



Many Grandmas Asian Pickles

Featured on May 4th, 2018 for “Asian Pacific American Foodways” demo with Chef Patricia Tanumihardja

“I learned some great pickle tips while working on the book [Farm to Table Asian Secrets]. Grandma Nellie taught me to randomly strip the cucumber of peel for a pretty finish, and to salt the vegetables to draw out moisture and make them crunchier (although I never found much difference). She also showed me how to feather the edges of the cucumber so the pieces can absorb the brine chop-chop. (Slicing the cucumber paper-thin as I’ve done below has the same effect). And Grandma Ling used maple syrup (instead of the prepared ginger syrup she was used to back home) to sweeten her brine. Yet another grandma massaged her carrot and daikon sticks before pouring the brine over.”- Patricia Tanumihardja

Many Grandmas Asian Pickles

Time: 15 minutes plus standing and brining

Makes: 1 pint

Ingredients

2 large seedless cucumbers (European or Persian cucumbers would be lovely too)

1 medium carrot

Salt

1/2 cup rice vinegar

1/2 cup water

1/4 cup sugar

2 tablespoons maple-flavored agave syrup (I used *Wholesome Sweeteners brand. You can also use maple syrup, regular agave syrup or honey, but start with less and adjust the amounts to taste)

1 clove garlic, smashed

Pinch crushed chipotle chilies

Directions:

Halve each cucumber lengthwise. Place one half flat-side down on your cutting board and using a vegetable peeler (a ‘Y’-peeler works great), slice the cucumber lengthwise into paper-thin strips. Repeat with the rest of the cucumbers.

Peel the carrot. Using a lemon zester, make nicks at equal intervals down the length of the carrot. Slice the carrot crosswise into thin slices. The slices will look like flowers.

Place the vegetables in a colander and toss with 1/2 teaspoon salt. Let them sit over the sink while you prepare the brine. (Skip this step if you’re in a hurry. I don’t find much different if you don’t salt the veggies first).

In a small bowl, mix together the vinegar, water, sugar, maple syrup, ¼ teaspoon salt, garlic, and chilies. Microwave on medium-high for 30 seconds. Stir the brine, making sure all the sugar has dissolved. Taste and adjust the seasonings if desired. Go read a chapter in a book while you let the brine cool.

Rinse the vegetables and shake dry. Toss them into the bowl with the brine, mix well and chill for at least one hour. Serve with fried rice, noodles, or munch on it throughout the day. This is a great snack if you're pregnant too!



For more recipes from **Cooking Up History**, visit: www.s.si.edu/CookHistory.

