

## Bright & Zingy: Pickled Watermelon with Lemon & Jalapeño

Pickled Watermelon: Your New Zesty, Tangy Summer Obsession!



**TIME**  
**10 min**

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**ChefManiac**

### INGREDIENTS

Watermelon (enough to fill a quart-sized jar, after rind is removed and cubed)

12 lemons (medium-sized)

1-2 jalapeños (adjust for heat preference)

2 cups water

1 tablespoon pickling salt (or non-iodized salt, like Kosher salt or sea salt)

Swaps and Notes:

**Watermelon:** Choose a firm, ripe watermelon. This recipe uses the pink/red flesh, not the rind (though you can pickle watermelon rind separately!).

**Lemons:** Using 12 lemons ensures you have plenty of slices for flavor and juice for the brine. Organic or unwaxed lemons are preferred since the rind is included.

**Jalapeños:** Adjust the number of jalapeños (and whether you include seeds) based on your desired level of heat. For a milder relish, remove seeds; for more heat, leave them in. You can also add a few slices of other hot peppers for complexity.

**Pickling Salt:** It's crucial to use pickling salt, Kosher salt, or other non-iodized salt for pickling. Iodine in regular table salt can cause cloudy brine and affect the texture and flavor of your pickles.

**Jar:** Use a clean, sterilized glass jar (a quart-sized mason jar is typical for this quantity)

with a tight-fitting lid. Sterilize by boiling for 10 minutes or running through a hot dishwasher cycle.

**Fermenting Weight (Optional but Recommended):** A fermenting weight or a sturdy piece of watermelon rind (scrubbed clean and cut to fit) is vital to keep the ingredients submerged and prevent mold formation.

**Directions:**

**Prepare Aromatics:** Start by slicing your lemons (thin rounds are great) and jalapeños (into thin rings or slices). Toss them into the bottom of a clean, sterilized quart-sized jar, creating a vibrant base.

**Prepare & Layer Watermelon:** Next, cut your watermelon into bite-sized pieces (about 1-inch cubes) and carefully remove all the green and white rind. Layer the juicy watermelon pieces on top of the lemon and jalapeño mix in the jar. Pack them in somewhat snugly, but don't crush them.

**Prepare Brine:** On the stovetop, in a small saucepan, bring the 2 cups of water to a boil. Once it's bubbling, stir in the 1 tablespoon of pickling salt. Keep stirring until the salt is fully dissolved, creating a clear brine.

**Pour Brine & Seal Jar:** Carefully pour that lovely hot brine over your watermelon, lemons, and jalapeños in the jar, ensuring all the solids are completely covered by the liquid. Secure the lid tightly and give it a gentle shake to make sure everything is covered and those pesky air bubbles are gone.

**Submerge Contents:** Pop the lid open. Use a fermenting weight (a glass disc designed to keep ferments submerged) or a hefty, clean piece of watermelon rind (cut to fit the jar opening) to keep all those goodies submerged under the brine. Trust me, this step is crucial for safe and successful pickling, preventing exposure to air which can lead to mold.

**Ferment:** Close the lid again (you can use an airlock lid if you have one, or a standard lid, burping daily). Let the magic happen! Allow the jar to ferment at room temperature (ideally between 65-75°F / 18-24°C) for at least 3-4 days. After a few days, taste it; if you want a stronger, more fermented flavor, let it ferment longer, or dig in right away if you're happy with the taste!

**Chill & Store:** Once you're happy with the taste, transfer the jar to the fridge. The cold temperature will significantly slow down the fermentation process. It'll stay fresh for up to 3 months in the refrigerator.

Enjoy this tangy snack alongside your favorite dishes or all on its own!:

#### Tips for Success:

**Cleanliness:** Always work with clean hands and sterilized jars to prevent unwanted bacterial growth.

**Submerged is Key:** Ensure all solids remain under the brine. Any pieces exposed to air are prone to mold.

**Taste Test Often:** Especially after the initial 3-4 days, taste the watermelon daily to find your preferred level of tanginess and fermentation.

**Burp Your Jar:** If using a standard lid, loosen it briefly once a day for the first week or two to release built-up gases. This is known as "burping" your jar.

**Don't Use Iodized Salt:** This is critical for successful fermentation.

#### Serving Suggestions and Pairings:

**Snack:** Enjoy it straight from the jar as a refreshing and zesty snack.

**Salads:** Add it to green salads, grain salads, or fruit salads for a surprising twist.

**Grilled Meats:** A fantastic accompaniment to grilled chicken, pork, or fish. The tang cuts through the richness beautifully.

