

# A YEAR OF FERMENTED FOOD

By: The Rootsy Network



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# INTRODUCTION

Fermented foods are a great way to get healthy probiotics and tasty food into our homes and kitchens frugally and easily. Fermentation seems involved and a bit like a science project but is truly one of the oldest forms of food preservation known to humans. It's really a few simple ingredients and time - that's all.

Use the recipes included in this book as a jumping off point, the general processes you will notice are fairly similar. Try mixing up the ingredients but keeping the brine the same and see what your family likes. Add different spices, make it hotter or milder depending on your own preferences.

Ferments are a long-standing food preservation method. Most ferments will keep for several months in the refrigerator, but do check for mold once they get older. The refrigeration process simply slows down the fermenting process and keeps the food at optimal flavor while also inhibiting some mold growth.

The following recipes are organized by seasonal abundance so that fermentation can take place with foods readily available in each season. Enjoy fermented foods for the ways they help make the most of the garden and other seasonal foods while increasing the daily intake of healthy foods!

## TIPS FOR FERMENTING SUCCESS

- Mushy ferments? Add a grape leaf, oak leaf, or a horseradish leaf for the tannins that help keep everything crisp.
- Avoid chlorinated water as the chlorine can interfere with the fermenting process
- Use kosher, pickling, sea, or mineral salt and avoid iodized salt for best results

## WINTER FERMENTS

This is a season of citrus and long, stored vegetables. This is not a season of tender, fast to spoil fruits and veggies but rather it is a season of hardy produce designed to get us through cold days and frigid nights. Soak up all that strength in food that tastes good and serves the body well at the same time.

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“TO FERMENT YOUR OWN FOOD IS TO LODGE A SMALL BUT ELOQUENT PROTEST - ON BEHALF OF THE SENSES AND THE MICROBES - AGAINST THE HOMOGENIZATION OF FLAVORS AND FOOD EXPERIENCES NOW ROLLING LIKE A GREAT, UNDIFFERENTIATED LAWN ACROSS THE GLOBE. IT IS ALSO A DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE FROM AN ECONOMY THAT WOULD MUCH PREFER WE REMAIN PASSIVE CONSUMERS OF ITS STANDARDIZED COMMODITIES, RATHER THAN CREATORS OF IDIOSYNCRATIC PRODUCTS EXPRESSIVE OF OURSELVES AND OF THE PLACES WHERE WE LIVE, BECAUSE YOUR PALE ALE OR SOURDOUGH BREAD OR KIMCHI IS GOING TO TASTE NOTHING LIKE MINE OR ANYONE ELSE'S.”

~ MICHAEL POLLAN

# RAINBOW KRAUT

- 1/2 Head of Green Cabbage
- 1/5 Head of Purple Cabbage
- 2 Carrots
- 1 Beet
- 1 Firm Apple (gala or pink lady, for example)
- Salt

Chop the red and green cabbage very fine.

Grate the carrots and beet

Chop the apple

Put all the prepared produce in a large bowl and sprinkle two teaspoons of salt for every pound of produce over it. Use your hands to mix and gently crush the produce. Cover with a cloth for several hours.

Put into clean wide mouth jars and place lid with airlock

Put in a cool dark place for 4-5 days. Then remove airlock and put a regular canning lid on.

Store in the refrigerator.



# PRESERVED LEMONS

- 4 Lemons, quartered
- ½ - 1 Cup Salt



In a clean glass jar, put a thin layer of salt on the bottom.

Put a few lemon quarters in the jar. Sprinkle liberally with salt. Give the jar a little shake. Add more lemon quarters and salt. Repeat until the jar is full.

Cover the jar with a tight fitting lid and let sit at room temperature for 1-2 weeks.

Refrigerate once fermentation has been achieved.

Rinse salt off lemons before cooking or eating.

