

Pickled Cantaloupe

Yield: about 4 half-pints

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| 5 pounds of 1-inch cantaloupe cubes (about 2 medium under-ripe* cantaloupe) | 1 teaspoon ground ginger |
| 1 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes | 4-1/2 cups cider vinegar (5%) |
| 2 one-inch cinnamon sticks | 2 cups water |
| 2 teaspoons ground cloves | 1-1/2 cups white sugar |
| | 1-1/2 cups packed light brown sugar |

*Select cantaloupe that are full size but almost fully green and firm to the touch in all areas including the stem area.

Day One:

1. Wash cantaloupe and cut into halves; remove seeds. Cut into 1-inch slices and peel. Cut strips of flesh into 1-inch cubes. Weight out 5 pounds of pieces and place in large glass bowl.
2. Place red pepper flakes, cinnamon sticks, cloves and ginger in a spice bag and tie the ends firmly. Combine vinegar and water in a 4-quart stockpot. Bring to a boil, then turn heat off. Add spice bag to the vinegar-water mixture, and let steep for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
3. Pour hot vinegar solution and spice bag over melon pieces in the bowl. Cover with a food-grade plastic lid or wrap and let stand overnight in the refrigerator (about 18 hours).

Pickled Cantaloupe - Day Two

1. Wash and rinse pint canning jars; keep hot until ready to use. Prepare lids according to manufacturer's directions.
2. Carefully pour off vinegar solution into a large 8 to 10 quart saucepan and bring to a boil. Add sugar; stir to dissolve. Add cantaloupe and bring back to a boil. Lower heat to simmer until cantaloupe pieces turn translucent; about 1 to 1-1/4 hours.
3. Move cantaloupe pieces into a medium-sized stockpot, cover and set aside. Bring remaining liquid to a boil and boil an additional 5 minutes. Return cantaloupe to the liquid syrup, and bring back to a boil.
4. With a slotted spoon, fill hot cantaloupe pieces into clean, hot pint jars, leaving 1-inch headspace. Cover with boiling hot syrup, leaving 1/2-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles and adjust headspace if needed. Wipe rims of jars with a dampened clean paper towel; apply two-piece metal canning lids.
5. Process pint jars in either a boiling water or steam canner for 15 minutes between 0-1,000 feet elevation, 20 minutes between 1,001-6,000 feet, and 25 minutes above 6,000 feet.
6. Remove jars from canner. Let cool, undisturbed, 12-24 hours and check for seals. Clean and label jars. Store sealed jars in a cool, dry, dark location.

Source: USDA Guide to Home Canning, 2015