



ROCKY'S KITCHEN • SOUTHERN SNACK

Firecracker Fruit-Punch Koolickles

Ruby-red dill pickle chips with lime, chile & a crackling sweet-sour finish

ONE 32-OZ JAR • 8–10 SERVINGS • PREP 15 MIN • CHILL 5 DAYS

INGREDIENTS

Koolickles

- 1 jar (32 oz) refrigerated dill pickle chips or spears, with all brine
- 1 packet (0.16 oz) unsweetened tropical punch drink mix
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1 tsp finely grated lime zest
- 1 tbsp fresh lime juice
- 1/4 tsp crushed red pepper flakes

Firecracker finish

- 1 tsp flaky salt
- 1/2 tsp granulated sugar
- 1/4 tsp mild chile powder, plus more to taste
- Lime wedges, for serving

ROCKY'S NOTES

- Use unsweetened drink-mix powder; presweetened mix changes the sugar balance.
- Tropical punch gives the boldest ruby color, but cherry or grape also work.
- Keep every pickle submerged and refrigerated at 40°F or below; this is a refrigerator recipe, not a shelf-stable canning method.
- Use clean utensils and discard the batch if it develops mold, gas, leaking, an off odor, or an unexpectedly slimy texture.
- For the best snap, serve only what you need and return the jar promptly to the refrigerator.

METHOD

- 1. Save the brine** — Pour the pickles and all their brine through a strainer set over a large measuring cup. Keep the original jar and lid. If using spears, cut them into 1/2-inch chips for faster, more even color.
- 2. Build the fruit-punch brine** — Whisk the unsweetened drink mix and 1/2 cup sugar into the reserved pickle brine until no dry pockets remain. Stir in lime zest, lime juice, and red pepper flakes.
- 3. Pack and chill** — Return the pickles to their jar and pour the colored brine over them, pressing the pickles below the liquid. Discard only excess brine that will not fit. Seal and refrigerate for 5 days, gently turning the jar once daily.
- 4. Make the crackle** — Just before serving, stir flaky salt, 1/2 tsp sugar, and chile powder together. Drain only the portion you plan to eat and pat it lightly so the seasoning sticks without washing away the fruit-punch flavor.
- 5. Finish and serve cold** — Arrange the chilled pickle chips in a bowl, dust lightly with the firecracker seasoning, and squeeze over a lime wedge. Start with half the seasoning and add more only if needed.