# FERMENTED CRANBERRIES

- 1 Pound Cranberries (if frozen, defrost)
- ½ Tablespoon Salt
- Juice of 1 Orange
- 1 Cinnamon Stick, optional
- Water

Crush the cranberries in a bowl (a potato masher works well). Break them into small pieces for best results. Sprinkle the cranberries with the salt and mix well.

Place the crushed cranberries into a wide mouth jar.

Add the cinnamon stick and orange juice.

Add water, filling the jar but leaving 1" headspace.

Place a weight to keep the cranberries submerged, they like to float. Put a lid with an airlock on the jar.

Let sit at room temperature for 2-3 weeks. Test for doneness based on personal preference. Refrigerate with a regular canning lid when optimal fermentation has been reached. Remove cinnamon stick, if desired, otherwise it might get overpowering.

# SPRING FERMENTS

After a long winter, everyone looks forward to fresh spring fruits and vegetables. These tender and bright flavors are extremely tasty after a brief fermentation period.

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“FERMENTED FOODS ARISE IN THE HUMAN RELATIONSHIP TO THE MICROBIAL ENVIRONMENT. HUMAN SURVIVAL IS CONNECTED TO YEASTS AND BACTERIA THAT PRODUCE LACTIC ACID AND ALCOHOL IN PRESERVED FOODS. THIS CONSTITUTES A FERMENTATION ECOSYSTEM THAT EMBODIES THE SUCCESSION OF SPECIES, PARTITIONING OF RESOURCES, DISTURBANCE AND EQUILIBRIUM FOUND IN LARGER ECOSYSTEMS. FERMENTED FOODS ARE PRESERVED BY MICROBES THAT LIVE IN FOOD STORAGE VESSELS. IN MANY SOCIETIES, THE CONTRIBUTION OF FERMENTED FOOD HAS BEEN CENTRAL. FERMENTATION ECOSYSTEMS CAN BE USED AS AN ENGAGING INSTRUCTIONAL TOOL TO ILLUSTRATE ECOLOGICAL CONCEPTS AND LEAD TO A MORE COMPLEX UNDERSTANDING OF THE ECOLOGY OF HUMAN NUTRITION.”

~ROBERT SCOTT & WILLIAM SULLIVAN

# FERMENTED ASPARAGUS WITH GARLIC

- 1 Pound Asparagus Spears
- 6-10 Whole Garlic Cloves
- 1 1/2 Tablespoons Kosher or Sea Salt (not iodized)
- 2 Cups Filtered Water

Trim the woody ends off the asparagus so that they fit into a quart sized mason jar.

Fill the jar with the asparagus, then push the garlic cloves into the jar.

Mix the water and salt to make a brine, and pour over the asparagus, making sure to cover all of the veggies. You may need to make a little more brine at a ratio of 3/4 Tbsp salt to 1 cup water in order to fill the jar.

Weigh the asparagus down with some kind of weight so that they stay under the brine.

Cover the jar with a clean towel and secure with a rubber band (you can alternatively use an airlock system if you have one, but it's not necessary).

Set in a cool and dark place for 1-2 weeks to ferment. Taste the veggies, and when they are to your liking they are done!

Cover with a lid and store in the refrigerator.



# FERMENTED BERRIES

- 2 Cups Berries (or a mix)
- 2 Tablespoons Sugar
- 2 Tablespoons Whey
- 1/4 Teaspoon Salt
- Water

Mix together berries, sugar, whey and salt.

Pack berry mixture into a pint wide mouth canning jar. Lightly press down on the berries so that the jar maintains a 1" headspace.

Add water to cover the berries completely.

Place a weight on top of the berries to keep them submerged.

Put on a canning lid and leave to ferment at room temperature for 24 hours.

Refrigerate. Use within 2 - 3 weeks.

# LACTO-FERMENTED RADISHES

- Fresh radishes, quartered to fill a quart jar
- 2 Tablespoons Kosher or Pickling Salt (not iodized)
- 2 Cups Filtered Water



Fill the jar with the radishes.

Mix the water and salt to make a brine, and pour over the radishes, making sure to cover.

Weigh the radishes down with some kind of weight so that they stay under the brine.

Place a lid loosely on the jar, and set the jar on the counter, or in another location where you will remember to check on the ferment daily. You will notice bubbles forming after a few days – this is completely normal and desired!

After a week or so, give your lacto-fermented radishes a taste. When they have reached your desired flavor, move them to the refrigerator or another cool location.

# SUMMER FERMENTS

Summer is always the season of blessed abundance. The season of amazing and fleeting ripeness. Enjoy it on a daily basis with quick ferments and savor it for months to come with those same jars.

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“FERMENTATION IS ... LIFE WITHOUT AIR, IT IS LIFE WITHOUT FREE OXYGEN.”  
~ LOUIS PASTEUR

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# LACTO-FERMENTED GARLIC SCAPES

- 2 Tablespoons Salt
- 1 Quart of water
- 15-20 Garlic Scapes
- Optional Seasonings: Red Pepper Flakes, Dill, Cumin seeds, Coriander, Mustard Seeds ( $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon of each)

Prepare garlic scapes by trimming off the tough ends and rinsing clean.

Place scapes in a wide-mouth quart mason jar. You can either just curl the entire scape up into the mason jar, or cut the scapes into smaller pieces.

Add desired seasonings to the jar.

Make the brine by whisking together the salt and water.

Pour brine over the garlic scapes, ensuring that they are covered completely. If you are using cut-up scapes, you may need to weigh them down.

Place a lid loosely on the jar, and set the jar on the counter, or in another location where you will remember to check on the ferment daily. You will notice bubbles forming after a few days – this is completely normal and desired!

After a week or so, give your scapes a taste. When they are fermented to your liking, move them to the refrigerator or another cool location and enjoy!

# LACTO FERMENTED DILLY BEANS

- Fresh green beans to fill a quart jar
- 4-5 garlic cloves
- 2 whole flower heads of pickling dill, or 2 sprigs fresh dill and 1 Tablespoon dried dill seeds
- 1-2 bay leaves
- 1 teaspoon mustard seeds
- 1 teaspoon black peppercorns
- 1 small hot pepper (optional)

## Brine

- 1 Tablespoon Kosher or Pickling Salt
- 2 Cups Water

Make the brine by mixing the salt and water together well. Set aside.

Put the remaining ingredients into a quart jar. Putting the beans in lengthwise makes it look beautiful, and it also allows you to stuff in as many beans as possible.

Pour that brine over the beans in the jar.

Make sure all the veggies are covered with the brine and weigh them down with a weight.

Cover the jar with a clean cloth secured with a rubber band and put in a dark place in your kitchen. Take a quick look at it every day or two to make sure it's ok (I'm sure it will be, but it's always nice to keep an eye on it!). After a week taste the beans and see if they're to your liking.

If they're still too crunchy, let them ferment longer, up to another week. If it's really cold in your kitchen, it may take even longer than that.

Once they are ready, it's time to eat! They should be delightfully salty and crunchy, the perfect addition to your next appetizer.



# FERMENTED ZUCCHINI PICKLE SLICES

- 2 Medium Zucchini, sliced either into round or long strips
- 3 Tablespoons Salt
- 4 Cups Water
- Optional Seasonings: Fresh Dill Flowers, Dried Dill, Red Pepper Flakes, Garlic Cloves

Make the brine by mixing together the salt and water. Set aside.

Pack canning jars with the zucchini, leaving 1" headspace. Add optional seasonings.

Pour brine over zucchini again, leaving 1" headspace in the jar.

Place a weight on the zucchini to keep it submerged.

Put a lid and airlock onto the jar.

Let sit at room temperature for 3 to 5 days, testing for doneness. When done remove airlock and replace with a regular canning lid. Refrigerate.

