



# SWEET AND SAVORY HERB GARDEN RECIPES

Recipes to celebrate plants at the  
Garfield Park Conservatory

A digital resource developed by

GARFIELD PARK  
CONSERVATORY  
ALLIANCE 

to supplement the VAMONDE Herb Tour

Photo by Suzy Hazelwood from Pexels



# Growing Herbs at Home and at the Conservatory

One of our most amazing rooms in the Conservatory is the Sugar from the Sun room. In this room, we set out to answer the question: how do plants make sugar? But what also makes this room special is that most of the plants make foods humans can eat. We've assembled this recipe booklet to feature several of our tastiest plants. To find out more about the plants featured in each of these recipes, you can find our digital tour on [vamonde.com](http://vamonde.com)!

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Photo by Brandon LaGrone

# Fruit Pizza

Recipe adapted from Brandon LaGrone, Professional Chef and Nature Educator at Garfield Park Conservatory Alliance

Fruit pizza is an invention by our Nature Educator, Brandon LaGrone, and he's found it really helps kids try new fruits that they might not otherwise. Enjoy this no-bake sweet treat in the hot summer months when watermelon is at its peak ripeness.

Time: 30 minutes

Makes 4 - 5 servings

Ingredients:

- 1 medium to large watermelon
- 1 cup plain or vanilla yogurt (to make the pizza vegan use a dairy-free yogurt)
- 4 graham crackers
- 1 teaspoon dried mint or 2 sprigs fresh mint with stems removed
- 4 strawberries
- ½ cup blueberries

Directions:

1. Crush the graham crackers into crumbs.
2. Take a watermelon and cut wheels out of the watermelon.
3. Lay wheel on its side and cut rind off. (The rind can be saved for composting or turned into pickles.)
4. Take a butter knife and spread yogurt around side and top edge



- of the watermelon wheel in place of rind.
5. Place graham cracker crumbs around on the yogurt to create a crust.
  6. Cut watermelon into your favorite pizza slices.
  7. Cut strawberries into slices and blueberries in half.
  8. Use yogurt to set spots to place fruit. Use strawberries as pepperoni and blueberries as sausage.
  9. If using fresh mint, finely chop mint and sprinkle over the top of fruit pizza.
  10. Enjoy as a snack or refreshing dessert!







# Mint Lemonade

Recipe adapted from Brandon LaGrone, Professional Chef and Nature Educator at Garfield Park Conservatory Alliance

While you might not immediately think of adding mint to lemonade, it adds complexity and a burst of refreshing coolness to this classic drink.

Time: 40 minutes

Makes 8 - 10 servings

Ingredients:

- 6 - 8 lemons
- 6 - 10 mint leaves, with more for garnish
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of water, with more to taste

Directions:

1. Mix the sugar and water together.
2. Put the sugar water on a low heat pan to dissolve the sugar. Once the sugar is dissolved, remove from heat and let cool.
3. Cut the lemons in half and squeeze them, collecting their juice.
4. Remove any seeds from the lemon juice. If you want no pulp in the finished lemonade, use a strainer to remove the pulp now.
5. Once all lemons are squeezed, add both lemon juice and syrup to a pitcher.
6. Depending how lemony or sour you want the lemonade, pour in the amount of water you want.





7. When the pitcher is filled, mix in 6 to 10 mint leaves. Leave them in the pitcher for a while (about an hour in the fridge) if you want the mint flavor to be stronger.
8. Remove the mint leaves before serving. If you like extra lemon flavor, cut up some of the leftover lemons and use them to decorate the rims of glasses. We like to add in a sprig of fresh mint as a garnish to serve if you have extra!





# Mint & Watermelon Salad

This salad tastes like a bright summer day with all the refreshing flavors of mint and watermelon. Enjoy this on picnics or as a side for dinners.

