

Donald's Mom's Rhubarb Chutney

Adapted from my mom's recipe card with several years' worth of notes, and apparently derived from a recipe developed by her church ladies' group in the early 1980's, and possibly assigned to her after one of their canning sessions with a request to make some at home.

Ingredients:

- 8 cups sliced rhubarb (1/8" to 1/4") -- roughly 12 to 18 full length stalks depending on stalk length and thickness
- 5 cups (packed) brown sugar
- 5 cups coarsely chopped onions -- approximately 875g pre-trimming (about 5 medium onions)
- 3/4 cup raisins
- 2-1/2 cups 5% (standard) vinegar, OR, 2 cups 7% pickling vinegar AND 1/2 cup water
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp ground cloves
- 1 tsp allspice

Equipment:

- cutting board
- kitchen knife
- measuring cup
- non-reactive, stainless steel pot, minimum 5 quarts
- wooden spoon
- sealable food containers
- blender or food processor (optional)
- measuring spoons
- pot for sanitizing bottles
- 7 x 250mL mason jars
- 7 mason jar lids
- mason jar lifter / wrench
- tongs or mason jar lid magnetized wand
- ladle or large spoon
- mason jar filler / funnel
- optional: labels

Day one / The day before cooking:

- trim and clean rhubarb
- slice rhubarb in 1/4" to 1/2" lengths
- measure out 8 cups of sliced rhubarb
- place sliced rhubarb in the large stainless steel pot.
- measure out 5 packed cups of brown sugar
- place brown sugar in pot with rhubarb
- mix rhubarb and brown sugar with a wooden spoon
- cover pot of rhubarb and brown sugar
- place pot of rhubarb and brown sugar in refrigerator
- mix rhubarb and brown sugar part way
- clean and trim onions
- chop onions coarsely

- measure out 5 cups of chopped onions
- place chopped onions in a sealable / covered container
- place container of onions in refrigerator

Day two / The next day, cooking the chutney:

- fill a separate pot with water (for sanitizing mason jars later)
- place pot of water on stove
- bring water to a boil -- while boiling and simmering the chutney
- put aside once boiled

While water for sanitizing mason jars is boiling:

- add chopped onions to rhubarb and sugar mix
- measure out 3/4 cup raisins
- coarsely chop raisins -- a blender or food processor may be used
- add chopped raisins to rhubarb, brown sugar, and onion mix
- measure 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- add cinnamon to rhubarb, brown sugar, onion, and raisin mix
- measure 1 tsp ground cloves
- add cloves to rhubarb, brown sugar, onion, raisin, and cinnamon mix
- measure 1 tsp allspice
- add allspice to rhubarb, brown sugar, onion, raisin, cinnamon, and cloves mix
- place pot of mix on stove
- bring to a boil, constantly mixing in order to avoid burning
- simmer chutney for approximately one hour, ten minutes, constantly stirring to avoid burning
 - a note in an older typed version said to immediately transfer the chutney to a clean pot if the bottom of the pot burns
- at about 50 to 55 minutes of simmering, bring water in second pot back to a boil
- chutney is ready when thick and syrupy -- approximately 1 hour, 10 minutes
 - notes on my mom's recipe card indicate up to two hours of boiling / simmer (presumably, depending on water content, room humidity, and stove burner capacity)
 - chutney is fine but over-boiled if the consistency of molasses while still hot, but will cool to a firm gel
 - a half batch simmered for approximately 50 minutes came out too thick although tasty!

Bottling the chutney:

- reduce stove temperature under the chutney to minimum
- place empty jars in boiling water such that they can be easily removed with the mason jar lifter -- depending on pot size, you may need to do four and three jars at a time
- quickly dip, then remove, the mason jar funnel in the boiling water
- quickly dip, then remove, the ladle in the boiling water
- remove a jar from the boiling water and place on a heat-proof cutting board on a counter
- place the funnel over the jar
- remove pot of chutney from stove
- ladle chutney into jar, leaving approximately 1 cm / 1/2 inch from the top of the jar
- using tongs, dip a mason lid and mason ring in the boiling water
- immediately transfer lid and ring to jar
- hand tighten ring
- repeat process for other jars

- place filled jars in refrigerator until cooled
- store jars