

Pickled Asparagus

with Formosa Pouchong Tea

TOTAL TIME: 24 hours (including marinating time)

2 lbs fresh asparagus, trimmed	1 T mustard seeds
2 C water	1 † red pepper flakes (optional, for a bit of heat)
1 C white vinegar	1 T cardamom seeds
1 C apple cider vinegar	1 T cocoa nibs
1 T Formosa Pouchong tea leaves	1 T pink peppercorns
2 T kosher salt	4 garlic cloves, peeled and smashed
2 T granulated sugar	1 lemon, sliced
1 T black peppercorns	

PREPARE THE ASPARAGUS:

Trim the woody ends off the asparagus and rinse them thoroughly. Blanch the asparagus in boiling water for 1-2 minutes, then immediately transfer them to an ice bath to stop the cooking process. Drain and set aside.

PREPARE THE BRINE:

In a medium saucepan, combine the water, white vinegar, apple cider vinegar, Formosa Pouchong tea leaves, kosher salt, granulated sugar, black peppercorns, mustard seeds, red pepper flakes (if using), cardamom seeds, cocoa nibs, and pink peppercorns. Bring the mixture to a boil, stirring until the salt and sugar are dissolved. Remove from heat and let it steep for 5 minutes. Strain out the tea leaves and return the liquid to the saucepan.

PACK THE JARS:

In sterilized jars, place the garlic cloves and lemon slices. Pack the blanched asparagus spears into the jars, standing them upright.

ADD THE BRINE:

Pour the hot brine over the asparagus in the jars, making sure the spears are fully submerged. Leave about ½ inch of headspace at the top of each jar.

SEAL AND STORE:

Wipe the rims of the jars with a clean cloth and seal with lids. Let the jars cool to room temperature, then refrigerate for at least 24 hours before serving to allow the flavors to develop.

TIPS:

- 👉 For a more intense tea flavor, you can increase the amount of Formosa Pouchong tea leaves.
- 👉 These pickled asparagus spears can be stored in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.