Time: 15 minutes

Makes 3 - 4 servings

Ingredients:

- 1 medium seedless watermelon
- ¼ cup fresh mint
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 teaspoons sugar

Directions:

1. Cut up watermelon into chunks, removing the rind.
2. Chop the mint leaves. In a large bowl combine the mint and watermelon.
3. To make the dressing mix together the lemon juice, olive oil, and sugar in a small bowl until the sugar completely dissolves.
4. Drizzle the dressing onto the watermelon and mint. Serve fresh and enjoy!



Photo by Winona Albano-Bachtell



# Classic Pesto & a Pesto Formula

Recipe adapted from [Spanish Sabores](#)

The word "pesto" in Italian means "paste" or "spread." But the one that most of us think of when we imagine pesto is the classic Genovese pesto, made with pine nuts, Parmesan, and basil leaves. To use pesto, you can try it as a rub under the skin of a roasted chicken, a spread on crackers, or as a sauce for pasta.

Time: 25 minutes

Makes 6 - 8 servings

Ingredients:

- 4 cups basil leaves
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 2 tablespoons pine nuts
- 3 garlic cloves
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- ½ teaspoon salt and pepper
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese (see notes)

Note: Many of these ingredients can be subbed for others. For instance, if you can't have pine nuts you can replace them with garbanzo beans or sunflower seeds or pepitas. If freezing the pesto, omit Parmesan and add in after thawing.

Directions:

1. Add all ingredients except the grated Parmesan cheese to a food



Photo by Delia Van Zyl



processor.

2. Process the ingredients in pulses until the leaves have broken down and are finely minced. Make sure to stop before these get turned into a spread.
3. Add in the grated cheese and pulse until it is just incorporated.
4. Pesto can be stored in the fridge for up to 2 weeks. If the cheese is omitted, it can also be frozen in small tubs or an ice cube tray. When thawed, add in a small amount of cheese.

Pesto mixes can be made with almost any herbs! Follow the above instructions to make pesto using any combination below that sounds good. The basic formula you can use to experiment is:

- 2 cups green leaves (parsley, carrot tops, kale, mint, etc.)
- ½ cup of oil (olive oil, sunflower seed oil, etc.)
- ½ cup grating cheese (Parmesan, Reggiano, etc.)
- ¼ cup nuts or seeds (pine nuts, pistachios, walnuts, pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds, etc.)
- 4-8 garlic cloves (more or less depending on preference)
- ¼ cup lemon juice
- Salt and pepper to taste



Photo by Delia Van Zyl





Photo by Brandon LaGrone



Photo by Brandon LaGrone

# Basil Butter Salmon

Recipe adapted from Brandon LaGrone, Professional Chef and Nature Educator at Garfield Park Conservatory Alliance

This salmon comes out light and flaky, and the flavor of basil complements the delicate taste of the salmon.

Time: 30 minutes

Makes 2 - 3 servings

Ingredients:

- 2 salmon fillets
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted
- 1 teaspoon minced fresh basil (8-10 basil leaves, with extra for garnish)
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- Pinch of salt and pepper

Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F.
2. Mix melted butter, basil, lemon juice, salt and pepper.
3. Remove bones from the salmon fillet, if necessary. Lay the fish on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper or aluminum foil.
4. Spoon the butter and basil mix onto the salmon.
5. Put the fish into the oven on the middle rack. Cook until fish begins to flake easily, between 10 and 15 minutes.
6. Serve with lemon wedges for garnish and a few basil leaves.



# Basil & Watermelon Agua Fresca

Recipe adapted from [The Kitchn](#)

In many Central American countries fruit juice and water blends are known as "agua fresca" or "fresh water". When you taste this on a hot summer day it's easy to understand this name because it's so refreshing.

Time: 15 minutes

Makes 5 - 6 servings

Ingredients:

- 1 medium seedless watermelon
- 4 - 6 Fresh basil leaves, more for garnish
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice

Directions:

1. First cut the watermelon into chunks, removing the rind.
2. Add the watermelon cubes to the blender along. Add in 4-6 fresh basil leaves and lemon juice.
3. Run the blender until all the ingredients are smooth. If your blender is having a hard time, you can add several tablespoons of water to start the blending.
4. Serve chilled with an extra basil leaf for garnish. Enjoy your refreshing summer drink!



