

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### History of Adams Extract & Spice Classic “Original Red Velvet Cake”

**Gonzales, TX** (January 15, 2012) Adams Flavors Foods & Ingredients, makers of the world famous Adams Best Vanilla “Since 1888”, played an instrumental role in the development of the original Red Velvet Cake. Very few recipes in America have as long a history or as many urban legends as Red Velvet Cake.

When most people hear the term “Red Velvet Cake”, they think of the urban legend of the “Waldorf Astoria Cake” or the “\$100,000 Cake”. But, Red Velvet Cake, a popular layered cake with a red color, has a deeper and more involved history. Red Velvet Cakes can be traced back to before the turn of the century. Originally the dark red hue was created by the chemical reaction of the vinegar, buttermilk, and cocoa which are always included in a traditional Red Velvet Cake recipe. More commonly the cake was called “Mahogany” or “Devil’s Food”. Some early recipes also called for beetroot or beet juice to enhance the red color. The term “Velvet” refers to the light and tender texture of the cake. Red Velvet Cake is traditionally served with a bright white icing, but in more recent times, cream cheese icing has increased in popularity and trend along with serving the recipe in a cupcake form.

Around the time of the Great Depression, Adams Extract & Spice created their own version of the Red Velvet Cake recipe. This more vibrant red cake included all the traditional ingredients such as vinegar, buttermilk, and cocoa, but was the first to incorporate the use of Red Food Color and the substitution of shortening and Butter Flavor for butter in their recipe. This recipe was printed on tear off cards added to product displays around the country. The bright red colored version was an instant hit, and over time, Adams Red Velvet Cake recipe has become a staple in households around the country. In 1972, Author James Beard discussed three recipes for Red Velvet Cake in his classic book, *American Cookery*. All three recipes featured shortening and Red Food Color, an adaptation that can be traced back to Adams innovative recipe. Similar recipes can also be traced to multiple State Fair Winners and recipes used by some the most renowned pastry chefs in America. But most importantly, all modern recipes for Red Velvet Cake contain red food color, the product Mr. Adams built his entrepreneurial marketing strategy around.

The next time you eat a Red Velvet Cake, remember the history goes back much further than the modern food trend of the last few years or the common urban legends. The resurgence is tied to historical recipes that date back decades. This classic recipe is definitely worth the effort to make. Once you do, you will be adding it to your family recipe traditions.

Adams Original Red Velvet Cake Recipe:

1 teaspoon baking soda  
1 cup buttermilk  
1 Tablespoon vinegar  
1/2 cup shortening  
1 1/2 cups sugar  
2 eggs  
1 teaspoon Adams Best Vanilla  
1 teaspoon Adams Butter Flavor  
1 ounce Adams Red Color  
3 Tablespoons cocoa  
2 1/2 cups sifted flour  
1 teaspoon salt

Cream the shortening and sugar. Add eggs one at a time and beat vigorously. Add flavors to mixture. In a separate bowl make a paste of cocoa and food coloring and blend into shortening mixture. Sift together dry ingredients and add alternately with buttermilk to mixture. Add vinegar to mixture with last part of buttermilk. Blend well. Bake in 3 - 9" pans for 20-25 minutes at 350 degrees.

This recipe, Red Velvet Cupcake recipes and icing/frosting recipes can found on our website at [www.adamsextract.com](http://www.adamsextract.com) or on our YouTube Channel at [www.youtube.com/user/AdamsFFI](http://www.youtube.com/user/AdamsFFI).

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