

## How I Make This Irresistible Tangy Pickled Garlic and Herb Cheese Spread

Pickled garlic adds bold, tangy flavor:



**TIME**  
**10 min**

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**ChefManiac**

### INGREDIENTS

8 oz cream cheese, softened  
... cup pickled garlic, finely chopped (I like to give it a good mince for even flavor distribution)  
1 tbsp pickled garlic brine  
2 tbsp fresh herbs (parsley, dill, or chives), chopped  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp black pepper  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp red pepper flakes (optional, but I almost always add them)  
Crackers, toasted bread slices, or pita chips for serving

### DIRECTIONS

1. Start with Softened Cream Cheese: I make sure my cream cheese is at room temperature before I start. It makes mixing a lot easier and creates a smoother spread. If I forget to take it out ahead of time, I microwave it for about 10 seconds - just enough to soften it without melting.
2. Chop the Pickled Garlic Finely: This step matters. Large chunks of pickled garlic can be overpowering in a bite, so I chop it as finely as possible. The brine-soaked garlic adds a perfect tang, and smaller pieces mix more evenly into the spread.
3. Mix Everything Until Smooth: In a mixing bowl, I combine the cream cheese, chopped pickled garlic, brine, herbs, black pepper, and red pepper flakes (if using). I use a rubber spatula and fold everything together until it's smooth and uniform. It should look speckled with herbs and tiny pieces of garlic.
4. Chill to Let the Flavors Mingle: I cover the bowl and let the mixture chill for at least 30 minutes. This step makes all the difference - the flavors meld beautifully, and the texture firms up just enough to make spreading easier.
5. Serve with Your Favorite Dippers: Right before serving, I give it a final stir and transfer it to a small serving bowl. I like to surround it with a mix of crackers, crostini, and even slices of fresh baguette. It also pairs wonderfully with crisp vegetables like cucumber rounds or carrot sticks if I'm trying to balance indulgence with freshness.

