

HOT GIARDINIERA

Chicago-style spicy pickled vegetables

Tangy, crunchy, oily, and hot—made for Italian beef and sausages.

MAKES

about 2 quarts

ACTIVE TIME

35 min + overnight salt

READY

48–72 hr chill

INGREDIENTS

VEGETABLES

- 1 small cauliflower, tiny florets
- 3 celery ribs, thinly sliced
- 2 carrots, coins or matchsticks
- 1 red bell pepper, diced
- 1 green bell pepper, diced
- 6–8 serranos, thinly sliced
- 8–10 green olives, sliced
- 8–10 pimento olives, halved
- 4 garlic cloves, sliced

BRINE + FINISH

- 2 cups white vinegar
- 1 cup water
- 2 tbsp kosher salt, plus 2 tbsp for salting
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 1 tbsp black peppercorns
- 1 tsp celery seed
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1/2 tsp red-pepper flakes
- 1 1/2 cups olive oil

METHOD

1 Salt overnight

Toss cauliflower, celery, carrots, bell peppers, and garlic with 2 tbsp kosher salt. Cover and refrigerate overnight.

2 Rinse dry

Rinse well in cold water. Drain thoroughly and pat dry so the finished brine stays punchy.

3 Cool the brine

Simmer vinegar, water, salt, sugar, peppercorns, celery seed, oregano, and red-pepper flakes just until dissolved. Cool completely.

4 Pack the jars

Divide vegetables, olives, and serranos among clean jars. Add cooled brine, then olive oil. Press everything under the liquid.

5 Let it settle

Seal and refrigerate at least 48–72 hours. It gets better after 5–7 days.

SERVE IT LIKE YOU MEAN IT

Pile it onto Italian beef or hot sausage. Spoon on a little seasoned oil, but let the crunchy vegetables stay the star. Use jalapeños for less heat; add habanero only if you mean it.