

Vv

Vanilla:

- Has been around since the 15th century
- Thomas Jefferson is credited with introducing it to the United States in the 1700's.
- Cultivated by Mexico's Totonac people until Aztecs took control of the vanilla bean crop upon invading Mexico. The mature fruit was called the "black flower" due to it shriveling and turns black after picking.
- Vines grow 30-50 feet tall in hot, moist, tropical climates 75-85 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Extract is made by soaking the beans in water and ethyl alcohol.
- It's the only fruit bearing member of the orchid family and has over 150 varieties
- After saffron, vanilla is the most expensive spice in the world because it's hard to grow. It is said to be more valuable than silver.
- Contains many antioxidants and it's smell is known to directly impact the brain and induce calmness

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