

Pickled Asparagus

makes 6 jars

- 3 pounds asparagus
- 2 1/2 cup white vinegar
- 2 1/2 cup water
- 2 1/2 teaspoons pickling salt
- 3 teaspoons mustard seeds
- 6 cloves garlic, peeled
- 1 lemon, sliced and seeded
- 6 12-ounce mason jars with lids and bands (pint-sized jars work OK too, they are just not as tall)

Fill your canning pot with enough water to submerge your jars with at least 1 inch of water over them. Set the pot on the stove, cover, and turn on high.

Wash your jars, lids, and bands with hot, soapy water. Once the water in the canning pot is boiling, use your jar tongs to lower the jars into the pot. Make sure they are completely submerged. Boil for at least 10 minutes (longer is OK). Place the lids in a small saucepan and cover in water. Bring to a simmer for 5 minutes. Turn off the heat and let sit.

Pour water, vinegar, and salt into a saucepan, bring to a boil. Trim asparagus to fit the jar. Cut them short enough that when they rest in the jar there is about 3/4 inch to the rim. (*I use a jar as a guide as you see in the picture above*). Save the bottoms of the asparagus for another use.

Once the jars have sterilized (boiled for 10 minutes) and the vinegar solution is hot, it is time to pack the jars. Using jar tongs, lift each jar from the boiling water, pour any water trapped inside back into the pot. Place the jars, open side up on a tray. Into each jar place one garlic clove and 1/2 teaspoon of mustard seed. Pack the asparagus spears in tightly (*I like them tip down, but it does not really matter*). Slide a lemon slice or two down the edge of the jar.

Pour the boiling vinegar solution into the jars leaving a 1/2 inch head space. Use a clean rag to wipe the rim of each jar. Lift a lid from the hot water (*I use a fork for this*). Place the lid on the top of a jar. Place a band over the lid and screw down with your fingertips. (*Do not really crank it down with your whole hand. You want the seal to form from the processing and not your force*). Repeat with the rest of the jars.

Use your jar tongs to lower the full jars into the boiling water bath. The water will temporarily stop boiling as you add the jars. Wait until the water is boiling and then set a timer for 10 minutes. After ten minutes of boiling, lift the jars from the boiling water. Let cool on the counter. Label with date and a description of the contents. These pickles can be stored for up to one year.