

Quick pickled courgettes and pickled carrots

Just a touch over a year ago I posted a recipe for quick [pickled red onions](#) and since then I've had this incredible craving for all things pickled.

Almost all things, as I will still draw a line on pickled eggs. So then this foolproof recipe (actually two recipes in one) for quick pickled courgettes and pickled carrots.

You could also use any other veggie of choice such as classic pickled cucumber, sweet pepper, fennel, cauliflower, beets, asparagus or red onions amongst a few options.

You may recall that I mentioned my grandfather who has always been a fan of pickling, canning and making curries and atchars out of all kinds of produce.

Most recently I've been playing around with adding pickled courgettes / zucchini / baby marrow and carrots over and above the usual cucumber and red onion to our pulled pork buns (replacing the coleslaw) and boerewors rolls (South African style hot dog – but made with beef/pork sausage).

These pickles are enough to transform the good old Saturday shopping wors roll to incredibly moreish gourmet fare.

If this is your first foray into pickles, you certainly won't be disappointed. It is quick, easy and you don't need any special equipment.

I'm all about as little fuss as possible, so most of my pickles are based on the cold-pack vinegar method, which is basically a fancy way of saying refrigerator pickles.

This means that the pickles rely on the cold temperatures of the fridge for the preservation and not a specific pH level of

the vinegar. I think this method is a bit more forgiving and takes very little time.

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Actually, we've been using these pickles on many other dishes and even once to give new life and zing to a take-out burger from Steers.

Quick and easy duck liver pâté



Duck liver pâté ingredients

For some odd reason I've been craving a chicken on duck liver pâté for the last few weeks. Perhaps this might be an underlying iron, vitamin A or B deficiency, or simply just a longing for a rich and hearty feel-good treat. I have type 2 diabetes and so recently on the recommendation of a friend I

read an [article](#) and began my neuropathy medication. If you have diabetes, then you know the pain and the burning sensation I suffer from, but to my surprise the medication I am on now numbs the pain to the level that I don't feel any pain or discomfort anymore.

Either way, on my recent trip to the shops to stock up on some essentials for the weekend, I happened on some [free range duck livers from Woolworths](#). They're less than R20 for 250g so this turns out to be an inexpensive dish.

Of course, if you don't like duck liver, you can always use chicken livers.

Ingredients

- 250g free range duck livers
- 50g butter
- 10ml olive oil
- 1 large garlic clove
- 1 red onion
- 25ml brandy or port
- 2-3 sprigs of fresh thyme
- salt and pepper
- 50g butter to seal

Method

1. Trim the livers of any fat and sinew, this means all the white or green bits. It's not as scary as it seems – trust me.
2. Add olive oil and butter in a frying pan on a medium high heat.
3. Once the butter has melted, add the onion and cook for a few minutes till soft.
4. Add the livers and cook gently for about five minutes total, turning so they brown on all sides. It's quite important to get a good sear on the livers as the caramelisation definitely adds to the final flavour

profile of your pâté.

5. Add the garlic to the pan after 4 minutes and fry.
6. Add the brandy and thyme. Watch out though, the brandy makes everything bubble and splatter. Bubble for a minute to allow the alcohol to burn off.
7. Transfer to a liquidiser and puree until your desired consistency. Once smooth, season with salt and pepper and transfer to a ramekin.
8. If you want a smoother, more silky texture you could always pass the mixture through a sieve, but I like it a bit more rustic.
9. Melt the extra 50g of butter and pour on top of the pâté to seal.
10. Cover with clingfilm and put in the fridge to cool down.

When you're ready to serve the pâté, take it out of the fridge a bit before you're ready to serve it with some toast. You can certainly play around by adding a couple of capers, cracked sea salt and pepper and dressing it up with a few sprigs of micro-greens.

Best served at room temperature.



Duck liver pâté serving suggestion

Note

Once the butter seal has broken the pâté must be eaten within a couple of days, but can remain in the fridge for a week or more with the seal intact.

This is such a versatile recipe that you could also add any other flavour profile you like. Play around with classic sage instead of thyme, add some porcini mushrooms, cream, mustard, raisins, cranberries...etc.