

Pickled Watermelon Rinds

How to Make Homemade Canned Pickled Watermelon Rinds

So, here's how to can pickled watermelon rinds! The directions are complete with instructions in easy steps and completely illustrated. In the winter when you open a jar, the pickled watermelon rinds will taste MUCH better than any store-bought Canned Pickled Watermelon Rinds!

The recipe is easy, but the you'll need to 2 days in total, as the rinds need to soak in brine for 3 to 4 hours, then are quickly cooked (10 minutes), then must rest in the fridge over night.

Prepared this way, the jars have a shelf life of about 12 months, and aside from storing in a cool, dark place, require no special attention.

Directions for Making Canned Pickled Watermelon Rinds

Yield: About 4 or 5 pints.

Ingredients

- 3 quarts (about 6 pounds) watermelon rind, unpared
- 3/4 cup salt
- 3 quarts water
- 2 quarts (2 trays) ice cubes
- 9 cups sugar (Yes, you may substitute Stevia or Splenda if that is your need or preference)
- 3 cups 5% vinegar, white
- 3 cups water
- 1 tablespoon (about 48) whole cloves
- 6 cinnamon sticks, 1 inch pieces
- 1 lemon, thinly sliced, with seeds removed

Equipment

At least 1 large pot
Large spoons and ladles
Ball jars (We do carry them here at our main greenhouse in Pleasantview)
Jar grabber (to pick up the hot jars)
Jar funnel
1 Water Bath Canner OR a pressure Canner (a large pressure pot with a lifting rack to sanitize the jars after filling about \$75 to \$200 at mall kitchen stores and "big box" stores, but it is cheaper online; see this page for more about pressure canners).
Watermelon Rind Pickles Recipe and Directions

Step 1

-Wash the watermelon

Step 2

- Make the brine solution

Make the brine by mixing the 3/4 cup salt with 3 quarts cold water. Stir well.

Step 3

- Prepare the watermelon

Trim the pink flesh and outer green skin from thick watermelon rind. Cut into 1 inch squares or fancy shapes as desired. You only want the white portion. Use the red for a delicious cool treat!

Step 4

- Brine the watermelon rind

Cover with the brine solution from step 3. Add the 2 trays (2 quarts worth) of ice cubes.

Let stand 3 to 4 hours, or overnight.

Step 5

- Prepare the seasoning mix

Combine

- 1 tablespoon (about 48) whole cloves
- 6 cinnamon sticks, 1 inch pieces tied in a clean, thin, white cloth.

Step 6

- Drain and rinse

After the 3 to 4 hours has elapsed, drain and then rinse in cold water and drain again.

Step 7

- Cook the watermelon rind

Cover the watermelon rind with cold water and cook until almost fork tender, about 10 minutes (do not overcook). Halfway through (after 5 minutes), add the sliced lemon.

Step 8

- Cook the seasoned syrup mix

While the watermelon rind is cooking, combine

- 9 cups sugar
- 3 cups 5% vinegar, white
- 3 cups water and the seasoning mix bag from step 6 in a large pot and boil for 5 minutes.

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Step 9

– Drain the watermelon rind and add to the seasoned syrup.

Drain the watermelon rind and add to the seasoned syrup solution from step 9 (remove the syrup from heat).

Step 10

– Chill overnight

Add the lemon slices. Let the watermelon rind and seasoned syrup stand overnight in the refrigerator.

Step 11

– Prepare the jars and canner

Wash the jars and lids. This is a good time to get the jars ready! The dishwasher is fine for the jars; especially if it has a “sanitize” cycle.

Otherwise put the jars in boiling water for 10 minutes. I just put the lids in a small pot of almost boiling water for 5 minutes

Get the canner heating up

Rinse out your canner, put the rack in the bottom, and fill it with hot tap water. (Of course, follow the instruction that came with the canner, if they are different). Put it on the stove over low heat just to get it heating up for later on.

Step 12

– Heat and prepare to can!

Heat the watermelon rind in syrup by bringing it to a boil. As soon as a boil is reached, turn down the heat to cook slowly for 1 hour.

Step 13

– Packing the watermelon rind in the canning jars

This is called “hot packing”! Fill the jars loosely, but be sure to leave 1/2-inch of space at the TOP of the jar. That is called “headspace” and is needed for expansion during heating in the water bath. To each jar add 1 piece of stick cinnamon from spice bag;

Step 14

– Pour boiling cooking liquid into each packed jar

Use a ladle or pyrex measuring cup to carefully fill each packed jar with the hot syrup solution, again allowing 1/2-inch headspace. The watermelon rind should be covered and there should still be 1/2- inch of airspace left in the top of each jar.

Be careful not to burn yourself, (or anyone else – children should be kept back during this step!)

Remove air bubbles and adjust headspace if needed. Wipe rims of jars with a dampened clean paper towel; adjust two-piece metal

canning lids.

Step 15

– Put the lids and rings on

Put the lids on each jar and seal them by putting a ring on and screwing it down snugly (but not with all your might, just “snug”).

Step 16

– Put the jars in the canner and the lid on the canner

Using the jar tongs, put the jars on the rack in the canner. Make sure the tops of the jars are covered by at least 1 inch of water.

Step 17

– Process for 10 minutes

Step 18

– Remove the jars

Lift the jars out of the water and let them cool on a wooden cutting board or a towel, without touching or bumping them in a draft-free place (usually takes overnight), here they won't be bumped. You can then remove the rings if you like, but if you leave them on, at least loosen them quite a bit, so they don't rust in place due to trapped moisture. Once the jars are cool, you can check that they are sealed verifying that the lid has been sucked down. Just press in the center, gently, with your finger. If it pops up and down (often making a popping sound), it is not sealed. If you put the jar in the refrigerator right away, you can still use it. Some people replace the lid and reprocess the jar, then that's a bit iffy. If you heat the contents back up, re-jar them (with a new lid) and the full time in the canner, it's usually ok. You're done!