



Preserve watermelon rinds



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During my in-depth research on specific vegetable parts for my Leaf to Root project, one vegetable part really impressed me: the rind of the watermelon. It's a traditional cooking ingredient in many countries.

If you like feasting on watermelons in the summer, you may come across a problem: your compost bin gets clogged. You get quite a lot of rind with your watermelon, so I was really interested in finding out whether it's edible.

Astonishingly, I stumbled upon countless uses for the rind through my research. In the Southern United States, it's customary to pickle watermelon rinds – I found lots of regional recipes for this. Cookbooks by American top chef David Chang and others have now seized upon this idea. Asia has another way of looking at it: watermelon rinds are used in salads and kimchi there. I even found age-old recipes for preserved watermelon rind.

The rind isn't just edible... it tastes fantastic! Important: peel the dark green outer rind and use the light green rind.



For example: Ingredients (for 3 × 200 ml jars of preserved rind)

Bring 200 ml white wine vinegar, 100 ml water, 180 g sugar and 1 teaspoon of salt to a boil. Add 400 g watermelon rind (with any residual pulp), 1 teaspoon of white peppercorns and 10 g fresh ginger and leave to simmer for 3 minutes. Pour into jars.

If you sterilise the jars beforehand, the pickle will last a few months. However, they lose their bite after 14 to 20 days, so I recommend eating them quickly. I cut them into small pieces and add them to a salad or serve them with cheese. You can also use the juice from the pickle to add flavour to a salad dressing.