

RING IN THE HOLIDAYS WITH VANILLA & RED FOOD COLOR

Simple Tips from a Busy Mom and Top Pastry Chef, Gale Gand



Celebrate an iconic pairing of the holiday season with family and friends. Vanilla and red food color, one of the definitive flavor pairings from the *McCormick® Flavor Forecast™ 2009: Holiday Edition*, is inspiring some of the season's most desirable treats. Top pastry chef and mom, Gale Gand, offers simple tips to achieve holiday fun and flavor with a few recipes from her cookbook, [Chocolate and Vanilla](#):

Experience Vanilla's Versatility

Vanilla balances, mellows and provides depth to even the simplest of dishes, making it one of Gale's must-have ingredients:

- "One of my favorite touches for a special treat is to add a splash of vanilla to pancakes, waffles or French toast. It adds a rich flavor without any extra time or effort," says Gale.
- "In the evenings after a long day battling the wintery cold, I enjoy cozying up with an easy warming drink. I simply heat sweetened milk until steamy, then turn off the heat and stir in a few drops of vanilla for a sweet and soothing treat," says Gale.



Experiment with Shades of Red

Gale finds inspiration in the holiday's classic color - red. From cookies to cupcakes, Gale uses red food color to infuse a twinkle of fun and holiday spirit to everything from cookie dough, to decorating sugar and frosting.

- Experiment with the full range of colors that red food color provides - from light rose to deep, velvety red - to express your color creativity. Gale's go-to garnish during the holidays is red tinted sugar. "I love to edge cupcakes and rim festive martinis with red sugar and it's easy for kids to help make. Simply pour granulated sugar in a baggie, add a few drops of red food color, then zip the bag and shake," says Gale.
- Gale likes to give her "**Vanilla Malted,**" a makeover during the holiday season by adding a couple drops of red food color and a teaspoon of chocolate syrup to turn them into a festive Red Velvet surprise. They can be whipped-up in minutes, require few ingredients, and are a sweet, rich and creamy indulgence.
- Cheesecakes are always a holiday hit and with red food color, Gale ups the ante by tinting half of the batter red, then swirling it together with the remaining white batter in a pan for a special twist.

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