



Kimchi – Vegan

Kimchi is an acquired taste. I happen to really like it. It is sort of the Korean version of sauerkraut meets hot and spicy and is a great condiment on many things and as a side dish with dumplings, rice and, in my opinion, almost anything. I like it so much I eat it straight sometimes as a snack. My family, on the other hand, are not fans. I was eating a lot of kimchi and wondered if I could make it myself. It is surprisingly easy to make. When I make kimchi, I usually double the recipe below because invariably my cabbage is at least 4 Lbs. I experiment with vegetables, but the staples are always Asian or Napa cabbage, scallions, and daikon radish.

Ingredients:

1 medium Napa or Asian cabbage (about 2 lbs)

¼ cup kosher salt

5-6 cloves of garlic peeled

Fresh Ginger piece peeled – about 4 inches

1 teaspoon sugar

3 Tablespoons Water

2-6 Tablespoons of Korean red pepper flakes (gochugaru)-find it online or in Asian markets

½ Lb Korean or Daikon radish peeled and cut into little matchsticks

6 scallions cut in 1 inch pieces

2 carrots peeled and cut into matchsticks

Note: None of the amounts of vegetables or spices is exact. Use what you have and to taste, this is just a guideline. You could add or subtract vegetables, the staples are the cabbage and the radish and scallion.

1. Cut the cabbage into quarters the long way and remove the core. Slice each section into ribbons about 2 inches wide. Put the cabbage in a large bowl (or soup pot) and sprinkle with salt using your hands to rub it in. The cabbage will start to soften. Cover the cabbage with enough water just to cover and then cover with a plate that you weight down. Let it be for 1-2 hours.
2. Rinse the cabbage repeatedly under cold water several times and set in colander to drain for at least 20 minutes.
3. Mix the spices: Into a mini chopper or food processor (or you can do it by hand) pulse the garlic, ginger, sugar and water till it forms a paste. Stir in the red pepper flakes, I would suggest at least 4 T per 2 lbs of cabbage (I use 5-6).
4. Put the paste in the large pot or bowl that you soaked the cabbage in (rinsed and dried) and add the drained cabbage, squeezing any excess water remaining out first. Add in the scallions, radish, and carrot pieces. Using your hands work the paste into the vegetables taking your time coating them thoroughly. I wear gloves for this part.
5. Pack the kimchi into a clean glass quart jar. My kimchi always grows as I buy more vegetables so I always have 1 more jar than I think I will need at the ready. Press and pack the kimchi into jars and press until the brine rises up over to cover the vegetables, you may need to add a little water. Leave at least one inch in the top of the jar. Seal the jar (I have bought the plastic lids that screw on mason jars but have improvised with wrap and rubber bands and the metal lids for canning).
6. Leave the jars in a cool spot, not in the sun. Put newspaper or plates under the jars in case they overflow a little as they ferment. Let them sit 1-5 days, you will likely see bubbles in the jar and brine may seep out. Open daily and press the kimchi down so the liquid rises over the vegetables. When it tastes to your liking move to the refrigerator.