RECIPE

Oregano and black pepper pickled red onions

A snack-shelf condiment of thin red onion scalded for 10 seconds, then pickled in a warm distilled-vinegar brine with oregano, black pepper and 2 teaspoons of sugar for the jar, kept in the fridge and not canned.

MAKES

8 servings US Metric

TOTAL

1 h 15 min

Ingredients

- [ ] 2 medium red onions, peeled and sliced thin
- [ ] ¾ cup distilled white vinegar
- [ ] ¾ cup water, for the brine
- [ ] 2 tsp sugar
- [ ] 1 tsp salt
- [ ] ½ tsp dried oregano leaves
- [ ] ¼ tsp black pepper
- [ ] 1 cup just-boiled water, to scald the onions in a colander

Method

1. Peel the onions and slice them into thin half-moons, about ⅛ inch (3 mm). A sharp knife is enough; you should get about 1¾ to 2 cups.
2. Put the slices in a colander in the sink. Pour 1 cup of just-boiled water over them, slowly, for about 10 seconds. Rinse them under cold running water for 20 seconds and shake them dry. This takes the raw bite off.
3. Pack the onions into a 1-quart glass jar.
4. In a small saucepan over low heat, warm the ¾ cup of water with the sugar and salt for about 2 minutes, stirring, only until the grains are gone. It should be warm to the touch, never steaming or simmering. Take it off the heat and stir in the vinegar, oregano and pepper.

5 Pour the warm brine over the onions and press them down with a spoon until they are under the brine. Put the lid on and set the jar straight in the fridge; it does not sit out to cool first.

6 Refrigerate. Do not leave the jar out more than 2 hours (1 hour above 90 °F). The onions are pink and ready to eat after about 1 hour; they are better after a night.

7 Serves 8: a ¼-cup spoonful of onions with a little brine, as a condiment. Keep the jar in the fridge up to 2 weeks (our kitchen practice; we hold no published source for it yet), the onions under the brine. This is a refrigerator pickle: do not can it, and do not keep it on the shelf, because the brine is not tested for canning.