

WATERMELON TABASCO SAUCE

From the Kitchen of: Caitlin Burr, Owner, C'Mon Betty

Preparation Time: 30 minutes | **Fermentation Time:** 4 weeks | **Yield:** 1 quart

This homemade sauce is a “sweeter sauce with a slight hint of heat and a nice tang of vinegar,” according to Caitlin. Caitlin says that making hot sauce is one of her favorite ways to use up fruits and veggies from the garden at the end of the growing season.

Caitlin loves to grow her own food in her home garden, a hobby and skill that she started building after moving to Ann Arbor. Since she began growing her own food, food preservation has become both a personal passion and professional endeavor, with her recent launch of C'Mon Betty!

Caitlin says this recipe was her favorite of her hot sauce batches made in 2024, when she grew watermelon and pepper seeds from the Ann Arbor Seed Sampler program!

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 watermelon (642.5 grams)
- 1-2 radishes (23 grams)
- Tabasco pepper (3 grams)
- Canning salt (21.8 grams, 3% weight of other ingredients)
- 5% acidity vinegar – Enough to fill the vessel with 1 inch of space from the top)

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT:

- Kitchen scale
- Jar (or other type of fermentation vessel)
- Compostable parchment paper
- Fermentation lid (preferred)
- Fermentation weight (preferred)



INSTRUCTIONS:

- Gather and wash the watermelon, radishes, and pepper.
- Place a large bowl on a kitchen scale and make sure it reads zero.
- Cut and weigh all of the watermelon, radish, and pepper (they can be weighed separately or all combined in the bowl as long as their total weight is calculated using a consistent unit).
- From the total weight of the watermelon, radishes, and peppers, calculate 3% of that weight. This is the weight of how much salt you will need to add in the bottom of the fermentation vessel.
- Add the salt to the bottom of the fermentation vessel.
- Add the watermelon, radishes, and peppers to the vessel.
- Pour the vinegar over the salt, watermelon, radishes, and peppers, leaving 1 inch below the vessel rim. The vinegar should completely cover the watermelon, radishes, and pepper, with no pieces sticking out from the vinegar.



- Cut a small piece of parchment paper and place it inside the jar to ensure that fruit and vegetables don't float to the top of the jar.
- Seal the vessel using a fermentation lid (or a mason jar ring and balloon).
- Set the vessel in a cool dark place for up to 4 weeks. Check on the jar at least weekly to ensure that fruit has not gone above the vinegar and started to mold. If any mold occurs, throw away the recipe. If you are using the balloon method, "burp" the recipe daily by allowing the gas to escape and replacing the balloon and ring.
- Once the 4-week fermentation process has ended, pour the contents of the vessel into a blender, and blend it until it reaches a smooth consistency.
- Transfer the hot sauce to a bottle of choice and enjoy!

NOTES:

- This recipe is a basic fermented hot sauce recipe. As long as your salt content is 3% of the weight of your vegetables and fruit, you can substitute any fruit or vegetables you'd like to fill whatever sized jar you like.
- If your recipe comes out a little chunky after blending, you can add more vinegar and blend it again for a smoother sauce. Caitlin also recommends experimenting with flavored vinegars as long as they are 5% acidity.



WATERMELON RADISH:

Have you ever seen a watermelon radish? These vibrant pink and green radishes are slightly sweeter than other radish varieties and have an appearance similar to a watermelon!

Although any variety of radish can be used in this recipe, you can try adding watermelon radishes to complement the watermelon fruit!



Caitlin in the kitchen!



Hot sauces fermenting at C'Mon Betty HQ.