



SAUERKRAUT

Makes: 1 x 1L JAR

In my perfect world, people would give jars of homemade sauerkraut as a gift for birthdays, Christmas and Valentine's Day instead of boxes of sugar-laden chocolates! Real fermented sauerkraut (not the stuff on the supermarket shelf that isn't refrigerated) is the simplest and most effective way to create good gut health. On top of that, fermented veggies are dirt cheap to make and absolutely delicious.

SAUERKRAUT

1 star anise

1 teaspoon whole cloves

**800 g cabbage
(green or red, or a mix of the two)**

**2 tablespoons (33 g)
fine Himalayan or sea salt**

1 ½ teaspoons caraway seeds

1 tablespoon juniper berries

1 small handful dill, roughly chopped

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.

Place the star anise and cloves in a small piece of muslin, tie into a bundle and set aside. Remove the outer leaves of the cabbage. Choose one of the outer leaves, wash it well and set aside. Shred the cabbage in a food processor or slice by hand or with a mandolin, then place in a large glass or stainless steel bowl.

Sprinkle the salt, caraway seeds and juniper berries and dill over the cabbage.

Mix well and gently massage with your hands for 10 minutes to release some liquid.

Fill the prepared jar with the cabbage mix, pressing down firmly between each addition with a large spoon or potato masher to remove any air pockets. Leave 2 cm of room free at the top. The cabbage should be completely submerged in the liquid, so add some filtered water if necessary.

Take the clean cabbage leaf, fold it up and place it on top of the mixture, 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 days and up to 2 weeks. (You can 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 to ferment, the greater the level of good bacteria will be present. It's up to you how long you leave it – some people prefer the tangier flavour that comes with extra fermenting time, while others prefer a milder flavour.

Remove muslin bag of spices when the desired flavour has been reached. Chill before eating. Once opened, it will last for up to 2 months in the fridge when kept submerged in the liquid. If unopened, it will keep for up to 9 months in the fridge.