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Recycling Tidbits

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Stump the Grump

Crayola's "Indian Red" crayon (now called chestnut) was named after what?



Answer:

Crayola originally named their "Indian Red" color after the brown pigment found near India, commonly used in fine artist oil paint.

Color Your World

I thought I'd shed some light on how to make food safe dyes. It all started during a particularly frigid day in March when cabin fever hit an all time high. My breaking point was that the color of my frosting reflected the color of the 4 foot high snow banks out my kitchen window. I didn't have any food coloring and it was way too cold to head to the store. Instead, I got creative and dug through my cabinets. I pulled out juice, hibiscus tea and turmeric.

Buttercream Frosting



I brewed one bag of hibiscus tea in ½ cup of boiling water, letting it seep for 10 minutes. Next, I condensed the tea by cooking it down for about 5 minutes on medium high heat, until approximately one teaspoon of liquid remained. By this point the pink liquid was a very deep red. I added ¼ tsp of the condensed tea to ½ cup of frosting. The frosting turned light pink. I added one final ¼ tsp and got a beautiful purple / pink color. The addition of the tea didn't alter the flavor. In fact I did the husband taste test - success!



After my success with the tea, I wanted to try a different color

dye. This time, I added ½ tsp of turmeric to another ½ cup of frosting which turned it a beautiful sunshine yellow. The spice did leave a slight after taste. However, I have a feeling if I had frosted a brownie, chocolate cupcake, or flavored the frosting with mint it would have masked the turmeric. Unfortunately I divulged my secret ingredient before frosting a chocolaty treat so I wasn't able to get away with using it.

Lastly, without measuring, I added a small amount of grape juice to the frosting. This produced a light purple color with a hint of grape goodness. The use of berries or other darkly colored juice will produce the same effect with a nice fruity flavor. When using berries, seeds or pieces of skin will show up in the frosting if you do not strain them.

Similar to food coloring, natural dyes may change the consistency of your frosting. To avoid runny frosting, opt for dried spices and reduce the use of liquids. This technique will also produce the deepest colors. Don't forget, some dried ingredients like turmeric and paprika are potent; if too much is used the flavor will come out in the frosting.

Hard Boiled Eggs

I had so much fun coloring frosting that I wanted to see how these dyes worked with hard boiled eggs. For my first

attempt, I placed a heaping teaspoon of turmeric into two glasses, (in hindsight I could have gotten away with using a ¼ tsp). In one glass I mixed in ¾ cup of boiling water, in the other ½ cup vinegar and ¼ cup boiling water.

After 5 minutes I checked the eggs. The egg placed in plain water had turned a pale Easter egg yellow. The vinegar mixture did very little. The turmeric separated from the vinegar leaving a residue on one side of the egg and a very very pale yellow on the other side.

Take two. I condensed the water and turmeric mixture. I proceeded to mix ¾ of a cup of boiling water with the condensed liquid. I allowed the egg to sit in this mixture 5 more minutes and the color difference was phenomenal! The egg was 2 times darker than it's previous color.



I didn't have many eggs so I couldn't experiment too much. However, I did learn that hibiscus tea turned the eggs pink and mixing hibiscus tea and turmeric together made them brown. I also learned coloring eggs is much easier as the dyes can be made from anything and won't affect the flavor of the egg!

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Tips & Tricks

<http://nourishingjoy.com/homemade-natural-food-dyes/>

Four Things to Keep in Mind:

1. Start with a small pinch or a few drops of these colorants. Add more according to your desired shade.
2. Natural colorants often lend a more timid hue than their store bought cousins. This is merely due to ratios. A concentrated store-bought food coloring requires only a few drops to add color and thus doesn't change the texture of the food by adding vast amounts of liquid. By comparison, it's difficult to get a true "red" from beet juice rather than just pink, not because the beet juice isn't red enough, but because most recipes can't stand up to the amount of liquid required to obtain a true red.
- On the other hand, just a few drops of beet juice will create an absolutely

lovely pink in frostings and ice creams without adding even a hint of beet flavor.

3. Since these colorants are foods themselves, remember that strongly colored foods also tend to be strongly flavored foods, so try – as much as possible – to avoid using large quantities of any of these (a small amount of cinnamon, for example, might make a frosting heavenly, but a large amount would render it inedible).

Also keep your final flavor in mind so that the colorants don't overwhelm it. I'm assuming you don't necessarily want paprika spiked buttercream or parsley ice cream! Again, small amounts of those colorants won't even be noticeable, but large

amounts most certainly will.

4. Lastly, vegetable powders are a great way to add vivid colors without adding excess liquid, so if you're wanting a deep red, for example, use beet powder rather than beet juice.

How to Make a Powder:

Slice the desired vegetable paper thin (or merely place whole herbs or berries on a tray) and dehydrate in a food dehydrator. Vegetables can also be dried by placing them in an oven set at about 150° until absolutely, completely dry (2-6 hours, depending on the vegetable). Place dried vegetable/fruit chips or herbs in a coffee grinder or blender and grind until you have a fine powder.

Color Choices

I scoured the web looking for ideas and color charts. These are the best ideas I found. Enjoy being creative!

Red: pure beet juice, pure pomegranate juice, beet powder

Pink: pure beet juice, pure cranberry juice

Orange: pure carrot juice, carrot powder, paprika



Yellow: ground turmeric, fresh turmeric juice, saffron

Green: matcha powder, spirulina powder, parsley juice, wheatgrass juice, spinach juice, spinach powder, parsley powder, liquid chlorophyll

Blue: pure blueberry juice, red cabbage leaves chopped and boiled for

½ hour—use the dyed water as your colorant

Purple: purple grape juice

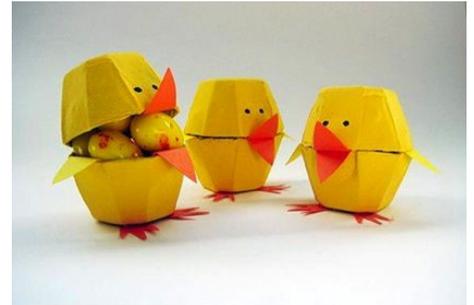
Brown: instant coffee granules, pure espresso, heavily steeped black tea, cocoa powder, cinnamon

Black: activated charcoal powder, squid ink

Spring Craft Ideas



Egg Cartons



Light Bulbs



Milk Jugs



Use shredded paper as Easter grass instead of the plastic kind. After Easter the paper can be recycled or used as a fire starter.

