

Lemon Pickle

Learn how to make authentic Indian lemon pickle at home with this easy recipe. Tangy, spicy, and bursting with flavor - perfect condiment for any meal.

10 min

PREP

20 min

COOK

30 min

TOTAL

4

SERVINGS

Easy

DIFFICULTY

Lemon Pickle

Ingredients

- 2 lemon
- 1 red chilli
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp mustard
- 1 tsp cumin
- 3 tbsp powdered sugar
- 1 pinch sea salt
- 5 leaf curry

Instructions

- 1 Prepare the lemons**

Wash 2 lemons thoroughly under cold running water and pat completely dry with paper towels. Cut each lemon into 8 wedges, then cut each wedge into small bite-sized pieces, removing any seeds as you go.
- 2 Mix with salt**

Place the chopped lemons in a large bowl and sprinkle with 1 teaspoon salt. Mix well with your hands, squeezing the lemon pieces gently to release their juices. Set aside for 10 minutes to allow the salt to draw out moisture.
- 3 Heat the oil and spices**

Heat 3 tablespoons oil in a heavy-bottomed pan over medium heat until shimmering, about 2 minutes. Add 2 tablespoons mustard seeds and fry until they begin to pop and splutter, about 30 seconds.
- 4 Add aromatics**

Add 5 curry leaves to the hot oil and fry for 30 seconds until they become crisp and fragrant. Add 1 tablespoon turmeric powder and stir constantly for 10 seconds until fragrant but not burnt.
- 5 Cook the pickle**

Add the salted lemon pieces along with any accumulated juices to the pan. Add 1 pinch sugar and stir to combine all ingredients. Cook over medium-low heat for 12-15 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the lemons are tender and the mixture is slightly reduced.
- 6 Cool and store**

Remove from heat and let cool completely to room temperature, about 30 minutes. Transfer to a clean, dry glass jar and seal tightly. Store in the refrigerator for at least 3 days before serving to allow flavors to develop.

Tips

Choose firm, thick-skinned lemons that feel heavy for their size. Meyer lemons work exceptionally well due to their sweeter flavor profile and thinner skin that pickles faster.

Ensure all equipment, jars, and utensils are completely dry before starting. Even small amounts of moisture can cause the pickle to spoil or develop unwanted bacteria.

Dry roast whole spices like cumin and mustard seeds before grinding them. This extra step significantly enhances their flavor and aroma in the finished pickle.

Use only non-reactive containers like glass or ceramic for storage. Metal containers will react with the acidic pickle, creating off-flavors and potentially harmful compounds.

Allow the pickle to ferment in a warm place for faster development. A sunny windowsill or the top of your refrigerator provides ideal conditions for proper fermentation.

Always use a clean, dry wooden or plastic spoon when serving. Avoid metal spoons as they can react with the pickle's acidity and create a metallic taste.

Be patient with the fermentation process. While the pickle can be eaten after a few days, the best flavors develop after at least one week of proper aging.

Store extra lemon juice from the recipe separately and add it if the pickle seems too dry during the fermentation process. This helps maintain the proper moisture balance.