

How to Make Sauerkraut

Sauerkraut was traditionally produced by European peasants to preserve the harvest for the less productive, colder months of the year. Whilst its main purpose was to keep hunger at bay during the winter months, it delivered added benefits of providing optimal nourishment too - the process of lactic acid fermentation increases vitamins (particularly Bs & C), food enzymes and beneficial bacteria. Nowadays, the health benefits of eating fermented foods such as sauerkraut are widely acknowledged, and what was once deemed to be humble peasant food is now considered to be a powerhouse of super nutrients.

Ingredients:

2 medium cabbage heads cored and finely shredded

2 tablespoons sea salt

Glass jar with lid / sauerkraut crock or vegetable fermenter

Useful Resources:

The Art of Fermentation by Sandor Katz



Method:

1. Place the cabbage and salt in a large mixing bowl and massage them together thoroughly, using your hands (gloves optional).
2. When the cabbage starts to become limp and release its juice, transfer it to a sauerkraut crock or vegetable fermenter. Pack in the salted cabbage as tightly as possible, until the cabbage is completely covered by the liquid and tightly secure the lid. Getting vegetables submerged is the most critical factor to fermentation so you may need to use a weight to force them down to keep them submerged or add more water during the process if necessary.
3. When fermenting in a jar, remember the fermentation process generates carbon dioxide, which will build pressure in the jar, so release this daily, or as needed.
4. Allow to sit at room temperature undisturbed. After only 2-3 days, the vegetables will begin to transform, but traditionally fermentation takes place for a season or longer – leave for at least 1 month and up to 6 months. When the sauerkraut tastes to your liking, transfer to the fridge where it should keep for at least 6 months and up to 1 year.

Variations:

You can try mixing red cabbage with white cabbage, or dark leafy vegetables rich in chlorophyll, such as kale, or adding extra flavour with radishes, carrots, celery root, onion, garlic, caraway seeds or juniper berries.