

Lacto-fermented Dilly Beans

Green beans are transformed into a tangy, crunchy, flavorful snack or side dish when they are made into dilly beans.

Instead of the more common vinegar preservation, lacto-fermenting produces lactic acid which not only gives dilly beans their ubiquitous tang, but also preserves them without canning so that they will keep in cold storage for months with all their enzymes and vitamins intact.

Ingredients:

- 2 quarts water
- 4-6 tablespoons sea salt
- 1 pound young green beans, trimmed
- 2 tablespoons red pepper flakes, or to taste
- 4 garlic cloves, peeled and smashed
- 1 teaspoon black peppercorns
- 2 large handfuls of dill (flowering heads preferred, but leaves work well too)

Instructions:

1. Dissolve sea salt in water to make a brine. Set aside.
2. Divide the red pepper flakes, garlic cloves, peppercorns, and dill between 2 quart-size glass jars.
3. Place the green beans on top of the seasonings, straight up if they are long and thin or sideways if thicker and cut into chunks. Cover with brine solution, leaving 1 inch headspace at the top of jar.
4. Cover the jar with a tight lid, airlock lid, or coffee filter secured with a rubber band.
5. Culture at room temperature (60-70°F is preferred) until desired flavor and texture are achieved. If using a tight lid, burp daily to release excess pressure.
6. Once the beans are finished, put a tight lid on the jar and move to cold storage.

Makes 2 quarts.