Photo by Delia Van Zyl

# Taco Seasoning

Recipe adapted from Brandon LaGrone, Professional Chef and Nature Educator at Garfield Park Conservatory Alliance

Taco seasoning doesn't take much to make and this mix will make many servings down the road. You may find that some of the ingredients are cheaper from the bulk section in your grocery store.

Time: 10 minutes

Makes 30 - 40 servings

Ingredients:

- 1/3 cup salt
- 5 tablespoons granulated garlic
- 1/2 cup paprika
- 1 1/2 tablespoon dried oregano
- 1 1/2 tablespoon dried thyme
- 2 1/2 tablespoons cumin
- 2 teaspoons onion powder
- 3 1/2 tablespoons black pepper

Directions:

1. Mix all together in a mixing bowl.
2. After well mixed, seal, label and store until needed.
3. Use this as a seasoning for making taco meats or beans, fajitas, shrimp, grilling vegetables, and salad dressing.



Photo from Pxhere.com



# Oregano Bloody Mary (Virgin)

Recipe adapted from Brandon LaGrone, Professional Chef and Nature Educator at Garfield Park Conservatory Alliance

While this drink has a lot of steps, the final product is well worth the effort! For an adult beverage, consider adding in a measure of a clear liquor like vodka.

Time: 40 minutes

Makes 4 - 5 servings

Ingredients:

For the juice:

- 4 celery stalks with leaves, more for garnishing
- 3 teaspoons horseradish
- 4 garlic cloves
- 1 small chopped onion
- 2 seeded and chopped Serrano peppers
- 2 tablespoons fresh oregano leaves
- 2 - 3 dashes of Worcestershire sauce
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 2 teaspoons celery salt
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 3 limes, juiced
- 1 64oz bottle of tomato juice
- Recommended 15 dashes of Tabasco sauce (we used 5 dashes of



Photo by Brandon LaGrone

Widow Maker, an extreme but flavorful hot sauce.  
Add more later if you desire more heat)

- Optional: clear liquor like vodka

For each garnish:

- 5 grape tomatoes
- 2 flour tortillas
- ¼ tablespoon butter
- 1 oz shredded cheddar
- 1 oz shredded mozzarella
- Dash of chili powder
- Dash of cumin
- Dash of salt
- Celery stalk
- 1 lime wedge

For the rims of the glasses:

- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- (The above ingredients can be replaced with a tablespoon of Tajin seasoning)
- 1 lime wedge

Directions:

Making the drink mix:

1. Chop the celery coarsely and place in a food processor. Use the processor to puree the celery.



2. To the food processor, add the horseradish, garlic, onions, peppers, oregano, Worcestershire, salt, celery salt, paprika, lime juice and hot sauce. Process all ingredients until smooth.
3. Pour tomato juice into serving pitcher, add the processed ingredients, and mix well. Then cover and chill in refrigerator.

Rimming the glasses:

4. Place Tajin or mix chili powder, paprika and salt in a small saucer.
5. Use lime wedge to moisten the rim of drinking glass.
6. Dip rim of glass into saucer mix and turn slightly to



coat. Let the glasses dry while making garnish.

Making the garnish:

7. Heat skillet or flat-top to a medium-high heat.
8. Mix cheddar, mozzarella, cumin, chili powder, and salt.
9. Let butter melt in skillet, and place tortillas. When slightly cooked, flip and add cheese mix to one tortilla and let cook for a minute or two.
10. Place second tortilla on top of cheese and flip to let cheese melt. Once ready, cut into 4 pieces.

Building the Bloody Mary:

11. Pour chilled mix into rimmed glass. (Adults could add a bit of adult beverage to glass should one decide, about a shot of vodka if one chooses.)
12. Take a long wood skewer and alternate grape tomato and quesadilla starting with grape tomato. Then place in glass.
13. Add celery stalk and lime wedge to rim and it's ready to enjoy!



