

## Fermented Green Beans (Sauer Bohnen)



Reminiscent of my late Mum's delicious green bean salad but my version is fermented. We came across a German recipe for fermented green beans which are blanched or steamed first and decided to try it. Glad we did as they taste much better than raw fermented green beans.

It's best not to eat large quantities of raw green beans as they are mildly toxic, containing lectins, which trigger symptoms like nausea, diarrhea, vomiting and bloating. To deactivate the lectins, blanch or steam the beans first for 5 minutes. After blanching they should be cooled in ice water.

The other secret with this recipe is the use of the herb savory. Savory is called "bohnenkraut" in German which translates to bean herb. Savory is a little difficult to find in Australia but Herbies supplies it, so check their website for a stockist near you. You will need to use some sort of starter culture to get the ferment started, having killed all the naturally occurring bacteria in the raw beans. We used a little brine from my fermenting garlic but you could use a number of things. You could even make your own starter liquid by fermenting some cabbage for a couple of days and using that liquid (a better option than backslopping with brine from a finished kraut).

It is important to almost fill your fermenting jar so that there is not too much oxygen in the jar. Headspace of about 3-4cm is ideal. We normally work on 800g vegetable per litre. Herewith our recipe for a one litre jar. We recommend using a jar with airlock as well as a weight to keep everything submerged under the brine.



800–900g fresh green beans

16g finely ground pink Himalayan salt or pickling salt without additives

1 tsp dried savory herb (you could substitute thyme, sage or marjoram)

Sufficient 2% brine to cover beans in jar

Starter (i.e. active brine from another ferment, commercial starter powder, whey)

Wash the beans, cut off ends, stems, threads and brown spots and then cut the beans into pieces about 3cm in size. We used a bean slicer for ours.

Add salt, mix through and massage a little. Put savory and starter brine/powder/mix into the bottom of the jar. Add beans, tamping down as you go. Add 2% brine to cover the beans, insert weight or Viscodisc to keep everything submerged.

Place lid and/or airlock on jar, close jar and leave to ferment in a cool place for 3-4 weeks. Do not be tempted to open your jar whilst the beans are fermenting. The longer they ferment the more tart the flavour will be. If you prefer a milder flavour go for a shorter fermenting period. When ready, store your fermented beans in the fridge. They should keep for some months but best to always remember to push the beans back down under the brine when removing some to eat.