

Tsukemono

Learn to make traditional Japanese Tsukemono pickled vegetables with daikon, cucumber, and cabbage. Quick 4-hour recipe with authentic flavors.

15 min

PREP

4h

COOK

4h 15min

TOTAL

4

SERVINGS

Easy

DIFFICULTY

Tsukemono

Ingredients

- 1 cucumber
- 1 cabbage
- 4 tbsp sea salt
- 1 cup rice vinegar
- 2 tbsp granulated sugar
- 1 pcs kombu
- 1 tsp chili flakes

Instructions

- 1 Prepare the vegetables**

Slice the daikon radish into 2mm thick rounds. Cut the cucumber into 3mm diagonal slices. Chop the napa cabbage into 2-inch pieces.
- 2** Place all vegetables in a large mixing bowl and sprinkle with 4 tablespoons salt. Toss thoroughly with your hands to coat all pieces evenly.
- 3** Let the salted vegetables stand for 45 minutes until they release significant liquid and feel soft to the touch.
- 4** Drain the liquid from the bowl and squeeze the vegetables firmly with clean hands to extract remaining moisture. Transfer to a clean kitchen towel and squeeze again until the vegetables are barely damp.
- 5 Make the pickling brine**

Whisk together 1 cup rice vinegar, 2 tablespoons sugar, and any sake in a small bowl until the sugar completely dissolves.
- 6** Add 1 teaspoon chili pepper flakes to the brine and stir to combine evenly.
- 7 Assemble and pickle**

Pack the squeezed vegetables tightly into a sterilized jar and nestle the kombu piece among the vegetables.
- 8** Pour the brine over the vegetables until they are completely submerged, leaving no air pockets.
- 9** Seal the jar tightly and refrigerate for a minimum of 4 hours. Shake the jar once after 2 hours to redistribute the brine.
- 10** Remove the kombu piece before serving and drain the vegetables briefly. Serve chilled as a side dish.

Tips

Use a mandoline slicer for uniformly thin vegetable cuts that pickle evenly and create professional-looking results.

Sterilize jars with boiling water before filling to prevent bacterial growth and extend storage life.

Remove the kombu after 24 hours if you prefer milder umami flavors, or leave it longer for more intensity.

Press vegetables firmly when squeezing out salt-drawn liquid to achieve the proper texture and prevent diluted brine.

Start with less chili pepper flakes and add more to taste, as heat levels can vary significantly between brands.

Reserve the pickling liquid to use again with fresh vegetables, building layers of flavor over multiple batches.

Avoid metal utensils when stirring, as they can react with acidic ingredients and create off flavors.