Photo by Brandon LaGrone



Photo by Brandon LaGrone



# Lemon Greek Potatoes

Recipe adapted from Brandon LaGrone, Professional Chef and Nature Educator at Garfield Park Conservatory Alliance

These potatoes are sort of a show stealer and we swear they will have no competition no matter what you serve them with!

Time: 1 ½ hours

Makes 6 - 8 servings

Ingredients:

- 6 - 7 russet potatoes
- 1 ½ cups chicken or vegetable broth
- ½ cup olive oil
- ¼ cup lemon juice
- 3 cloves of garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon dry oregano (if using fresh, double this amount)
- 1 tablespoon semolina flour
- 1 teaspoon of salt (or add to taste)
- Fresh parsley and lemon wedges for garnish

Directions:

1. Preheat oven at 400°F.
2. Peel and cut the potatoes into halves or quarters. Place them in a baking dish.
3. Combine chicken broth, olive oil, lemon juice, garlic, and oregano.

4. Add semolina to the liquid, mix it well and then pour it over the potatoes!
5. Cover the potatoes with the foil and roast in the oven for 40 minutes.
6. Remove from the oven, take off the foil, mix the potatoes and put them back into the oven, uncovered for 20 - 30 minutes, until most of the liquid has evaporated and the edges are slightly crispy.
7. Remove potatoes from the oven, and let them cool off slightly before serving.
8. Garnish with some parsley and some fresh lemon slices to serve.

Photo by Brandon LaGrone







Photo by Brandon LaGrone

# Lemon-Thyme-Ade

Recipe adapted from [Tara Noland](#)

There are a lot of different ways to make lemonade, but the thyme of this recipe cuts the sweetness and adds an herbal flare, which we love.

Time: 45 minutes

Servings: 6 - 8

Ingredients:

Simple syrup:

- Zest of 1 lemon
- 1 cup of water
- 1 cup of sugar
- 7 sprigs of thyme

Lemonade:

- 1 ½ cup fresh lemon juice
- 5 cups water
- 8 slices of lemon
- 8 sprigs of thyme

Directions:

Syrup:

1. Mix water, lemon zest and sugar in a sauce pan and heat to a simmer. Keep stirring until sugar dissolves.

2. Add thyme sprigs and simmer for another minute.
3. Remove from heat and let steep for approximately 10 minutes.

Lemonade:

4. Remove thyme sprigs from syrup and mix with lemon juice in serving pitcher.
5. Add water and mix well.
6. Put ice into 8 glasses and pour lemonade over ice. Garnish with a thyme sprig and lemon slice. Enjoy! This recipe pairs well with our Lavender White Chocolate Macadamia Nut Cookies, on page 22.



Photo by Brandon LaGrone



# Salmon with Lemon & Thyme

Recipe adapted from [Epicurious](#).

Grilling goes hand in hand with garden harvests, and this salmon makes great use of fresh herbs from the garden. If you don't have access to a grill, the oven works just as well for this dish! If you do have to substitute dried thyme, reduce the amount by half.

Time: 1 ½ hours

Servings: 6 - 8

Ingredients:

- 4 salmon fillets
- 2 limes
- 2 lemons
- 2 green onions
- 1 red onion
- ½ cup fresh thyme
- 2 teaspoons Himalayan sea salt (you can substitute with any fine, flavorful sea salt if needed)
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon granulated garlic

Directions:

