



Preserving, Fermenting, & Sprouting

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Food goes bad, that's just part of its nature. But in the kitchen, we can help to extend that date, not only giving foods new life, but changing them in the process. This is a little zine about just that.

Basic Quick Pickle Brine

Quick pickles aren't fermented, but a vinegary brine gives flavor and helps to extend the life of an assortment of vegetables.

- Brine: 1 cup (240 ml) water + 1 cup (240 ml) vinegar (different vinegars will result in different flavors) + 1 to 2 teaspoons salt (depending on saltiness you are after) + 1 to 2 teaspoons sugar or honey (not necessary, but helps to round out flavor)
- Sliced vegetables (carrots, onions, cucumbers, rhubarb, etc)
- Any herbs/spices you want. Ideas: bay leaf, peppercorns, star anise, etc.

Put the sliced vegetables in a clean glass jar. Place the brine ingredients in a saucepan and bring to a boil, stirring until the salt and sugar are dissolved. Remove from stove, pour over vegetables. Cover, let cool, and store in the fridge.

More preserving/fermenting/sprouting resources to check out:

The Art of Fermentation by Sandor Ellix Katz
Fermented Vegetables by Christopher Shockey
Kirsten K. Shockey
(check out their website
<http://ferment.works> and other books too)

The Noma Guide to Fermentation: Including Koji, Kombuchas, Shoyus, Misos, Vinegars, Garums, Lacto-ferments, and Black Fruits and Vegetables by David Zilber and René Redzepi

Mastering Fermentation by Mary Karlin

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This is a basic brine recipe to get you started with lacto-fermentation.

For about 1 1/2 pounds (750 grams) of vegetables:

- 4 cups (1 liter) water
- 4 tablespoons (60 ml) sea salt

Let sea salt dissolve into the water, taste to see if it seems salty enough. It should taste like a sip of sea water. Brine can be made in advance and then poured over vegetables. You can also break up the process and rub the salt into your vegetable mixture, massaging the cabbage, etc. to get them to start breaking down and releasing their juices, then add water at the end.

Sometimes it's easy to wait a few hours after the salt rub to see if some vegetable juice has already been released and then add water accordingly.

Make sure vegetables are covered in liquid. Cover a crock with plate (see next section) or loosely seal jar with lid. Let things ferment until the sourness is to your liking. Transfer to an airtight container.

Basic Brine

Fermented Cabbage and Carrots

Now we're getting a little more exciting with our fermentation game. You can spice this one up as you see fit.

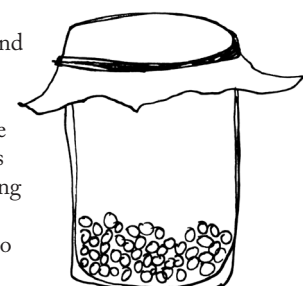
- 1 head green cabbage
 - 4-5 carrots
 - 1 medium sized yellow onion
 - 3 cloves chopped garlic
 - 1 inch grated ginger
 - 4-5 tablespoons course sea salt
 - Water
- Optional:*
- 1-2 tablespoons red pepper flakes
 - Green onion
 - Radish

Chop cabbage, carrots, and onions to equal sizes. Combine vegetables with garlic, ginger and optional ingredients, if using, in your fermentation vessel. Add coarse sea salt and massage the vegetables with the salt for 2-3 minutes.



When the lentils have soaked overnight, strain off the water and cover again.

Rinse the lentils once a day, until the lentils have softened and long sprouts have formed. This usually takes 3 to 4 days.



When the lentils have fully sprouted, cover with a lid. Store in fridge.

Add to salads, put on sandwiches, eat by the spoonful, etc.



Fill jar 1/3 of the way with lentils. Fill the rest with water.

Cover with fabric and let sit overnight.



Sprouting lentils is fun because you not only get to watch the lentils grow, but it's an easy way to turn a pantry staple into a "fresh" food.

- You'll need:
- A glass jar
 - Water
 - Lentils (you can also experiment with sprouting other things like wheat berries, buckwheat, spelt, quinoa...)
 - Something to put on top of the jar to let it breathe (fabric, cheesecloth, paper coffee filter, etc.) + a rubber band to secure in place

Push vegetables down and add a weight to keep them compressed. A plate with a weight—like a glass jar or bottle filled with water—works well. You can also use a smaller glass jar that fits inside the one you are using. You can also try the method from *Fermented Vegetables* by Christopher Shockey and Kirsten K. Shockey in which you place a ziploc bag in the jar on top of the ferment, and then fill it with water. The weight of the water holds things down.

Check in on your cabbage a few hours later—if no brine has begun to form add a cup or so of water.

Massage the vegetables every day so they release their juices and make more brine—which should cover the vegetables as they ferment.

Taste regularly, once you like the taste of you fermented cabbage and carrots, transfer to an airtight container, juices and all, and keep in the fridge – this will keep well stored in the cold as long as it takes to finish them off!

