



# Five ways to use... VANILLA PODS

>> The Craft Guild of Chefs is the largest UK chefs association with members worldwide in foodservice and hospitality, from students and trainees to top management working everywhere from Michelin starred restaurants to school catering divisions.

The Guild, represent's the interest of chefs and promotes understanding, appreciation and the advancement of the art of cookery and the science of food.

## Young National Chef of the Year

2013 was a big year for Young National Chef of the Year, for the first time since the competitions

conception four years ago, a series of semi-final heats were held to open the competition to more young chefs aged 18 – 23 years old.



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## Vanilla pods can enhance a wide range of savoury dishes too.

>> Vanilla pods are a prized possession in any kitchen.

Containing the seeds from the vanilla orchid plant, real vanilla is expensive as each plant must be pollinated individually by hand. The green pods must then be cured in the sun over several days, raised to high temperatures and 'sweated' in cloth to achieve the complex balance of sugars and aromatics, then dried and straightened out for several weeks. This process also transforms the green seed pods into the characteristic wrinkly, dark-brown pods.

We often think of vanilla being used solely for desserts but, as Young National Chef of the Year finalist Danny Hoang demonstrates, they can enhance a wide range of savoury dishes too.

1. **Vanilla beurre blanc** – scrape a vanilla pod into a 500ml quantity of beurre blanc to make a more complex sauce that eats well with white fish.
2. **Vanilla root vegetable purée** – when making a purée that uses a naturally sweet root vegetable, scrape a pod into it to make it a little different, e.g. parsnip and vanilla puree.
3. **Vanilla gin** – utilise used vanilla pods by infusing them with a spirit or liqueur to enhance the product which could be then used in other dishes for soaking.
4. **Vanilla mayonnaise** – add some vanilla seeds into a fresh mayonnaise. This was made famous by Heston Blumenthal for the Fat Duck.
5. **Vanilla sabayon** – add some vanilla to a sweet sabayon for a dessert or even a hollandaise to serve with fish etc.



Danny Hoang

### About Danny Hoang

Danny trained at the prestigious Westminster Kingsway College and has worked in some of London's finest restaurants, including Café Royal. He is currently working at the Michelin-starred, Portuguese-inspired Viajante restaurant in east London under the tutelage of Nuno Mendes. Danny was a finalist in the Craft Guild of Chefs Young National Chef of the Year 2013.

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