1. If using an oven, preheat it to 350°F. If using a grill, get the grill started and build up the heat to medium high.



Photo by Brandon LaGrone



2. Use a vegetable peeler to zest one of the limes and one of the lemons. Cut the zest into thin strips for garnish. Thinly slice the whole lime and lemon, and slice half of the zested citrus. Save the remaining halves of the zested lime and lemon for juicing later on.
3. Thinly slice red onion and green onions.
4. Place salmon skin down on lined sheet pan (if grilling use a grill plank). Mix salt, pepper, paprika, garlic, and sprinkle over salmon to season. Place half of the fresh thyme over seasoned salmon. Layer the sliced lemon, lime and red onion in an alternating pattern over the length of the seasoned salmon.
5. Place in the center of the grill (or on the center rack of the oven) for approximately 15 minutes or until cooked and flaky.
6. When finished, place the fillets on plate or serving dish and garnish with the green onion, remaining fresh thyme and lime and lemon zest. Splash salmon with lemon and lime juice and use any leftover slices to decorate the plate.
7. Serve with rice or quinoa and a seasonal vegetable of choice like broccoli and cauliflower or zucchini and squash.





# Lavender Vanilla Chai Syrup

Recipe adapted from [Simple Veganista](#)

Chai tea makes such a delicious treat and we love the addition of lavender. While making the syrup takes a little while, the effort is well worth it for this flavorful blend of herbs and spices.

Time: 45 minutes

Servings: 6-8

Ingredients:

- 3 ¼ cups water
- 3 black tea bags or 3 tablespoons of loose black tea
- 2 large (or 4 small) cinnamon sticks
- 10 whole cloves
- 8 peppercorns
- 2 tablespoons culinary lavender (Note: culinary lavender is safe to eat, but other dried lavender sold for crafting may have chemicals that are not safe for ingestion)
- ¾ inch piece of fresh ginger, sliced or ½ teaspoon powdered ginger
- 4 cardamom pods lightly crushed or ½ teaspoon powdered cardamom
- 2-3 dashes of powdered nutmeg
- ¼ cup pure maple syrup
- 1 tbs vanilla extract



Photo by Brandon LaGrone

Directions:

1. To make the chai syrup, bring water to boil. Once it's boiling add the tea, cinnamon, cloves, peppercorn, lavender, ginger, cardamom and nutmeg and turn down to a simmer for 15 minutes. Remove from heat and let steep for an additional 10 minutes.
2. Remove tea bags and squeeze out excess liquid. Use a strainer to remove larger ingredients to get the syrup.
3. Add vanilla and maple syrup to the strained syrup. Stir well to mix.
4. Pour the syrup into a sealable container and put in the refrigerator to chill.
5. To serve pour a up to  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of the Chai syrup into cup of choice and fill with water, milk or cream of choice.
6. Garnish with a sprinkle crushed clove, cinnamon and nutmeg over the beverage along with a sprinkle of lavender flowers.



Photo by Meg Rock



# Lavender Macadamia Nut White Chocolate Chip Cookies

Recipe adapted from [Simple Veganista](#)

Lavender's delicate floral favorite pairs so well with buttery macadamia nuts in these cookies! We think they pair really well with the lavender vanilla chai recipe on 22, but they'd also be great as a dessert to have with the Basil Butter Salmon on page 23.

Time: 45 minutes

Servings: 15 - 20

Ingredients:

- 1 cup softened butter
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup packed light brown sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup white sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 ts vanilla extract
- 2  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups all-purpose flour
- 1 ts baking soda
- $\frac{1}{2}$  ts salt
- 1 cup roughly chopped macadamia nuts
- 1 cup coarsely chopped white chocolate chips
- 4 tbs finely chopped culinary lavender



Photo by Brandon LaGrone

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350F.
2. Mix together butter, brown sugar, and white sugar. Beat until the mixture is smooth and creamy.
3. Beat in eggs 1 at a time. Then mix in vanilla extract.
4. Combine flour, salt and baking powder. Gradually add to cream mix and mix together.
5. Mix in white chocolate, lavender and macadamia nuts.
6. Using a spoon, drop about 1 teaspoon onto ungreased sheet pan then bake for approximately 10 minutes or until golden brown (Remember they will continue to cook during the cooling process.)
7. Remove from the oven and let cool for 15 to 20 minutes. Then serve or store in air-tight container. Serve with vanilla ice cream, tea or the Lemon-Thyme-Ade from page 18.



