Achar (pickled vegetables)

My grandmother’s recipe for nyonya achar.

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# Ingredients

## For rempah (aromatic paste)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **#** | **Item** | **Also known as** | **Quantity \*** |
| 1 | Candlenut | Buah keras | 4 |
| 2 | Galangal | Blue ginger | 1-2 inch knob sliced thick |
| 3 | Tumeric | Yellow ginger | ½ inch knob sliced thick |
| 4 | Lemon grass (2 inches of the fleshy stem at the base) | Cang Mao | 1 cut finely crosswise |
| 5 | Shallot | Small red onions | 4-5 cut into pieces |
| 6 | Ground shrimp paste | Belachan | 1-2 teaspoon |
| 7 | Red chilli |  | 1 cut into pieces |
| 8 | Lemon grass | Cang Mao | 2-3 stalks bruised |

\* These measurements do not have to be exact. Modify to suit tastes.

Items #1-7 need to be pounded together till it becomes pastey. Start with the candlenut and gradually add one ingredient at a time.

## Pickling ingredients

Rice wine vinegar - 200ml

Water - 100ml

Sugar - to taste

## Vegetables for pickling

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Item** | **Preparation** | **Quantity** |
| Cucumber | Cut into 1.5” lengths.  1cm square crosswise  Remove seeds | 2 |
| Carrot | Cut into 1.5” lengths  1cm square crosswise | 2 |
| Red chilli (optional) | Cut in half lengthwise.  Remove seeds. | 2 |

# Method

1. Fry rempah in oil under medium heat till fragrant. Add the bruised lemongrass stalks last.
2. Once rempah darkens, add rice wine vinegar. Bring to slow simmer.
3. Add water. Bring to slow simmer.
4. Add pickling vegetables. Bring back to low simmer.
5. Turn off heat. Add sugar to taste.
6. Leave off stove to cool.
7. Store in clean bottles.
8. Ready in 12 hours.

# Special handling

* Vinegar to salt ratio = 2:1

You may need more to cover the vegetables.

* Salt cure sliced cucumbers for 20 minutes, drain liquid and rinse off salt.
* Ground peanuts and/or sesame can be added prior to storage.   
  My grandmother does not do this.