



TruColor Tips n' Tricks

GEL PASTE: (1:1 RATIO) ½ water tsp. to ½ tsp. powder (Less water for fondant)

When adding color to fondant or gum paste, use less than the recommended equal parts of water to concentrate the color so you don't break down your fondant or make it too sticky, Use a dropper and drip drops of water to hydrate the powder, using the least amount of water possible. Best results are achieved when the wet TruColor™ is very concentrated and completely dissolved. Make sure the concentrated color is completely dissolved before folding in or adding to fondant or icing or you may see specks of undissolved color. TruColor Yellow and any color that has "Turmeric" on the ingredient label will take more water to hydrate as this color is naturally thicker.

Always test a small amount of natural color in what you are trying to color first before committing to a large batch.

- Like with many things, when using natural colors for the first time, it is always best to test a small amount of a natural color in what you are trying to color to see the results first.
- When using natural colors, you may also have to consider if a particular natural color is "heat stable" or not and that some natural colors bake well other do not. Generally colors derived from an Anthocyanin source will brown with heat. Yellow made with color derived from Turmeric Root and Orange from the Annatto Seed is generally heat stable.
- You can change the color yourself by adding or neutralizing the acidic content of your icing with natural household items such as lemon juice to lower the pH or baking soda to raise the pH

- **What is pH?**

Simply stated, the term pH is used as a scale to measure the activity of hydrogen ions in a liquid with numbers from 0 to 14 used to identify whether or not there is an acid present or not. A pH reading of 7 is neutral (not acidic or basic) Below 7 shows an acid is present and above 7 is termed basic or alkaline.

- To help understand the concept that an acid will change the color in plants, think of various colors in the Hydrangea flower bloom. You can change and manipulate the color of the flowers of this plant from blue to red by adding or removing an acid (lowering or raising the pH) in the soil. The color changing process of the hydrangea is slightly different, however it demonstrates how natural colors show different hues with an acid present.

- Natural Colors have many variables especially when adding “into” a medium like icing cake batter or dough as opposed to painting a natural color on the surface. You have to take into account what is “in” what you are trying to color or how all of your individual ingredients may affect natural color. Some natural colors bake well, other do not. Some natural colors change and react to pH or if the icing or dough medium is “basic” or “acidic”. If there is an acid like lemon Juice or Cream of Tartar (Tartaric Acid), some but not all natural colors will actually change color (hue) with every increment change in pH. And some natural colors are enhanced with an acid others are completely changed!
- A good rule as with most things is to always try a little natural color in what you are trying to color before committing to a large batch and add your dough or icing into the hydrated color a little at a time (Not Color to dough) that way you can control the color better to the shade you desire

- For blue in baking you can try the Purple Sweet Potato Extract depending on the heat used. “Sky Blue” food paint or “Royal Blue” food paint are fairly heat stable.
- Think “out of the box” when it comes to natural colors, try painting with an airbrush gun or a paint brush on the ‘dry” food surface after you bake, using this technique you avoid using large amounts of color inside the dough by simply coating the surface with brilliant hues and shades.
- To make bold rich natural color, add color to small amounts of icing or add small amounts of icing into color until you reach a shade just lighter than you want the finished product to look. The natural color will darken slightly as it dries in the icing. If you add a small amount of natural color into a large batch of icing, you may only achieve pastel shades.