Photo by Brandon LaGrone



Photo by Brandon LaGrone

# Chimichurri Sauce & Marinade

Recipe adapted from [The Kitchn](#)

Chimichurri brings a flavorful punch whether it's used as a simple accompaniment to grilled proteins or vegetables. But with a little more work you can use it as the base for a fantastic marinade for steak, tofu, or vegetables. Here the direction for "packed" means a compression of the herbs into a measuring cup so there's not much air.

Time: (to make sauce): 15 minutes

Servings: 10 - 12

Ingredients:

Sauce:

- 3 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 medium shallot, chopped
- 1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- ½ cup fresh parsley leaves, packed
- ½ cup fresh basil leaves, packed
- ¼ cup fresh cilantro leaves, packed
- ¼ cup olive oil
- ½ teaspoon ground coriander
- ½ teaspoon cumin
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt

## Marinade:

- ½ cup olive oil
- 3 tablespoons Chimichurri Sauce
- 3 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt

## Directions:

### For the sauce:

1. Marinate garlic and shallot in vinegar and lemon juice for 10 minutes. =
2. Place the mixture, along with liquids, into food processor along with parsley, basil and cilantro. Pulse until finely chopped.
3. Let processor run as you drizzle in oil, approximately 1 minute.
4. Add coriander, cumin and salt. Pulse until combined well.
5. For storage, place in air-tight container and refrigerate for up to 6 days.

### To make a marinade:

6. Mix salt with red wine vinegar and stir until salt dissolves.
7. Add the olive oil and chimichurri sauce and mix until combined.
8. In a plastic bag or baking dish, pour the marinade over the desired protein or vegetables and let rest in a fridge for several hours. Afterwards, remove the items from the dish and grill or cook accordingly. Serve with extra chimichurri on the side!





# Parsley Lime Spritz

Recipe adapted from Brandon LaGrone, Nature Education Teacher at Garfield Park Conservatory Alliance

This spritz has a refreshing taste and we love it as another way to enjoy parsley fresh from the garden. For an adult drink, try adding a serving of clear liquor with the seltzer!

Time: 30 minutes

Makes 4 servings

Ingredients:

- 3 limes
- ½ cup sugar
- ½ cup water
- 8 sprigs parsley
- 2 cups plain seltzer water
- Clear liquor of choice (optional)

Directions:

1. Remove zest (the outer colorful layer of lime peel) of 2 limes. Reserve a tablespoon of zest for garnish, and place the remaining zest in a sauce pan with sugar and water. Bring mixture to a boil, then reduce heat quickly to a steady simmer until it thickens into a syrup. Then pour into a bowl and let cool for about 15 minutes.
2. Place 6 parsley sprigs in the bottom of a serving pitcher and gently muddle to release flavor.

Photo by Brandon LaGrone

3. Stir lime syrup in with muddled parsley reserving some zest for garnishing.
4. Roll the limes on a counter top to prepare them for juicing. Cut limes in half. Cut one of the lime halves into 4 slices for garnishing. Squeeze the juice from remaining lime halves into serving pitcher and mix.
5. If you would like to garnish the rim of the glass, use a lime slice to moisten the rim, and dip it into a saucer with sugar. Then proceed to make beverage.
6. Fill 4 glasses (or similar) with ice and evenly distribute lime mix into each glass. Add half cup of setzer water to each glass and give a quick stir. Adults can add a shot of clear adult beverage of choice.
7. Garnish glasses with leaves of parsley, reserved lime zest, and lime slice. Serve and enjoy!



Photo by Suzy Hazelwood from Pexels





Photo from PxHere.com

# Mukwhas

Recipe adapted from [Mind Over Munch](#)

Mukwhas, or the traditional palate cleanser from Indian cuisine, is a delicious and refreshing snack to keep on hand, especially as a treat for after meals with strong flavors.

