

Pickled Pork Rinds – *Cueritos en Escabeche* (with vegan option at the bottom)

Ingredients (about six portions)

½ lb (225 g)	fresh pork skin
¼ cup	vinegar
1	bay leaf
½ tsp	whole black peppercorns
1 tsp	salt, or to taste
1 cup	pickled jalapeño peppers with carrots (homemade, or from can)

Water, as needed

Place pork skin pieces in a pot with water, over high heat, and bring to a rolling boil. Lower heat to medium, and cook, covered, for thirty to forty minutes, until skin is fully cooked and tender, but not breaking. Drain water, remove rinds from pot, and rinse in cold water. Working with one piece at a time, place on a cutting board with the outer side facing up; using the tip of a knife, remove any bristles that might be still attached, placing the knife under the individual hair, then scraping against the growth direction. Once all the bristles have been removed, flip the piece so outside surface is now facing down, and holding one end with a hand or fork, shave fat still attached, sliding a knife on the surface of the rind, moving towards the other end; discard fat, then slice cleaned rind into smaller pieces, either rectangles, or strips (photo below, left). Return rind pieces to the empty pan; add two cups of water, bay leaf, salt and pour in vinegar (photo below, right):



Turn on heat to high, and bring to a boil. Cook for five minutes, then transfer rinds and bay leaf to a heatproof jar with lid, add black peppercorns and pour cooking liquid on top. Cover with lid. Once cooled, jar may be stored in the fridge for a couple of months. To serve, mix with pickled jalapeños and carrots, adding a little of the liquid as well, and serve as a snack or appetizer, as shown at the top.

VEGAN OPTION! *Cuerito-less Pickled Snack:* It might seem impossible to conceive this dish without pork rind, but the flavour of cooked fresh pork rinds is mild, and its texture, chewy, and konjac noodles (*shirataki*) are a vegan foodstuff with similar characteristics. For four portions of *cuerito-less* pickled snack, mix 400g of rinsed and drained konjac noodles with one cup of pickled jalapeños and carrots, including several spoons of vinegary liquid:

