

Curtido

Salvadoran fermented cabbage slaw - makes about 1 quart

Makes ~1 qt • Prep 15 min • Ferment 2-3 days • El Salvador

INGREDIENTS

The slaw

- 1/2 medium green cabbage, finely shredded
- 2 carrots, grated
- 1/2 white onion, thinly sliced
- 1 jalapeno, thinly sliced (optional)
- 1 tbsp dried oregano

The brine

- 2 cups warm water
- 1 tbsp fine sea salt (non-iodized)
- (For a quick version: 1 cup water + 1 cup white vinegar + 1 tbsp salt)

METHOD

1. Toss the shredded cabbage, carrot, onion, jalapeno, and oregano together in a large bowl.
2. Pack the vegetables tightly into a clean quart jar, pressing down as you go to remove air pockets.
3. Stir the salt into the warm water until dissolved, let it cool, then pour over the vegetables until submerged. Weigh them down so nothing floats above the brine.
4. Cover loosely and leave at room temperature 2 to 3 days, until pleasantly sour and lightly fizzy. Taste daily - the flavor deepens as it ferments.
5. Once it tastes right, seal and refrigerate. It keeps for weeks and only gets better.
6. For a quick version, skip the ferment: use the vinegar brine, chill at least 1 hour, and serve.

Tip • Use non-iodized salt and keep everything under the brine - submerged vegetables ferment cleanly, while anything poking out can spoil. When in doubt, add a small weight.