



KIMCHI

Makes: 1 x 1L JAR

Kimchi is the national dish of Korea and Koreans eat close to 20 kilograms of it each year. They say their good health and vigor comes from having this fermented super food every day. Every region and each season has a slightly different version but at its heart kimchi is very similar to its European cousin sauerkraut. I am a huge fan of kimchi and enjoy it on the side with many Asian dishes; it also works well with eggs for breakfast and with burgers when mixed with homemade mayonnaise.

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**600g Chinese cabbage (wong bok)
130g choy sum, cut into 5 cm pieces
3 spring onions, thinly sliced
½ bunch of coriander, stalks, roots and leaves, finely chopped
1 long red chillies, deseeded and finely chopped
1 long red chilli, halved length-ways and deseeded**

**2 tablespoons (33 g) fine Himalayan or sea salt
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
2 ½ cm (1 inch) piece of ginger cut into thin strips
1 - 2 tablespoon Korean chilli powder (gochugaru - see note)
1 tablespoon fish sauce**

You will need a 1 litre preserving jar with an airlock lid for this recipe.

Wash the jar and all the utensils you will be using in very hot water or run them through a hot rinse cycle in the dishwasher.

Remove the outer leaves of the cabbage. Choose one, wash it well and set aside. Cut the cabbage in half length-ways, and then cut cross-ways into 5 cm pieces, discarding the root end.

Combine the cabbage, choy sum, spring onion, coriander and chopped and halved chillies in a large glass or stainless steel bowl and sprinkle on the salt. Mix well and gently massage with your hands for 10 minutes to release some liquid. Add the garlic, ginger, chilli powder and fish sauce. Mix well to combine.

Fill the prepared jar with the vegetable mixture, pressing down well with a large spoon or potato masher to remove any air pockets. Leave 2 cm of room free at the top. The vegetables should be completely submerged in the liquid; add some filtered water if necessary.

Fold the clean cabbage leaf, place it on top of the cabbage mixture and then add the weights to keep everything submerged. Close the lid, then wrap a tea towel around the side of the jar to block out the light. Store in a dark place with a temperature of 16–23°C for at least 12–14 days. (Place the jar in an insulated cool box to maintain a more consistent temperature.) Different vegetables have different culturing times and the warmer it is the shorter the time needed. The longer you leave the jar, the higher the level of good bacteria and the tangier the flavour.

Chill before eating. Once opened, the kimchi will last for up to 2 months in the fridge when kept submerged in the liquid. Unopened, it will keep for up to 9 months in the fridge.

Note: Korean chilli powder has smoky, fruity, sweet notes and a hot kick. It is available from Asian grocers.