

Dilly Beans

Ingredients

- 2 pounds green beans, trimmed to fit your jars
- 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper (optional)
- 4 teaspoons dill seed (not dill weed)
- 4 cloves garlic
- 2 1/2 cups white vinegar (5%)
- 2 1/2 cups water
- 1/4 cup pickling salt (use a bit more if you've only got kosher)

Preparation

Prep your canning pot by inserting a rack to keep your jars off the bottom of the pot, place pint jars in (wide-mouth pints work best here. A 12 ounce jelly jar is also nice, as it's a bit taller than a standard pint and makes for less trimming) and fill it with water. Bring to a boil to sterilize while you prepare the rest of your ingredients.

Wash and trim your beans so that they fit in your jar. If you have particularly long beans, your best bet is to cut them in half, although by doing so, you do lose the visual appeal of having all the beans standing at attention.

Combine vinegar, water and salt in a medium saucepan and bring to a boil. While it's heating up, pack your beans into the jars, leaving 1/2 inch headspace (distance between the tops of the beans and the rim of the jar). To each jar, add 1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper, 1 clove of garlic and 1 teaspoon dill seeds.

Pour the boiling brine over the beans, making sure to leave that 1/2 inch headspace. Use a plastic knife to remove air bubbles from jar by running it around the interior of the jar. Wipe the rims and apply the lids (which have been sitting in a small saucepan of water at a mere simmer for at least ten minutes in order to soften the sealing compound) and rings.

Process for 5 minutes in a boiling water bath (remember that you don't start timing until the pot has come to a rolling boil).

These beans want to hang out for a least two weeks before eating, to thoroughly develop their flavor.

Makes 4 half-pint jars.