

Spiced Pickled Cherries

Leena Trivedi-Grenier

Makes: Enough for 3 pint (16-ounce, 470 milliliters) jars

- **2 pounds (900 grams) sweet cherries**
- **1 3/4 cup (420 milliliters) apple cider vinegar (5% acidity)**
- **1 3/4 cup (9 ounces, 255 grams) granulated sugar**
- **3/4 cup (180 milliliters) water**
- **1 1/2 teaspoons Chinese Five Spice, ground**

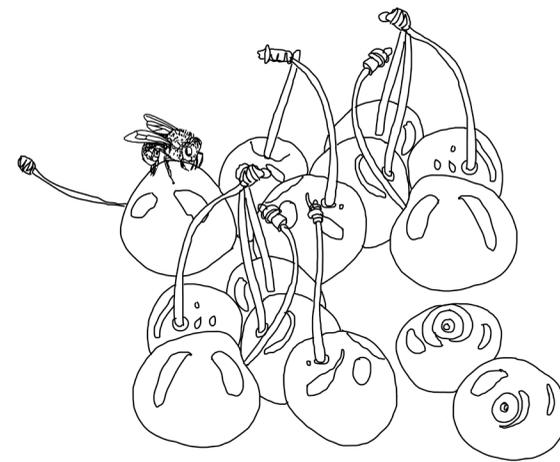
I used to assume that anything with the word “pickle” in it must be flavored with salt, dill and garlic, like those cucumber spears you get with your sandwich. These pickled cherries challenge that notion in the best way possible, producing little fruity nuggets of sweet and sour with a hint of spice.

This recipe was my gateway drug into the world of pickled fruit, both for its killer flavor and versatility. They are great to pair with cheese plates and salads. Mix the pickling syrup with some bubbly water for a refreshing soda, or use it as a base for cocktails. The possibilities are endless!

I love using Chinese Five Spice to replace cinnamon in fruit recipes. In this one, it gives the cherries an addictive flavor that you can't quite name and makes you go back for more.

Feel free to get creative by using your favorite vinegar (must have at least 5% acidity) and seasonings. Experiment with simple flavors like white vinegar, cinnamon, nutmeg and clove. Try bolder flavors like red wine vinegar and cardamom, or give it a bit of heat and savoriness with black peppercorns and thyme. Just make sure to keep the same amount of sugar and vinegar if you are planning on canning this recipe so you don't alter the recipe's acidity.

Any variety of sweet cherry will work with this recipe. The finished product can be put into clean mason jars and stored in the fridge for a year or water bath canned to make it shelf stable for up to a year.



Wash and dry the cherries, then pit them and slice in half.

Place a small pot on the stove and add the vinegar, sugar, water and spices. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for twenty minutes. You want it to look like a light syrup when it is finished cooking.

To make refrigerator pickles, pack the sliced cherries into the jars, then pour the hot syrup on top. Top with a lid and place in refrigerator for at least a week before trying. The cherries will stay good in the refrigerator for up to a year.

If you are canning, dip your pint jars in boiling water and fill them while they are still warm with the cherries and hot syrup. Be sure to leave a 1/2 inch of headspace at the top of each jar as you fill them. Add lids and process the jars in a water bath canner (or a large pot fitted with a rack) for 15 minutes.

Remove from the pot and let cool overnight. Place any unsealed jars in the fridge. Sealed jars will be shelf-stable for one year.

What is Chinese Five Spice?

Chinese Five Spice is a spice mix (typically star anise, cinnamon, Sichuan peppercorn, fennel seed and clove, but variations may include ginger, cassia, licorice or nutmeg) used in Asian and Arabic cuisines.

It lends a sweet, aromatic flavor to the pickled cherries and can be found in most grocery stores.

Good substitutions:

- cinnamon
- nutmeg
- ginger
- cardamom
- black peppercorn