Sauces / Mexico

Escabeche (Pickled Jalapeños & Vegetables)

The taqueria condiment that makes everything better — jalapeños, carrots, and onion submerged in a hot brine spiced with oregano, cumin, and bay leaf, then left overnight to soften and sour into a punchy, crunchy pickle that brightens anything it touches.

Time 1440 min **Servings** 4

What you'll need.

- ☐ 50 parts Jalapeños (sliced into rings, with seeds)
- ☐ 30 parts Carrots (peeled, sliced on the bias, 5mm thick)
- ☐ 20 parts White onion (thinly sliced into half-moons)
- ☐ 60 parts White distilled vinegar
- ☐ 40 parts Water
- ☐ 3 parts Salt, dried oregano (Mexican), black peppercorns, bay leaves, dried cumin seeds
- ☐ 5 parts Neutral oil (optional — for a taqueria-style finish)

Let's make it.

01 Heat oil in a medium saucepan over medium-high heat. Add the carrot slices and cook for 2-3 minutes until they begin to develop a tiny amount of color but are still firmly crunchy. Add the jalapeño rings and onion slices. Toss and cook for another 2 minutes — just enough to soften the raw edge of the onion and coat everything in the oil. This brief sauté (a step often skipped but essential to the best taqueria-style escabeche) allows the oil to carry flavors between the vegetables and makes the brine more complex.

02 Add the vinegar, water, salt, oregano, black peppercorns, bay leaves, and cumin seeds directly to the pot with the vegetables. Bring to a boil over high heat, stirring to dissolve the salt. The brine should smell sharp and herby — vinegar dominant, with an oregano note underneath. Once boiling, reduce to a simmer for 3 minutes, pressing the vegetables gently to ensure they are all submerged. Remove from heat. The hot brine will continue to cook the vegetables slightly as it cools.

03 Transfer the hot escabeche to clean glass jars, ensuring the vegetables are fully submerged under the brine. Press them down if needed. Seal loosely and allow to cool at room temperature for 1 hour, then refrigerate for at least 8 hours before serving — 24 hours is ideal. The brine will change color as the pigments migrate: the jalapeños turn it pale green, the carrots add a warm gold, and the onion layers become slightly translucent and bright. These are not ready to eat until the vegetables have had time to fully absorb the brine.

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Servings are an estimate; check quantities in the source recipe.
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