

What is the difference?



[en español](#)

Many times you come across products that look the same and want to know what the difference is between them. Below are a few we thought you might like to know about.

Extracts and Spicery Shoppe Flavorings:

Pure Vanilla Extract is a combination of Water, Alcohol, and Vanilla bean extracts.

Spicery Shoppe Pure Vanilla Flavoring is a combination of Water, Glycerin, and Vanilla bean Extract.

The only difference is the alcohol. That is why when you open a bottle of alcohol based Vanilla extract you get a strong vanilla aroma. Alcohol evaporates quickly when exposed to air and so you will smell a strong aroma. The glycerin base holds the vanilla extract until you use it. The flavoring quality is the same. So if you prefer not to use alcohol in your cooking, use a glycerin based extract. The same holds true for all the other Spicery Shoppe flavors.

Carob and Chocolate

Both are from beans and ground to make a powder. Both flavors are nearly the same. The difference is that carob does not contain caffeine. Also, those allergic to chocolate do not seem to have a problem using carob for the "chocolate-y" flavor.

Wheat-free and Gluten-free

A product labeled "Wheat-free" is made without wheat as an ingredient. A product labeled "Gluten-free" has no wheat, oats, rye, barley or other grains that contain gluten as an ingredient and it is produced in a facility that does not use these grains.

Cocoa powder and Cocoa Mix

Cocoa powder is in your cocoa mix. But your cocoa mix also contains milk powder and sugar, possibly some salt. Depending upon the manufacture, you could

also have preservatives included in your mix.

Vegan and Vegetarian

A Vegan is a Vegetarian. But not all Vegetarians are Vegan. A Vegetarian avoids Meats and Meat products. Those that choose to supplement their diets with eggs and dairy products are known as Lacto-Ovo Vegetarians. A Vegan uses no meat, no eggs, and no dairy products. Their diet is strictly vegetable based.

All-Purpose Flour, Bread Flour, Pastry Flour, Pasta Flour, Gluten Flour

All Purpose flour is a combination grind of a hard and soft wheat. It can be used in baking anything from cakes to bread. The mix varies by region; southern regions have more soft wheat because they tend to make more biscuits; northern regions have more hard wheat since they tend to bake more bread.

Bread flour is a grind of hard wheat berries. This flour has more gluten, which gives the structure necessary for the expanding dough.

Pastry flour (or Cake flour) is a grind of soft wheat berries. It tends to be lighter and produces of softer cake or pastry dough. Lower in gluten than All-purpose it is perfect for those delicate pastries.

Pasta flour is a grind of pure durum wheat. It is designed to produce the stability needed in pastas so they don't turn to mush when cooking.

Gluten flour is a flour designed to be high in gluten by removing most of the starch from hard wheat . This flour can be used along with either your all-purpose flour or bread flour to produce a loaf of bread better in both texture and size.

Roux and Beurre Manie

A roux is a thickener that is made from equal parts of flour and fat and whisked together in a saucepan over heat to blend flavors and remove the lumps. It is then added to sauces and gravies to thicken while cooking together. To make a Roux, heat fat in pan and gradually whisk in flour. cook mixture, stirring constantly for at least several minutes and gradually whisk in hot liquid you are trying to thicken. It should be cooked for 30 min in order to eliminate the flour's starchy flavor, to thicken liquid and to get rid of the flour's white color.

White sauce is a roux. Its thickness depends on the liquid content vs. flour/fat. Thin sauces is 1 T. each flour and fat with one cup of liquid; medium has 2 T each of flour and fat (béchamel); thick has 3 T of each (veloute).

Beurre Manie is a flour-butter mixture to correct overly thin sauces at the last minute. Blend equal parts of butter and flour and knead them together. After you whisk it into sauce, let it cook for no more than 1-2 minutes, since sauces thickened with flour pick up starchy taste after cooked for a few minutes.

Baking Soda and Baking Powder

Baking soda is sodium bicarbonate. When it is mixed with an acid liquid it releases carbon dioxide. That is what creates its leavening ability.

All recipes calling for baking soda include an acid. It could be vinegar, lemon juice,

buttermilk, or sour milk to activate the baking soda. Hidden acids are used instead like molasses or honey or cream of tartar (a dry acid).

Baking soda releases the gas all at once. If the batter sits too long before baked, or is beaten too much, the leavening action will be lost. Too much baking soda will give a bitter/soapy taste to your food.

Baking Powder is a combination of baking soda and a dry acid and other ingredients. When added to a batter with the wet ingredients they react and release the carbon dioxide to leaven the batter.

There are two types of baking powder: single-acting and double-acting.

Single acting powders are differentiated by the acid used: Tartrate baking powder (cream of tartar and tartaric acid) and Phosphate baking powder (calcium phosphate or disodium pyrophosphate) and SAS baking powder (sodium aluminum sulfate {Alum}). Each reacts differently in the speed when gas is released. Single action is not commonly used in the US.

Double acting baking powders are more commonly used. This baking soda contains a dry acid which does not react with the baking soda until water is added. The first action refers to the release of gas when baking soda reacts with the acidic liquid.

The second action refers to the release of gas when the batter is heated in the oven or on the griddle. This relies on the presence of a slower acting acid, SAS, which only combines with the soda when the temperature increases.

Sometimes baking powder will list cornstarch as one of the ingredients....this is to keep the product dry and free flowing; help keep the soda and acid dry and separate and bulks the powder for easier measuring and standardization.

Spices and Herbs

Most all spices are grown in tropical regions of the Orient, East Africa, and the East Indian Islands. They are usually the seed, bark, root or fruit of a plant.

Most herbs are grown in the US and Europe and can be distinguished from spices. Herbs are usually the leafy, flowers, or seeds of green plants. Many herbs, such as basil or oregano, may be used fresh, and are commonly chopped into smaller pieces or dried. Spices, however, are dried, extremely aromatic, and although sometimes used whole, are usually ground into a powder.

Cassava Flour and Tapioca Flour

Ground from the cassava root, cassava flour is creamy-white with a slightly fermented flavor and sour taste. Gluten free, it is used to replace wheat flour, and is so-used by some people with allergies to other grain crops.

Tapioca Flour is milled from the dried starch of the cassava root. Actually known as Tapioca Starch, it thickens when heated with water and is often used to give body to puddings, fruit pie fillings, and soups. It can also be used in baking as a flour .

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