

OLD MAN'S SALSA - LEVEL 01 (JALAPENOS)

This one is an amalgamation of MANY things. I think I did this one fairly early in my foray into fermentation. It is one of the handful of things I have made that I am actually really proud of. It takes a little bit o' time, but it is worth it!

INGREDIENTS

FERMENTATION STAGE

<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Item</u>
1	N.U.	Green Pepper
1	N.U.	Yellow Pepper
1	N.U.	Red Pepper
8	N.U.	Decent Sized Jalapeno Peppers
4	N.U.	Shallots
2	TBSP	Minced Fresh Garlic
3 1/4	TBSP	Brining Salt

The general goal is to get about 8 oz. each of the above ingredients, except the garlic and salt. I really should get a weight for the garlic; maybe next time I make it. The brining salt should be a good quality salt with no additives. I use Morton's Canning and Pickling Salt, but I have seen other people use a variety of brands and types. By the way, the amount of salt listed is approximate. The actual amount is at least 1.5% by weight of the veggies.

FINISHING STAGE

<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Item</u>
~1 3/4	lb	Roma Tomatoes
8	TBSP	Fresh Chopped Cilantro

You need enough tomatoes for 3 cups diced. Yes, the pictures show Beefsteaks, but at a later point I realized I like the Romas a bit better.

SPECIAL TOOLS

- Wine Cooler [i]
- (Qty. 2) quart sized, wide-mouthed Ball jars [ii]
- (Qty. 2) Easy Fermenter Fermentation Lids [iii]
- (Qty. 4) Easy Fermenter Fermentation Weights [iii]
- Good Quality Wood tamper

- (Qty. 2) Quart ZipLoc Freezer Bags
- Digital Kitchen Scale [iv]
- 9" x 13 " Pyrex Baking Dish
- Cheese cloth
- Medium Binders Clips [vi]

PREPARATION

FERMENTATION STAGE

1. Rinse veggies and pat dry
2. Weigh a largish glass bowl and record the weight [v]
3. Chop all the veggies and mix together in the glass bowl with a wood spoon
4. Weigh the largish glass bowl plus the veggies and subtract the weight of the bowl from step 2 to get the weight of the veggies
5. Calculate the amount of bringing salt you need by
 - a. $\text{Weight of Salt} = 1.5\% \text{ of Weight of Veggies}$
6. Weigh out the brining salt
7. Mix in the brining salt into the veggie a little bit at a time, stirring with a wood spoon.
8. Mix the salt / veggie mixture for about 2 minutes after the last of the salt has been mixed in
9. Spread the veggie mix in a glass baking dish
10. Cover with cheese cloth and secure with the binder clips
11. Let sit overnight [vii]
12. Cut the ZipLoc's off the ZipLoc bags
13. Cut the ZipLoc bags in half at the seam at the bottom. These will be your followers [viii]
14. Divide the salsa evenly, including the brine, between the 1-quart wide mouth jars [ix]
15. Tamp down the salsa (with the wood tamper) until it is compacted and under the brine
16. Place the first followers in each jar so that it evenly covers the veggies across the entire surface area and comes up the sides of the jar
17. Place the first weights on top of the followers
18. Place the second followers in each jar on top of the first weight so that it evenly covers the entire area and comes up the sides of the jar
19. Place the second weights on top of the second followers
20. Press down gently so that all the veggies are submerged below the brine
21. Put the lids on the jars and the jars in the wine coolers set for 65 deg. F.
22. Allow the salsa to ferment for 28 days at about 65 deg. F.

FINISHING STAGE

1. Dice the tomatoes and let drain for about 15 minutes
2. Chop the cilantro
3. Remove the fermenting veggies from the wine cooler and put in a largish glass bowl
4. Stir in the tomatoes and cilantro with a wood spoon
5. Cover the bowl with cheese cloth and let sit for 15 minutes

6. Stir everything again with a wood spoon
7. Divide the salsa evenly, including the brine, between the 1-quart wide mouth jars [ix] and tamp it down
8. Put the Easy Fermenter lids on the jars (no weights and followers this time) and put the jars in the fridge for about 1 week
9. After about a week, you can put the regular lids on the jars if you need the Easy Fermenter Lids for something else
10. ENJOY!

NOTES

- i. Not 100% necessary as long as you have a cool, dark place to put the salsa while it ferments. The wine coolers make it pretty easy to maintain the temperature and not have to worry about fluctuations.
- ii. Wouldn't hurt to have an extra one on hand in case you have just a little too much veggies to allow for headroom in the jars, but (Qty. 2) should do the job for this amount of salsa. Same goes for the fermentation lids and weights.
- iii. There are a variety of options out there, but I like the Easy Fermenter Brand. The lids have a special little waterless airlock valve that lets CO2 out and prevents air from getting in while keeping a profile no higher than the lid itself. These fit into my wine coolers perfectly.
- iv. If you don't have a digital kitchen scale, GET ONE!
- v. Most digital scales have a tare function, but most digital scales also have an auto off function. Recording the weight of the bowl hedges our bets in the event that the scale shuts off before you get all of the veggies in (which will happen).
- vi. Yes, I said binder clips. I LOVE these things. They are perfect for securing the cheese cloth over the glass baking dish
- vii. The house smelled FANTASTIC while this was sitting out overnight
- viii. Non-plastic alternatives are grape leaves, outer cabbage leaves, etc. Fresh grape leaves might be hard to find in most grocery stores, but you should be able to find cabbage
- ix. If you want to be REALLY precise, strain the solids then weigh the solids and the liquid and divide by 2 to determine how much of each to put in each jar

PICTURES















