

HyeGyong Choi • Kimchi

My mom made this simpler version of kimchi when she visited Chicago for my graduation from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2016. I had a hard time getting used to the kimchi from Korean markets in America because they are a bit too salty for me and not spicy enough. My mom's kimchi has a more refreshing taste so I started making my own kimchi ever since then. This kimchi is something between summer kimchi, which is chopped up before the salting process for a quick pickling process, and winter kimchi. I also added fresh red peppers. Koreans often use fresh red pepper for summer kimchi to bring a more refreshing taste when the kimchi from winter is done.



HyeGyeong Choi, *Kimchi Baby*, 2020, watercolor on paper, 9" x 11".

Kimchi Recipe

Ingredients:

- 1 Napa cabbage normally 4-8 pounds
- 1 cup coarse sea salt
- 8-10 fresh red peppers
- 1.5 cups Korean red pepper powder
- broth — dried pollock head or 1 cup of dried pollock (you can find it in a Korean store), a piece of dried seaweed, 1 cup dried shiitake mushroom
- 1 small radish (optional — you can skip it if the radish isn't that good because it's not in season)
- 1 small onion
- 3 tablespoons sweet rice flour
- 15-20 garlic cloves minced (approximately 4 teaspoons)
- 3 tablespoon anchovy fish sauce
- 1 tablespoon fermented shrimp sauce
- a bunch of chives
- 1 tablespoon sesame seeds

Directions:

How to salt the cabbage:

1. Cut cabbage into 4-inch-long shapes.
2. 3 cups of coarse sea salt and 1.33 gallons of water – mix it so that the salt dissolves into the water.
3. Scatter the rest of the salt over the cabbage.
4. The container should be filled with this saltwater to about 2/3. Leave it for 1.5 – 2 hours.

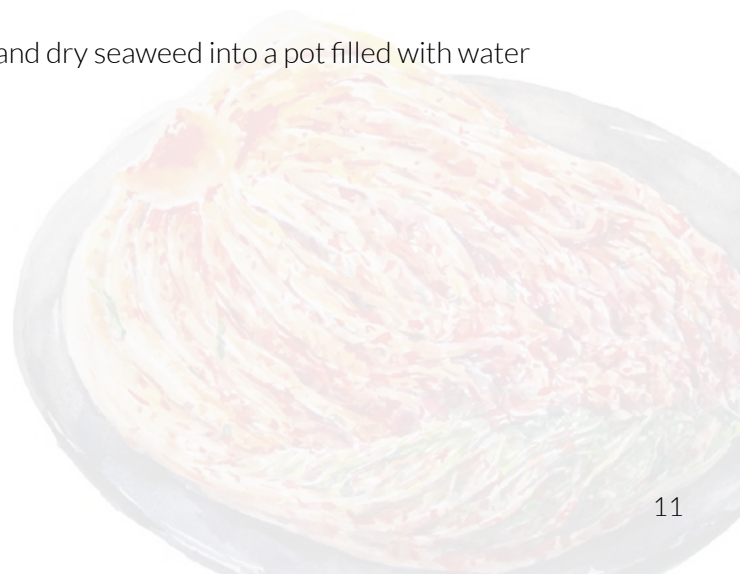
Tip - if you want to wrap this with a clean plastic wrap, it boosts the speed for salting so the salting should take only about 1 - 1.5 hours.

5. Reverse the cabbage upside down and leave it for another 2-3 hours (the cutting side should face down) if you put a heavy pot on top of this, it can also speed up the process.
6. How to check it's done is to bend a leaf and you should be able to fold it without breaking it.
7. Rinse it under running water.

Tip: if the cabbage is too salty, you can put it in a bowl and fill it with water then soak it for 30 – 40 mins.

How to make the broth:

1. Pour the dried pollock fish and dried shiitake mushroom and dry seaweed into a pot filled with water (6.75 ounces).
2. Boil it for 15-20 minutes.
3. Cool it before using it.



Kimchi Recipe (continued)

How to make rice porridge:

1. Boil 6.75 ounces of water (you can also use the broth you made).
2. Put 3 tablespoons of sweet rice powder (mix it into a very small amount of water first, then it's easier to mix in) into boiling water and mix well. You can replace the sweet rice powder with flour if needed.
3. Keep stirring until it gets thickened.
4. Cool it before using it.

How to make the sauce:

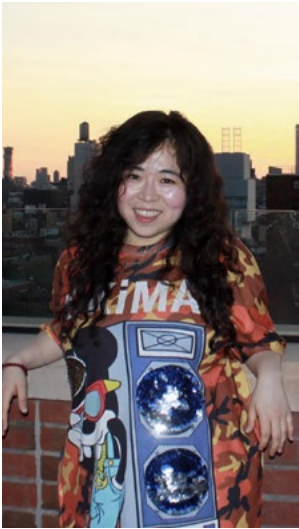
1. Soak the red pepper powder in the broth or the broth and porridge mix. Let it sit for 20 mins.
2. Grind onion, red peppers, radish, and garlic (you can skip the radish if radish isn't that good because it varies by season)
3. Mix fish sauce, shrimp sauce, porridge, chives, and ground ingredients (onion, radish, and garlic) into the red pepper mix
4. You can add more pepper powder if it's too watery.

The final step to make kimchi:

5. Open the cabbage from the bottommost layer and start rubbing the sauce onto each layer.
6. Add more sauce to the last layer of the cabbage piece.
7. Do the same thing for the rest of the 3 pieces of cabbage.
8. Pour in the rest of the sauce.
9. Leave the kimchi at room temperature for 1-2 days to help ferment the kimchi
10. Put it in the refrigerator. It gets perfectly fermented about 2 weeks after the day you make it.



HyeGyeong Choi



HyeGyeong Choi is a painter who works to address social and cultural issues that she faces as a woman. As a Korean woman, she has been subject to commentary and criticism based on the South Korean “high” standards of ideal beauty that define womanhood in a limited way. Similarly, taboos revolving around sexuality are deeply embedded in Korean society inevitably shaping how women are treated and objectified, resulting in a high level of sexual harassment and assault. Her work addresses these points of social friction head-on, dealing with body image, identity, gender, and sexuality.

She is currently living and working in New York and has been in the U.S for 10 years. She holds a BFA from Chung Ang University in Korea and MFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Her work has been included in exhibitions at Anton Kern Gallery, Chart Gallery, Harper’s Gallery in NYC, Zolla/Liberman Gallery, Chicago, Seoul Auction in South Korea, Richard Heller Gallery in LA, and many others. Her work has been featured in and written on by *Washington Post*, *Artsy*, *Hyperallergic*, *Artnet News*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Sixty Inches From Art Center*, and many others.

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HyeGyeong Choi, *Amazon Olympia*, 2020, acrylic on canvas, 42" x 50.5".