

Ayurvedic Nabak Kimchi 나박김치, Recipe to Balance Pitta Dosha

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Nabak kimchi is a chilled water-based kimchi (mul kimchi 물김치) often enjoyed in the spring and summer months. It's a lighter and cooler version of traditional kimchi, making it a refreshing choice for warm weather. It also offers several health benefits, including supporting digestion, boosting the immune system, and providing antioxidants. Enjoy Nabak kimchi with noodles, rice, or as a side dish (banchan) with any meal.

Ingredients

- 1.5 pound Korean radish, mu (무) *
- 12 - 16 ounces napa cabbage (baechu, 배추)
- ½ teaspoon saffron
- 1 medium carrot
- 1/2 large Korean Asian pear or 1 medium sweet apple, such as Honeycrisp, peeled
- 1 medium leek or 1 bunch of green onions
- ½ teaspoon
- fresh ginger slices, about 1-inch round, thinly sliced
- fresh turmeric slices, about 1-inch round, thinly sliced

Brine

- 2 Tbs maple syrup
- 4 Tbs mineral sea salt **
- 10 cups of warm water
- 1 gallon airtight jar (may need 2)

Instructions

1. Brine: dissolve 2 tablespoons of salt and maple syrup in 10 cups of warm water to make your brine.
2. Clean the radish by scrubbing with a brush and/or scratching off the stubborn impurities with a small knife. Do not peel the skin.
3. Cut radish into thin 1-inch squares, and place in a large bowl.
4. Rinse the cabbage leaves a couple of times. Cut leaves into 1-inch-wide pieces. Add to the bowl with the radish.
5. Sprinkle with 2 tablespoons of salt, and mix well to evenly distribute the salt. Let it sit until napa cabbage is wilted, about 30 minutes. Do not drain or rinse the radish/cabbage mixture.

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6. In a small bowl, soak the saffron in 1/2 cup of warm water.
7. Slice carrots crosswise into thin rounds. Cut the peeled Asian pear or peeled apple into about 1-inch squares. Cut the leek into about 1-inch lengths. Add to the bowl with the salted radish, cabbage and vegetables.
8. Strain the soaked saffron into the brine through a fine mesh strainer.
9. Place salted radish, cabbage, and vegetable mixture into jar(s).
10. Pour brine into jars, covering the radish, cabbage, and vegetable mixture completely. The brine will taste salty, and the saltiness will reduce as the kimchi ferments.
11. Start fermenting: leave jars out at room temperature for 2-3 days before storing in the fridge. You will notice the beginning of the fermentation process when you see tiny bubbles at the top of the mixture. Nabak kimchi can be eaten within a few days. Stir to the bottom each time before taking some out to serve.
12. Enjoy Nabak kimchi over noodles with a drizzle of toasted sesame oil and tamari, as a side dish with any meals. Enjoy the broth as it is a good digestive full of probiotics and vitamins to support digestion.

Note

*If you can't find mu (무) Korean radish, you may substitute with daikon radish (stronger flavor), round radish, kohlrabi, or turnip.

**Salt: Use salt that is free of iodine and anti-caking agents, as this can prevent the fermentation process from occurring. A suggestion is to use Cheonilyeom, Korean Solar Salt, Celtic Sea Salt, Pink Himalayan Salt, or other unrefined mineral salts. The minerals help to maintain the crunchiness of the vegetables.

YouTube Video of Nabak Kimchi: <https://youtu.be/Xc8awXkgGGM>

Resources:

Salt: <https://kimchimari.com/best-salt-kimchi-12-salts/>

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Kimchi throughout millennia: a narrative review on the early and modern history of kimchi:

<https://journalofethnicfoods.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s42779-023-00171-w>

약식동원 (yak-sik-dong-won), food is medicine:

<https://thekoreanacad.com/article.php?token=218>

Kimchi-Making Culture Joins UNESCO Intangible Heritage List:

<https://www.chosun.com/english/national-en/2013/12/06/6NUYJQRJKPJENTHAJIEPKQ3AN4/>

This recipe is inspired by:

<https://www.koreanbapsang.com/nabak-kimchi-water-kimchi/>

