

PICKLED CUCUMBERS

Pickled cucumbers are made in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Cucumbers undergo a typical lactic acid fermentation and change from a pale to a darker green and a more transparent product. *Khalpi* is a cucumber pickle popular during the summer months in Nepal.

Raw material preparation

The cucumbers need to be selected and prepared. Only fully ripe cucumbers without bruising or damage should be used. All the cucumbers need to be washed in potable cold water and drained. The cucumbers can be pickled whole or sliced. With *khalpi* the cucumbers are washed, sliced and cut into 5-8cm pieces.

Processing

1 kg of salt is added to every 20kg of small cucumbers and 15 kg of large cucumbers. The brine should be formed within 24 hours by osmosis. If the brine formed by osmosis does not cover the cucumbers 40° Salometer brine is added to the desired level. A day or two after the tank is filled and closed the brine should be stirred in order to help equalise the concentration of salt throughout the mass.

As soon as the brine is formed, fermentation starts and bubbles of carbon dioxide appear. Fermentation takes between one and four weeks depending on the ambient temperature. Fermentation is complete when no more bubbles appear.

During fermentation the brine becomes cloudy for the first few days due to the growth of bacteria. Later if the brine is not covered, a filmy yeast growth will often occur on the surface.

Flow diagram

Selection	Only ripe cucumbers should be selected
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Wash	In clean water
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Mix with salt	1kg salt for 15-20kg of cucumbers
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Ferment	For between one and four weeks
↓	
Package	

Packaging and storage

The pickle can now be packaged. Cucumber pickle is usually in clean jars and capped. This keeps well if stored in a cool place. Due to the high acid level of the final product, the risk of food poisoning is low. With *khalpi* in Nepal, oil is added.