

# August Spice Club:

## Pickling Spice



Tangy, zingy, and oh-so-delicious! Pickling spices infuse flavor into a wealth of produce and, through the canning process, extend the longevity of a garden harvest. While specific herbs and spices may vary, common components include mustard seed, coriander seed, dill seed, bay leaf, cinnamon stick, clove, and peppercorn. These aromatic spices come together to create a distinctive and robust flavor profile that adds depth and complexity to the brine or vinegar solution, enhancing the overall taste of the preserved food. Pickling spices can be used in various pickling methods, such as quick pickles, refrigerator pickles, and traditional canning. The flavors develop over time and result in a vibrant, zesty, and slightly pungent taste that adds a delightful twist to preserved foods. Whether you're pickling cucumbers, peppers, onions, or experimenting with other ingredients, pickling spices are an essential element of delicious and flavorful homemade pickles.

A note on pickling salt: Some salts are coated in anti-caking agents and contain iodine. While fine to use for canning, these salts can turn canning liquid cloudy or slightly impact the overall canned product in terms of flavor or experience. Pickling salts are specifically denoted in canning recipes to avoid these pitfalls.

## *Suggested Reading*

*available to request on the Minerva catalog*

America's Test Kitchen, *Foolproof Preserving*

Andrea Chesman, *Pickles and Relishes*

Diane Devereaux, *Beginner's Guide to Canning*

Liana Krissoff, *Canning for a New Generation*

Ellie Topp and Margaret Howard, *The Complete Book of Year-Round Small-Batch Preserving*

Stephanie Thurow, *Can It & Ferment It*

TMS Ball Corporation, *Ball Blue Book of Preserving*

## **Refrigerator Dills**

Andrea Chesman, *Pickles and Relish*

Yield: 4 quarts

2 dill heads  
3 cloves garlic  
2 tbsp mixed pickling spices  
2 bay leaves  
1 gallon pickling cucumbers  
1 cup white vinegar  
8 cups water  
¼ cup pickling salt

Place the dill, garlic, pickling spices, and bay leaves in the bottom of a gallon jar. Fill the jar with cucumbers, cut in halves or quarters if they are large.

Combine the vinegar, water, and pickling salt in a medium-size saucepan. Bring to a boil and set aside to cool.

When the vinegar solution has cooled, pour it over the cucumbers and refrigerate.

After 3 days, the cucumbers and brine can be put into small jars. Keep refrigerated.

## How to Make Quick-Pickled Vegetables

Mountain Rose Herbs, [mountainroseherbs.com](http://mountainroseherbs.com)

Yield: Approximately 2 pints

“Quick pickles take half the time [of traditional canning] and are perfect for smaller gardens that are ready for harvest a little at a time.”

About 3 cups organic vegetables of choice

1 cup apple cider vinegar, rice vinegar, or white vinegar (with at least 5% acidity)

1 cup clean, filtered water

1 tbsp fine sea salt

1 tbsp sugar (optional)

1-2 tsp pickling spice, divided

2 bay leaves, divided

Clean and chop veggies in size and shape of preference. Set aside. Add vinegar and water to non-reactive pot and turn heat to medium-high. While heating the brine, add 1 bay leaf to each sterilized jar and ½-1 tsp of pickling spice blend, to taste. Fill jars with veggies, leave ½ inch from the rim of the jar.

When brine is hot enough to fully dissolve the salt and sugar, turn off stovetop. Add salt and sugar; still until fully dissolved. Pour brine over veggies, leaving at least ¼ inch from the top, being sure to cover all of the veggies.

Place lid loosely on to prevent fruit flies but with enough space to allow steam to dissipate. Once fully cooled, label with date and place in refrigerator. Enjoy within 14 days.

*Pro tip:* for harder vegetables like beets and carrots, smaller pieces will take on the pickle flavor faster. You can also partially cook them in the brine if you prefer them softer.

# Pickled Jalapeño Peppers

Ellie Top and Margaret Howard, *The Complete Book of Year-Round Small-Batch Preserving*

Yield: 2 half-pint jars

1 cup cider vinegar	½ tsp pickling salt
¼ cup water	2 tsp picking spice
4 tsp liquid honey	2 cloves garlic, halved
½ lb. jalapeño peppers, seeded and thinly sliced	

If a recipe requires a preparation and cooking time longer than 20 minutes, begin preparation of the ingredients first. Then bring the water and jars in the canner to a boil while the prepared food is cooking. If the ingredients require a shorter preparation and cooking time (**like this recipe**), begin heating the canner before you start your recipe. The jars do not need to be sterile if the processing time is 10 minutes or longer, but they do need to be hot. Have a kettle with boiling water handy to top off the water level in the canner after you have put in the jars.

## *20 Minutes Before Processing*

Partially fill a boiling-water canner with hot water. Place in the canner enough clean canning jars to hold the quantity of food prepared by the recipe. Cover and bring the water to a boil over high heat. This step generally requires 15-20 minutes, depending on the size of your canner.

## *Meanwhile, Prepare the Pickling Liquid*

Combine vinegar, water, honey, pickling spice and salt in a small saucepan. Bring to a boil over high heat, remove from heat and let stand for 10 minutes.

## *5 Minutes Before Processing*

Place lids in boiling water 5 minutes before you are ready to fill the jars. Follow the manufacturer's directions.

## *Filling Jars*

Remove hot jars from canner. Place ½ clove garlic in each jar. Divide peppers between jars. Add ½ clove garlic.

Return pickling liquid to a boil. Pour over peppers to within ½ inch (1 cm) of rim (head space). Wipe jar rim to remove any stickiness. Center lid on jar; apply screw band just until fingertip tight.

## *Processing Jars*

Place jars in canner and adjust water level to cover jars by 1 inch. Cover canner and return water to boil. Begin timing when water returns to a boil. Process 10 minutes for half-pint jars of jalapenos or 15 minutes for pint jars.

Remove jars from canner and cool for 24 hours. Check jar seals (sealed lids turn downward). Remove screen bands, dry, and either replace loosely on jar or store separately. Label jars with contents and date and store in a cool, dark place.

*Tip:* For extra eye-appeal, strips of either hot (cayenne, de Arbol and Mirasol are generally available) or sweet red peppers may be placed in jars with jalapeño slices before liquid is added.