

- Prep Time: 10 minutes
- Cook/Simmer Time: 5 minutes
- Cooling & Steeping Time: 15 minutes (ready to eat!)
- Total Time: 30 minutes
- Recipe Difficulty / Intensity: Very Low (1 / 5) — Perfect for absolute beginners.
- Yield: 1 Pint Jar (approx. 8–10 servings, 2 tablespoons per serving)

Table of Contents

- ◆
- [Flavor Intensity Profile](#)
- [Ingredients & Equipment](#)
 - [The Ingredients](#)
 - [Essential Equipment](#)
- [Step-by-Step Instructions](#)
- [Culinary Applications & Pairing Ideas](#)
- [Storage & Shelf Life](#)
- [Nutritional Breakdown](#)

Flavor Intensity Profile

Understanding flavor dynamics helps you customize the brine to suit your taste preferences:

- Tanginess / Acidity: Moderate-High (4 / 5) — Crisp vinegar bite that cleanses the palate.
- Sweetness: Mild-Balanced (2 / 5) — Rounded out just enough to tone down harsh acidity without tasting like syrup.
- Saltiness: Balanced (2 / 5) — Enhances flavor extraction and preservation.
- Aroma / Pungency: Moderate (3 / 5) — Warm garlic and peppercorn undertones without raw onion harshness.

Ingredients & Equipment

The Ingredients

- 1 medium Red Onion (thinly sliced, approx. 2 cups)
- ½ cup Apple Cider Vinegar (gives a fruity depth; apple cider vinegar or white distilled vinegar works great)
- ½ cup Water
- 1 ½ tablespoons Cane Sugar or Granulated Sugar (or liquid honey/maple syrup)

- 1 teaspoon Fine Sea Salt or Kosher Salt
- Optional Aromatics (Highly Recommended):
 - 2 cloves Garlic, peeled and smashed
 - ½ teaspoon Whole Black Peppercorns
 - ½ teaspoon Coriander Seeds
 - 1 small Pinch of Red Pepper Flakes (for a gentle heat kick)
 - 1 small fresh Bay Leaf or sprig of Fresh Thyme

Essential Equipment

- 1 Pint-Sized (16 oz) Glass Mason Jar (or a heat-safe glass container with a lid)
- Chef's Knife & Cutting Board (or a mandoline for paper-thin slices)
- Small Stainless Steel Saucepan
- Measuring Cups and Spoons

Step-by-Step Instructions

1.Prepare the Red Onion:Thin, uniform slices yield the best texture.

Peel the outer papery skin off the red onion. Cut the onion in half from stem to root. Place the flat side down on your cutting board and slice into thin half-moons (aim for about 1/8-inch thickness).

Tip: Slicing them uniformly ensures they absorb the pickling brine evenly and soften to a uniform crunch.

2.Pack the Mason Jar:Add aromatics to the bottom first.

Place your smashed garlic cloves, black peppercorns, coriander seeds, bay leaf, and red pepper flakes directly into the bottom of your clean glass mason jar. Pack the sliced red onions tightly into the jar over top of the spices, leaving about ½ inch of space at the top.

3.Prepare the Quick Brine:Dissolve solids completely over medium heat.

In a small saucepan, combine the water, apple cider vinegar, sugar, and fine sea salt. Place the saucepan over medium heat. Bring the mixture to a gentle simmer, stirring occasionally until the sugar and salt completely dissolve (about 2–3 minutes). Remove from heat immediately.

4.Pour and Steep:Ensure all onions are fully submerged.

Carefully pour the hot brine into the jar over the packed red onions. Use a spoon to gently press the onions down beneath the liquid level. Ensure the spices are submerged.

Allow the jar to sit uncovered at room temperature for 15–20 minutes. As the hot brine works its magic, the onions will soften, shrink slightly, and transform from dark purple to a brilliant bright pink.

5.Seal, Chill, and Serve:Best enjoyed after a quick chill.

Once the jar has cooled down to room temperature, seal it tightly with a non-reactive lid. You can serve them immediately, but letting them rest in the refrigerator for at least 1 hour drastically improves their flavor.

Culinary Applications & Pairing Ideas

Quick-pickled red onions are extraordinarily versatile. Here are some top ways to incorporate them into daily meals:

- **Mexican Favorites:** Essential on carnitas tacos, chicken enchiladas, nachos, quesadillas, and freshly mashed guacamole.
- **Sandwiches & Burgers:** Adds crunch and cuts through fatty meats in smashed burgers, pulled pork, falafel wraps, and avocado toast.
- **Bowls & Salads:** Brightens grain bowls, poke bowls, Mediterranean salads, and potato salads.
- **Breakfast:** Pairs exceptionally well with scrambled eggs, omelets, and smoked salmon bagels.

Storage & Shelf Life

Storage Parameter Detail / Guidance

Refrigeration	Must be kept refrigerated in an airtight glass container.
Shelf Life	Best quality consumed within 2 to 3 weeks.
Texture Peak	Days 1 through 7 yield maximum crunch.

Storage Parameter Detail / Guidance

Appearance Note The brine will stay bright pink. If you notice cloudiness or an off-odor, discard immediately.

Nutritional Breakdown

Pickled red onions are naturally low-calorie, low-fat, and full of beneficial antioxidants from the red onion skins (flavonoids and anthocyanins).

Serving Size: 2 Tablespoons (approx. 28g)

- Calories: 18 kcal
- Total Fat: 0 g (0% DV)
 - Saturated Fat: 0 g
 - Trans Fat: 0 g
- Cholesterol: 0 mg (0% DV)
- Sodium: 180 mg (8% DV)
- Total Carbohydrates: 4.2 g (1.5% DV)
 - Dietary Fiber: 0.5 g (2% DV)

- Sugars: 3.2 g
- Protein: 0.3 g
- Vitamin C: 3% DV
- Calcium: 1% DV
- Iron: 1% DV