

WATERMELON PICKLES RECIPE

This recipe was given to me by my mother Anne. She was visiting with friends while living in Albuquerque, NM in the 60's. The young couple brought watermelon pickles as a hostess gift to my mother. This began the tradition of canning Watermelon Pickles in our home.



As with most family recipes that get handed down to the next generation, I've made a few additions to the original recipe. I can't remember when I first tried a Watermelon Pickle but I do remember the distinctive flavor. Popping open a jar of these delightfully crisp pickles and smelling the combination of clove, cinnamon and ginger was like a bite of summer in a jar. Biting into the crisp freshness of the watermelon rind and hearing that crunch then tasting the richness of the pickle, made our mouths dance with delight.

As kids we chose to just eat them straight from the jar but they pair well with many main dishes. Try serving them with a hot curried chicken and rice dish or as an accompaniment to a leg of lamb. The flavor is strong and sweet so it takes a very hearty dish to stand up against the robust flavors.



Watermelon Pickles

Recipe from Anne Stone

First Brine

- 1 large seedless watermelon
- 2 quarts cold water
- 6 Cups sliced and peeled watermelon rind
- 4 Tablespoons Kosher or Sea Salt
- 2 Tablespoons pickling Spice

Choose a large seedless watermelon and cut in half. Remove all the flesh leaving just a bit of red flesh on the rind. Cut off the green skin and cut rind into 2-3 inch strips. In a large bowl place 6 cups of rind into 2 quarts of cold water, add remaining ingredients and let soak 5-6 hours or overnight in the refrigerator. Rinse the rind in a large colander rinsing off as much of the pickling spice as possible

Second Brine.

- 1 whole fresh ginger thinly sliced
- Cold water

In a large stock pot cover rind with cold water, add the sliced ginger and cook for 30 minutes or until fork tender. Drain ginger water keeping the ginger flesh with the rind.

Syrup

- 5 Cups water

4-6 cinnamon sticks broken in half
¼ cup whole lemon with peel thinly sliced
¼ cup real lemon juice
2 Tablespoons whole cloves
4 Cups sugar
2 Tablespoons candied ginger

To make syrup combine 5 cups water, watermelon rind, cinnamon sticks, whole cloves, 4 cups sugar, sliced lemon, and candied ginger. Gently boil for 30 minutes

Pack in jars

24 -6 ounce sterilized canning jars, hot from the water bath

Using a pair of tongs gently remove the flesh of the watermelon rind, lemon peel and ginger and place in sterilized jars. Using funnel ladle or pour hot syrup over the rind leaving ¼ inch at the top of the jar free. Wipe rims with a damp paper towel to clean any spilled food to make sure a tight seal. Cover with lids tightly and boil filled jars in water bath for 15 minutes. Remove to a clean hand towel and let stand until you hear a distinctive “pop” or “ping” sound. It can take up to 24 hours for a proper seal on some jars, so don't be afraid if you don't hear the popping sound right away. If by chance, one of the jars doesn't seal (push the top of lid and if it moves up and down it's not sealed) . Refrigerate and enjoy right away with your family and friends. You can also Reprocess an unsealed jar by placing a new heated lid on the jar and re-heating per the recipe instructions.

Makes 18 to 24 jars