**Tacos & Burgers:** Top your tacos, burgers, or hot dogs for a sweet-and-sour kick.

**Cheese Boards:** Offer it on a cheese board with creamy cheeses (like goat cheese or brie) for a delightful contrast.

**Cocktails:** A small piece can even be used as a garnish for summer cocktails (like a mojito or margarita!).

#### Storage and Leftover Tips:

## DIRECTIONS

- 1. Making :** Pickled Watermelon is a simple process of layering and brining, then letting time work its magic!
- 2. Prepare : Aromatics:** Start by slicing your lemons (thin rounds are great) and jalapeños (into thin rings or slices). Toss them into the bottom of a clean, sterilized quart-sized jar, creating a vibrant base.
- 3. Prepare & : Layer Watermelon:** Next, cut your watermelon into bite-sized pieces (about 1-inch cubes) and carefully remove all the green and white rind. Layer the juicy watermelon pieces on top of the lemon and jalapeño mix in the jar. Pack them in somewhat snugly, but don't crush them.
- 4. Prepare : Brine:** On the stovetop, in a small saucepan, bring the 2 cups of water to a boil. Once it's bubbling, stir in the 1 tablespoon of pickling salt. Keep stirring until the salt is fully dissolved, creating a clear brine.
- 5. Pour : Brine & Seal Jar:** Carefully pour that lovely hot brine over your watermelon, lemons, and jalapeños in the jar, ensuring all the solids are completely covered by the liquid. Secure the lid tightly and give it a gentle shake to make sure everything is covered and those pesky air bubbles are gone.
- 6. Submerge : Contents:** Pop the lid open. Use a fermenting weight (a glass disc designed to keep ferments submerged) or a hefty, clean piece of watermelon rind (cut to fit the jar opening) to keep all those goodies submerged under the brine. Trust me, this step is crucial for safe and successful pickling, preventing exposure to air which can lead to mold.

7. **Ferment:** Close the lid again (you can use an airlock lid if you have one, or a standard lid, burping daily). Let the magic happen! Allow the jar to ferment at room temperature (ideally between 65-75°F / 18-24°C) for at least 3-4 days. After a few days, taste it; if you want a stronger, more fermented flavor, let it ferment longer, or dig in right away if you're happy with the taste!
8. **Chill & : Store:** Once you're happy with the taste, transfer the jar to the fridge. The cold temperature will significantly slow down the fermentation process. It'll stay fresh for up to 3 months in the refrigerator.
9. **Tips for Success: Cleanliness:** Always work with clean hands and sterilized jars to prevent unwanted bacterial growth.
10. **Submerged is : Key:** Ensure all solids remain under the brine. Any pieces exposed to air are prone to mold.
11. **Taste : Test Often:** Especially after the initial 3-4 days, taste the watermelon daily to find your preferred level of tanginess and fermentation.
12. **Burp : Your Jar:** If using a standard lid, loosen it briefly once a day for the first week or two to release built-up gases. This is known as "burping" your jar.
13. **Don't : Use Iodized Salt:** This is critical for successful fermentation.
14. **Serving Suggestions and Pairings:** Pickled Watermelon is an incredibly versatile condiment that brings a unique sweet, tangy, and spicy flair to a variety of dishes:
15. **Snack:** Enjoy it straight from the jar as a refreshing and zesty snack.
16. **Salads:** Add it to green salads, grain salads, or fruit salads for a surprising twist.
17. **Grilled : Meats:** A fantastic accompaniment to grilled chicken, pork, or fish. The tang cuts through the richness beautifully.
18. **Tacos & : Burgers:** Top your tacos, burgers, or hot dogs for a sweet-and-sour kick.
19. **Cheese : Boards:** Offer it on a cheese board with creamy cheeses (like goat cheese or brie) for a delightful contrast.
20. **Cocktails:** A small piece can even be used as a garnish for summer cocktails (like a mojito or margarita!).
21. For other bright and fresh summer flavors, you might also enjoy my [This Blueberry Lemonade Is My Favorite Refreshing Drink for Sunny Days](#) or my vibrant [Refreshing Strawberry Mojito Recipe \(Perfect For!\)](#).
22. **Storage and Leftover Tips:** Once transferred to the refrigerator, your Pickled Watermelon will stay fresh for up to 3 months. The cold temperature significantly slows down the fermentation process. Always use clean utensils when removing pieces from the jar.
23. **More Recipes You Will Love:** If you loved the unique flavor and the satisfaction of making your own condiments, here are a few more fantastic recipes that I think you'll absolutely love:
24. For another tangy homemade condiment with a kick, try

my Zesty Jalapeno Relish.

25. If you enjoy the process of home preserving fruit, my Homemade Chokecherry Jelly is a delightful sweet option.

## SWAPS & NOTES

**Watermelon:** Choose a firm, ripe watermelon.

This recipe uses the pink/red flesh, not the rind (though you can pickle watermelon rind separately!).

**Lemons:** Using 12 lemons ensures you have plenty of slices for flavor and juice for the brine.

Organic or unwaxed lemons are preferred since the rind is included.

## TIPS FOR SUCCESS

**Cleanliness:** Always work with clean hands and sterilized jars to prevent unwanted bacterial growth.

**Submerged is Key:** Ensure all solids remain under the brine.

Any pieces exposed to air are prone to mold.

**Taste Test Often:** Especially after the initial 3-4 days, taste the watermelon daily to find your preferred level of tanginess and fermentation.

**More recipes:** [ChefManiac.com](https://chefmaniac.com)

Original recipe: <https://chefmaniac.com/bright-zingy-pickled-watermelon-with-lemon-jalapeno/>