Time: 15 minutes

Makes 10 servings

Ingredients:

- 4 tablespoons sugar (try using half regular sugar and half coconut sugar if you have it on hand for a mild coconut flavor)
- 3 tablespoons water
- ½ cup fennel seeds

Directions:

1. Bring sugar and water to a boil over high heat, stirring continuously until a syrup forms. It should take 3 - 5 minutes and there will be bubbles.
2. Reduce heat to medium and add the fennel seeds. Stir until the mixture crystallizes—it will be quick! (The fennel should look dry, but it will also dry a bit more as it cools.)
3. Remove pan from heat and stir another 30-40 seconds, until the fennel seeds dry and can separate.
4. Add to a dish to serve immediately or store in an airtight container for later. Lasts 1-2 weeks stored in an airtight container.

# Fermented Dill Pickles

Recipe adapted from [Serious Eats](#)

Fermented dill pickles are one of our favorite ways to enjoy the bounty of summer into fall and winter. These pickles are delicious, but also a great science experiment for learning about lacto-fermentation. Who doesn't love an edible experiment?

Time: 30 minutes (plus a few weeks of fermenting)

Makes 10 servings

Ingredients:

- ¼ cup plus 2 tablespoons pickling salt or other pure salt, divided
- 10 pickling cucumbers (go for smaller ones, usually referred to as number one pickling cucumbers)
- 3 tablespoons whole mustard seed, divided
- 1 tablespoon whole allspice
- 1 tablespoon whole juniper berries
- 1 tablespoon ground turmeric
- 2 teaspoons coriander seeds
- 5 whole cloves
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 2 bay leaves, crushed
- 1 small (2-inch) cinnamon stick, broken into pieces
- 1 whole star anise, broken into pieces (optional)
- ¼ cup thinly sliced white onion (from about ¼ medium onion)
- 2 cloves peeled garlic



Photo from Vicky Wasik from Serious Eats



- 1 stem of whole, mature dill weed, including flower, or a medium-size tuft of young feather-like dill
- 1 quart water (1 liter), preferably distilled (see note)

#### Directions:

1. In a large bowl, combine 1 quart (1 liter) cold water with the 1/4 cup salt, stirring to dissolve the salt. Meanwhile, wash cucumbers, then trim off the flower-end (opposite of the stem) using a paring knife. Place cucumbers in cold saltwater bath. Let stand while you prepare the spice mixture.
2. In a small bowl, stir together 2 tablespoons mustard seed with the allspice, juniper, turmeric, coriander, cloves, ground ginger, bay leaves, cinnamon, and star anise, if using. Measure out 1 tablespoon pickling spice blend and reserve the rest for a future batch.
3. Wash 1 (1-quart) glass canning jar with warm soapy water and rinse well. Pack the sliced onion, garlic, dill, 1 tablespoon pickling spice, and remaining 1 tablespoon mustard seed into the jar, pressing firmly into the bottom.
4. In a medium bowl, stir together remaining 2 tablespoons salt with 1 quart cold water until salt is dissolved. Drain cucumbers and pack into the jar. Pour the saltwater brine over cucumbers until covered. Close jar, fitting it with a Pickle Pipe or other airlock system for mason jars.
5. Place fermenting vessel in a cool, dry location away from direct sunlight to ferment. Ideal fermentation temperature is 60°F to 70°F. If you have a dry basement, this is ideal for fermenting since basements usually maintain a relatively consistent temperature.
6. Check on your fermenting vessel every few days, looking for any evidence of spoilage or rot. You may notice some whitish growth; this is yeast and can be skimmed (or, if you're like me, you can toss the batch if you see yeast, as it can affect the flavor of the pickles). Your crock should develop a sour aroma; if it smells of mold or rot and the cucumbers are gray, soft, or otherwise discolored, your batch has been contaminated and must be discarded.
7. The exact fermentation time is hard to predict, but generally it takes about 3 weeks to reach the half-sour stage and 6 weeks to reach the full-sour stage. When your pickles reach your desired sourness level, transfer to the refrigerator, where the temperature will slow the fermentation. The finished pickles can be refrigerated for up to 2 months.