# FALL FERMENTS

Fall is the traditional season of harvest. It is the season in which much food is collected and preserved. Keep in harmony with that tradition with these ferments.

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“I LOOKED AT THE TRANSPARENT YELLOW LIQUID IN THE GLASS. I TASTED IT & TASTED FERMENTATION. IN OTHER WORDS I TASTED LIFE ON EARTH. FOR EVERYTHING THAT LIVES HERE FERMENTS, AGES, BECOMES DISEASED. BUT AS THINGS MADE THEIR DECLINE FROM RIPENESS THEY COULD TASTE WONDERFUL, I REALISED.”  
~ MATT HAIG

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# GARLIC FERMENTED IN HONEY

- Garlic Cloves, peeled - enough to fill a jar  $\frac{3}{4}$  full
- Raw Honey

Put garlic cloves in a clean jar.

Pour honey over garlic and stir to remove air bubbles. Make sure the honey completely covers the garlic.

Place a lid loosely on the jar and put the jar into a small bowl.

Let the jar sit for 1 to 2 weeks. Give it a shake now and then to keep the garlic cloves submerged. Turning the jar over works well, too, but remember to tighten the lid when upside down and loosen it again when rightside up. Wipe up any honey that may have 'burped' from the jar.

Once the cloves have fermented, the honey will get thinner. Place the fermented honey and garlic cloves into the refrigerator until ready to use.

# KIMCHI

- 1 Tbs Salt, unrefined
- 1 Napa cabbage, cut into 2" pieces (toss the root end to your chickens)
- 3 carrots, grated
- 1/2 pound daikon radish, grated
- 4 Tbs diced garlic
- 2 inches fresh ginger, grated
- 1/2 onion, diced
- .5 oz Ichimi Togarashi (Japanese chili pepper powder), more or less to taste
- 3 Tbs fish sauce

Mix cabbage and salt in large ceramic bowl. Don't use a metal bowl, as it can react negatively with the salt. "Punch" down cabbage. Really. Much like when making sauerkraut, you want the cabbage leaves to break down.

Let this sit for 30 minutes to allow the salt to draw the juice from the cabbage. This is the beginning of your brine.

Mix the rest of the ingredients with the cabbage. Remember, use a wooden or plastic spoon, no metal spoon! Some people prefer to mix it with their hands.

Squish the kimchi mix into wide mouth glass jars, leaving a half inch of head room. (This amount filled a quart and a pint jar for me.)

Make sure the brining liquid covers the cabbage mix in both jars. Weight the mixture to keep it submerged, if there isn't enough liquid, just add some cold non-chlorinated water to it.

Clean your jar rim and place lid & airlock.

Set in a cool area out of direct sunlight and wait. Depending on how strong you want your kimchi flavor, let it ferment for one week to 21 days. Feel free to taste test along the way. Once the flavor is where you want it, remove the airlock and switch to a regular mason jar lid. (If it tastes kimchi-y, but is still too salty, let it keep fermenting. That just means it is not quite done yet.)

Store in a cool, dark area for up to nine months (if not longer). As long as there is no mold, you're good to go! Kimchi will continue to ferment, so if you want to keep the flavor where it's at, refrigerate it. This will not stop the fermenting process, but will greatly slow it down.

# FERMENTED CARROTS

- 2 Cups Water
- 1 Tablespoon Salt
- 4 Medium Carrots, sliced (into coins or strips)
- 1 Garlic Clove, smashed

Stir the salt into water. Set aside.

Put the carrots into a quart jar, packing tight and leaving about 1 inch of headspace. Add the garlic clove.

Pour the brine over the carrots to cover them completely. Place a weight to keep them submerged.

Place a lid and airlock onto the jar.

Leave the jar sit at room temperature for up to a week. Taste along the way to decide on best flavor.

Once done, put a regular canning lid on the jar and keep refrigerated.