WATERMELON RIND PICKLES
Adapted from the Huffington Post July 2016

Think about all the watermelon rinds you toss into the garbage every summer, and consider how heavy they are. Now contemplate the fact that you pay for watermelon by the pound. You might as well throw dollar bills in the garbage can. Considering one-third of the world’s food is wasted in the present day, we need to start thinking about using every part of the fruit or vegetable that is can be re-purposed. Don’t be put off by the idea of a pickled fruit — take a bite blindfolded, and you might never guess it’s not a traditional cucumber pickle.

Ingredients:

- Fills 3 8-ounce BALL canning jars
- Rind from 1 pound of watermelon
- 2 tablespoons salt
- 1 cup cider vinegar (white wine vinegar will also work in a pinch)
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup filtered water
- 1 1/2 tablespoons pickling spice

Directions:

1. Scoop out the flesh from the watermelon and reserve for eating. Peel the green skin off the watermelon rind with a sharp vegetable peeler.
2. Cut white rind into spears that are about 1/2” wide and 2” long.
3. Bring a medium saucepan full of water to a boil. Add 1 tablespoon salt. Boil the watermelon rinds for about 4 minutes, until they just begin to turn translucent and become soft when stabbed with a fork. Drain and let cool for handling.
4. In a medium saucepan (it can be the same one you used for the watermelon), combine the vinegar, sugar, water and pickling spices. Bring to a boil, until the sugar has dissolved.
5. Place the cooled rinds in their pickling jars, tightly packed. Carefully pour the pickling liquid into each jar, until the liquid nearly reaches the top. Screw the top on your jars and refrigerate for up to 2 weeks. Your pickles can be eaten after just a few hours.

The rind may not be as juicy as the flesh of a watermelon, but you can eat it. A 1-inch cube of watermelon rind contains 1.8 calories. While you will not derive a tremendous amount of macronutrients from eating watermelon rind, this food does contain some vitamins. One serving provides 2 percent of the daily recommended intake of vitamin C and 1 percent of the vitamin B-6 your body requires every day. This makes watermelon rind good for your skin and immunity, as well as the health of your nervous system. Citrulline Content Watermelon rind contains a compound known as citrulline, according to a study published in the June 2005 issue of the “Journal of Chromatography.” Citrulline might serve up a range of medicinal benefits. Evidence in the March 2011 edition of the “Journal of the Science of Food and Agriculture” suggests that the citrulline in watermelon rinds gives it antioxidant effects that protect you from free-radical damage. Additionally, citrulline converts to arginine, an amino acid vital to the heart, circulatory system and immune system, say researchers from Texas A&M’s Fruit and Vegetable Improvement Center. These researchers speculate that watermelon rind might relax blood vessels and have a role in treating erectile dysfunction. See more at livingstrong.com