



The Food Connection: Pickling

We are a community of food-loving folks who meet for monthly potlucks and free do-it-yourself workshops!

Pickling Overview

Generally speaking, pickling refers to preserving foods in acidic brine. Pickles aren't just sour cucumbers; any foods soaked in acidic brine can be considered to be pickled. There are a few different methods of pickling, used for different purposes, and with different results:

- Heat-processed (canned) pickles - These pickles are preserved in brine, and canned using a hot water bath or pressure canner (for canning animal protein, like fish or eggs) to achieve a sterile, airtight seal. They can be stored at room temperature.
- Refrigerator pickles - Like the kind we're sharing in this recipe, these pickles are preserved in brine and stored in the fridge. No canning necessary!
- Quick pickles - Thinly sliced foods (veggies like radishes, carrots, or turnips) can be placed in brine for 10 to 30 minutes to add a tartness to a dish and balance out heavier flavours.

***Bonus:** Leftover brine can be used in vinaigrettes or other dressings!*

Pickled Antipasto

This is a simple recipe for roasted vegetables, preserved through pickling and refrigeration. Pickled antipasto goes well in snack trays (cheeses, crackers, meats), and can be added to soups, salads, and sandwiches to balance and 'brighten' richer flavours with its well-rounded tartness.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 small zucchini squash (roughly the size of a jumbo carrot)
- 1 Japanese eggplant
- 1 red bell pepper (or other sweet pepper)
- 2 cloves garlic
- olive oil
- ½ tsp dried oregano

Brine: Follow these basic ratios of water, acid, and salt to adapt this brine recipe.

The apple cider vinegar provides sweetness, while tarter vinegars like white vinegar or rice vinegar will produce a very sour brine. Adding sugar or another sweetener will produce a more balanced character.

- 1-¼ cups water
- 1 cup apple cider vinegar
- 2 tbsp Kosher salt (do not use iodized/table salt, as this produces cloudy brine)

Optional:

- additional ¼ cup water & ¼ cup red wine vinegar for the brine
- additional spices - add to vegetables before roasting, or to brine (before or after boiling)

This recipe and others can be found on our website:



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METHOD

Veggies

1. Clean and chop veggies to medium dice (roughly ½-inch cubes).
2. Mince garlic.
3. Toss veggies and garlic with oregano and just enough olive oil to coat the mixture.
4. Roast veggies on an unlined baking sheet for 20 minutes at 375F.

Brine

5. Bring water, vinegar and salt to a boil, and remove from heat.
6. Do not allow steam to come in direct contact with your eyes, as the vinegar fumes can cause irritation and burning.

Jars

7. Sanitize jars, lids and utensils. Allow for 1 minute of contact with boiling water. You could also soak them in a bath of hot water and peroxide (oxygen bleach), or run them through the dishwasher on high heat. Make sure everything is fully air dried.
Note: To save time, do this step at the beginning or while your veggies are in the oven.
8. Spoon roasted vegetables into jars, using a canning funnel to avoid spills.
9. Use some of the brine to deglaze the roasting pan, dissolving oil and juices. Distribute this mixture evenly among the jars, for maximum flavour.
10. Fill the jars with hot brine. Cool, then cover and refrigerate for about a week before eating. This recipe will store in the fridge for up to three months - if it lasts that long!

Pickled Garlic & Onion Confit

- 1 garlic bulb
 - 1/2 cup pearl onions
 - olive oil
 - brine (see above)
1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
 2. Separate garlic bulb into individual cloves, keeping the skin on. You don't need to worry about peeling the garlic or onions at this point as the skins will come off easily after roasting them in the oven.
 3. Put garlic & pearl onions on a small roasting pan or oven-safe dish and cover with olive oil.
 4. Roast in oven for 40 minutes. Cool and remove garlic & onion skins.
 5. Place garlic and onion in a sanitized glass jar and cover with brine. Add the roasting oil from the pan, or keep it separately in the fridge to make vinaigrette or eat with bread.
 6. Store the confit in the fridge. Serve with bread and crackers, alongside meat dishes, tossed with leafy greens like kale or arugula, etc - remember, the sky's the limit!

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