

PICKLED VEGETABLES

Atchar

Atchar is a hot vegetable pickle eaten by many in Botswana. It is usually eaten with bread or rice.

Atchar from vegetables, is made from carrots, onions and cabbage (sometimes sweet peppers and green beans) stored in vinegar and oil. The main flavour of atchar is usually cayenne pepper (chilli), with salt and other spices being added.

Recipe

Ingredients needed for 7-8 jars of mild vegetable atchar (400g jars/glass bottles like those used for peanut butter)

750g	Carrots
600g	Cabbage
450g	Onions
750ml	Sunflower oil
300ml	Vinegar
72g	Cayenne pepper
15g	Ginger powder
40g	Salt
30g	Curry powder

Method

Wash all vegetables in cold water. Remove all rotten parts, skin, tops and tails, and discard them.

Grate the carrots using the large round holes on the grater.

Cut the onions and cabbage into thin pieces, approximately 5cm long. Do not use the core of the cabbage.

Wash the jars and lids and put them into a large saucepan. Fill the saucepan with water so that the jars and lids are covered and heat until the water boils. Let the water boil for about 5 minutes.

Put a little of the oil in a saucepan and add to this, the dry foods (cayenne pepper, salt, ginger powder and curry powder). Stir well and make sure that the oil does not burn. Keep stirring. If more oil is needed, add only from the amount you have measured out for the recipe.

Add the onions and heat quickly until they become soft (approximately 5 minutes).

Add the rest of the oil and vinegar. Stir well. You must have enough vinegar or the atchar will spoil.

Add the cabbage. Stir well. Heat for a further 5 minutes. Stir from time to time. Make sure the atchar does not burn.

Finally add the carrots and heat for a few minutes so that the carrots are slightly softened (about 5 minutes).

Fill the jars to 2cm from the top. Make sure that there is a layer of liquid from the atchar covering the vegetables, otherwise when the jar is opened, it will spoil.

Clean the outside of the rim of the jar and put on the lid. Close as tightly as possible.

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Slowly turn the jar upside down, so that any bacteria on the lid or in the space at the top of the jar are killed. Leave the jar upside down until it is cold.

When the jars are cold, test each lid to make sure it has a good seal.

Alternative recipes

The above recipe is for mild vegetable atchar.

For hot vegetable atchar use 120g of cayenne pepper.

For curried vegetable atchar use 90g curry powder and only 48g of cayenne pepper (6 packets).

Making mild vegetable atchar without using scales (not to be done if atchar is meant for sale).

6 coke cans	Carrots
6 coke cans	Cabbage
3 coke cans	Onions
3 ¾ teacups	Sunflower oil
1 ½ teacups	Vinegar
6 level tbs	Hot curry powder
9 packets	Cayenne powder
3 level tbs	Ginger powder
3 level tbs	Salt

tbs = tablespoon (next size up from a teaspoon or equal to three teaspoons)

For hot vegetable atchar follow the above recipe but use 15 packets of cayenne pepper.

For curried atchar follow the above recipe but use only 6 packets of cayenne pepper and 18 level tablespoons of curry powder.

Equipment required

2 large saucepans
Fire or stove
Grater
Scales
Large wooden spoon
Knife
Chopping board
Measuring jug or cup
Tablespoon

References and Further Reading

Pickled Cucumbers Technical Brief ITDG
Pickled Dry Salted Lime Technical Brief ITDG
Pickled Cabbage (Kimchi) Technical Brief ITDG
Pickled Fruit Technical Brief ITDG
Pickled Papaya Technical Brief ITDG
Preservation of Fruit and Vegetables: Agrodok 3, Agromisa 1997
Pickles of Bangladesh, ITDG Publishing 1994

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Useful Organisations and Contacts

Agromisa
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Web: <http://www.agralin.nl/agromisa>

Agromisa is a Dutch non-profit organisation affiliated with the Agricultural University of Wageningen in the Netherlands. Agromisa provides information and advice on small-scale sustainable agriculture and related topics in order to support and strengthen self-reliance of the rural populations in the South.

Useful Internet Sites

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations <http://www.fao.org/>

Humanity Libraries Online <http://www.humanitylibraries.net/>

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