Pickled Okra

http://userealbutter.com/2012/07/08/pickled-okra-recipe/ from Food in Jars by Marisa McClellan

- 3 cups (720 ml) apple cider vinegar (5% acidity)
- 3 tbsps pickling salt
- 4 lemon slices
- 4 tbsps mixed pickling spice (purchased or you can make your own see recipe below)
- 2 pounds okra, washed and trimmed
- 4 cloves garlic, peeled

mixed pickling spice

- 3 tbsps crushed bay leaves
- 3 tbsps black peppercorns
- 3 tbsps whole allspice
- 3 tbsps coriander seeds
- 3 tbsps mustard seeds
- 3 tbsps juniper berries
- 1 tbsp whole cloves
- 1 tbsp dill seed
- 1 cinnamon stick, broken into pieces

Make the pickling spice: Combine all ingredients in a jar. Tighten the lid onto the jar and shake to mix. Makes about 20 tablespoons.

Notes: I made this recipe using both Weck and Ball jars. The Weck site has some nice <u>canning instructions</u> if you are using their jars, which differ slightly from the standard instructions for canning with Ball-style jars.

Canning pickled okra: Ready the boiling water bath and the four clean (washed with soap and water) jars you plan to use for canning. Check your jars and lids for nicks or cracks – don't use them if they have any because it could jeopardize creating a good seal. If using standard Ball or similar style jars, it helps to put them in the pot you plan to use for canning and fill them (and the pot) with water, then bring to a boil. Keep the jars at a simmer (180°F) until they are ready to use. Place the lids in a small saucepan with enough water to cover them and set to a simmer over low heat (high heat can compromise the gummy seal material). If using Weck jars, you only need to sterilize your jars and glass lids if they will be processed for less than 10 minutes. Place the rubber rings in a small saucepan of water and bring to a boil for 2-3 minutes then leave them in the hot water until you are ready to use them.

Place the vinegar, 3 cups of water, and the pickling salt in a pot over high heat. Stir to dissolve the salt and bring the brine to a boil. When you are ready to start filling the jars, place 1 lemon slice and 1 tablespoon of mixed pickled spice in each sterilized jar. Pack the okra in, with the pointy ends up, then place a second layer of okra in, pointy-end down, to maximize the number of okra in the jar. Tuck a clove of garlic in each jar. Pour

the hot brine over the okra for each jar such that you have 1/2 inch (12 mm) of head-space from the rim. Make sure the brine is hot, because you're putting it into a boiling water bath – if it isn't hot, you could crack a jar like I did with one of my Ball jars. Gently tap the base of each jar on a kitchen towel laid out on your work surface to release any air bubbles. Use a clean wooden chopstick to get any stubborn bubbles to release from the okra, jar, etc. Add more brine if the levels drop below 1/2 inch head-space (this may happen as the okra are hollow and will fill with brine).

Use a cloth to wipe the rims clean and apply the lids and rings of the Ball-style jars to fingertip tight (just tightened with fingertips – not super tight). If using Weck jars, place the rubber rings on the glass lids and set them on the jars. Secure the lids with two canning clamps for each jar – 180° from each other (across from each other). Set the jars in your canning bath (either on a jar rack or a makeshift cooling rack – just be sure they are not set directly on the bottom of the pot) and check that there is at least 1-2 inches of water above the lids of the jars – if not, add more water. Once the pot has returned to a boil, process for 10 minutes if you are at an altitude of sea-level to 1,000 feet above sea level (asl). For 1,001 to 3,000 feet asl, add another 5 minutes to the 10 minute processing time. For 3,001 to 6,000 feet asl, add another 15 minutes to the 10 minute processing time. For 6,001 to 8,000 feet asl, add another 15 minutes to the 10 minute processing time. And finally, for 8,001 to 10,000 feet asl (that's me!) add an additional 20 minutes to the 10 minute processing time for a total of 30 minutes.

When the pickles are done processing, remove them from the canning bath and place them on a towel-lined countertop to let them cool. Don't mess with them! For the metal lids, you may hear the "ping" of the seals forming as the center of the lid gets sucked down. There will be no pinging of the Weck lids, but you may notice the tongue of the rubber band pointing down (this is good). Let the jars cool for 24 hours. Remove the bands or clamps and lift the jar an inch or so off your work surface (carefully – in case the seal is bad and breaks) by the lid. If the seal is good, it should hold. Store the jars in a cool, dark location for up to a year (take the clamps and rings off). Also, if you have a jar with a bad seal, like my cracked jar, you can store it in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks – the food is still good. Makes 4 1-pint (500 ml) jars.