



배추김치

Baechu Kimchi

Napa Cabbage Kimchi

Makes 1 gallon / Prep time: 30 minutes, plus 4 hours for salting / Fermentation time: 3 weeks

Whenever kimchi is mentioned, the type made with Napa cabbage is usually the first one that comes to mind. Even though it's very popular, every restaurant and every household's kimchi will vary in taste. Over time, you'll figure out the combination you like best, whether it's more seafood focused, sweeter, or extra pungent from longer fermentation.

½ cup coarse salt, for dry brine
2 large Napa cabbage heads, about 4–5 pounds total
1 large Fuji apple, rough chopped
2 medium carrots, grated
10 Asian chives (or 5 green onions), 1-inch pieces
½ cup garlic cloves
1 (2-inch) knob of ginger, peeled and rough chopped
1 medium yellow onion, rough chopped
1 cup coarse gochugaru flakes
3 tablespoons fish sauce
4 anchovy fillets

1. Quarter the cabbage head then put in an extra-large bowl. Lightly sprinkle salt on each cabbage leaf by lifting each leaf and making sure the salt gets right down to the root. Set aside on the counter in a cool area for four hours. The cabbage leaves should be pliable but still have crunch. Rinse the salt off and shake off excess water.
2. Add the apple, onion, ginger, garlic, fish sauce, and anchovy fillets into a food processor and pulse until most of it is broken up. Add the gochugaru to the food processor and pulse until it turns into a rough paste.
3. Mix the paste, grated carrots, and chives in an extra-large bowl. Using your hands, spread the paste on each individual cabbage leaf, making sure to get all the way to the core and rubbing the paste all over the cabbage head so every part has the paste on it. Place the paste-coated quarters in a BPA-free plastic or glass container and press the cabbage down to get rid of air bubbles. Cover with a lid and leave on the counter in a cool area for a few days to activate the fermentation. When you start to see small bubbles forming in the brine, store in the fridge for about three weeks total for full fermentation, opening the lid once a week to let trapped air out. Cut into 1-inch pieces when ready to serve.

Prep Tip: You can cut the cabbage head into bite-sized pieces, salt, then mix with the paste before fermentation. This style is called mak-kimchi. Mak 막 translates to “roughly” or “haphazardly” because it's not as labor intensive. The cabbage pieces will not be as crunchy as the method in this recipe.

Prep Tip: Starting the fermentation on the counter could take only two days in a warm kitchen, or up to five or six if your kitchen is chilly.

Make Ahead Tip: The kimchi can be kept in the refrigerator for a very long time. As long as there is no mold, you can eat the kimchi. The oldest kimchi I've eaten was fermented for a year!