UMAMI

MEXICAN · TROPICAL · MIAMI-ADAPTED · DRINK · COCKTAIL MIXER · SUMMER REFRESHER · AMUSE-BOUCHE

Tepache (Fermented Pineapple Drink, Miami Tropical)

The peels and core of one ripe pineapple, 200 grams of piloncillo or dark brown sugar, 2 liters of water, a cinnamon stick, a few cloves. Everything in a jar. Covered with cheesecloth. Stirred once daily. Three days later, strain and refrigerate. The Mexican fermented pineapple drink that turns pineapple scraps (waste otherwise) into a fizzy, slightly sour, pineapple-forward beverage — and in Miami's summer heat, ferments in 36 hours instead of 3 days. The easiest ferment in the collection, and the most rewarding.

Protein None (naturally vegan)

Serves ~2 L · 10-15 servings (100-150 ml per) · keeps 1-2 weeks refrigerated

Difficulty Beginner

Active 10 min (5 min assembly + 2 min daily stir + 5 min strain)

Total 36 h - 4 days (Miami: 36-48 h; cooler climates: 3-4 days)

THE STORY

The Pineapple Scrap Ferment

Tepache is pre-Columbian Mexican. The technique predates the Spanish conquest — indigenous Mesoamerican peoples fermented pineapple with corn and sugar as a mildly alcoholic beverage that preserved the fruit during seasonal abundance. Today, tepache is the easiest and most rewarding fermentation project in the home kitchen, and in Miami's sub-tropical climate it is almost impossible to mess up. The pineapple peels and core (parts

otherwise thrown away) ferment with piloncillo (unrefined Mexican cane sugar) and water to produce a fizzy, slightly sour, distinctly pineapple-forward drink that stands between kombucha and cider in the fermentation family.

The Miami factor is everything. Traditional Mexican tepache ferments 3-4 days at 22-25 °C. Miami's summer ambient temperatures (25-32 °C year-round, 30+ in July-September) accelerate this to 36-48 hours. This is why tepache is particularly well-suited to Miami kitchens: fast turnaround, low equipment requirements, year-round success. The Miami speed comes with one risk — you cannot walk away from the ferment. What takes 4 days in a Michigan basement takes 2 days in Miami, and 12 hours makes the difference between 'perfect' and 'too sour.'

This recipe also establishes the zero-waste integration pattern Pablo's collection is building. The pineapple's edible flesh goes into the morning fruit bowl, into gazpacho (UMAMI-5 #1 tropical variant), into grilled-fruit desserts, into the Miami Hot fermented hot sauce variant (UMAMI-8 #2). The scraps — peels, core, crown — become tepache. Nothing wastes. This is the Pablo-Miami-hosting cycle: buy a ripe pineapple Friday, eat the flesh Saturday, start tepache Saturday afternoon, enjoy the ferment by Monday. Three days of value from one pineapple.

The finished drink has three distinct use cases. As a chilled summer refresher: poured over ice in small glasses, 100-150 ml per serving, on its own or garnished with fresh mint. As a cocktail mixer: 60 ml tepache + 30 ml mezcal + dash of lime + Tajín-rimmed glass = the vanguardia-era Miami-Mexican cocktail that defines summer cookout. As an amuse-bouche: 30 ml in a small glass passed at the start of a Mexican-leaning dinner party — the palate primer that signals the meal's arc. All three uses from one batch.

AT A GLANCE

Specs

YIELD	PINEAPPLE	FERMENT TIME	DIFFICULTY
~2 L tepache (10-15 servings)	1 ripe pineapple (scraps only)	`Miami: 36-48 h · cool climates: 3-4 days`	Beginner ●○○○○
ACTIVE TIME	**MAKE-AHEAD**	**TARGET PH**	**CARDINAL RULE**
10 min across 2-4 days	1-2 weeks refrigerated (improves 24-48 h)	3.5-4.0 (fizzy, lightly sour)	Miami heat = 36-48 h; don't walk away
FINAL SIGNAL	**PAIRS WITH**		
Fizzy, slightly sour, pineapple-forward aroma	Mezcal cocktails, summer heat, everything grilled		

UMAMI ADAPTATION

What Changed & Why

Classical Mexican tepache uses pineapple scraps, piloncillo sugar, water, cinnamon, cloves, 3–4 days at room temperature. This Umami adaptation codifies the Miami-specific timing (36–48 h in hot season vs classical 3–4 days), adds the optional spice expansion (ginger, star anise, tamarind) for 🔴 versions, and establishes the zero-waste integration with Pablo's weekly pineapple purchase pattern. The 🟢 Everyday version uses one supermarket pineapple and regular dark brown sugar. The 🔴 No Limits version uses a Homestead or Robert Is Here farmers market pineapple, actual piloncillo from a Mexican grocery, optional ginger + star anise + tamarind, and the mezcal-cocktail service pattern.

CHANGE	ORIGINAL	UMAMI VERSION	WHY
TECH	3-4 days ferment at room temp	Miami summer: 36-48 h; Miami winter / cool climates: 3-4 days	Miami's 25-32 °C ambient accelerates fermentation; do NOT walk away in summer
ADD	—	Cheesecloth cover (NOT tight lid)	CO2 production requires gas escape; sealed jar can pressurize and rupture
TECH	—	Stir once daily to homogenize	Prevents surface layer from forming; ensures even fermentation throughout
SUB	White granulated sugar	Piloncillo (Mexican unrefined cane sugar) OR dark brown sugar	Piloncillo's molasses character is authentic; dark brown is acceptable substitute; white sugar loses flavor depth
ELEV	Classical cinnamon + cloves	🔴 Add ginger + star anise + tamarind for complexity	Expanded spice profile creates a more dimensional tepache — still classical, just more layered

INGREDIENTS

What You Need

🟢 Everyday

The Classical Tepache (🟢)

- Peels + core + crown of 1 ripe pineapple (eat the flesh — it's not part of the ferment; the peels and core have enough sugar and wild yeast)
- 200 g piloncillo (Mexican unrefined cane sugar — cone or block form, available at Mexican/Latin markets) OR dark brown sugar as substitute
- 2 L filtered water (NOT chlorinated — chlorine kills wild yeast)
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 3-4 whole cloves
- Optional: 1 star anise OR pinch of allspice berries

Optional 🔴 Variants (Flavor Expansions)

- Fresh ginger — 2 cm knob, sliced (adds warmth + pungent depth)
- Tamarind — 2 tbsp tamarind paste OR 3 dried tamarind pods, soaked (adds sharper acid note)
- Additional star anise — 2 pods total (more licorice-fennel character)
- Fresh lime zest from 1 lime (brightens the final flavor; add at strain stage)

Substitution Notes

- *No piloncillo?* Dark brown sugar is the closest substitute. Muscovado sugar (British-style unrefined brown) also works. AVOID white granulated (wrong flavor) and coconut palm sugar (too bitter). Piloncillo is worth sourcing — available at any Mexican market or online for $3-5.
- *Frozen or canned pineapple?* Fresh is mandatory — the wild yeast on pineapple skin is the fermentation agent. Frozen/canned pineapple has been processed and lost the wild yeast. No fermentation starter = no tepache.
- *Pineapple is under-ripe?* Wait until it's fully ripe. Under-ripe pineapple has less sugar and less wild yeast; ferment will be weak or fail. Signal: yellow-gold color, slight softness when pressed, sweet aroma from the base.
- *Miami summer vs winter?* In summer (25-32 °C ambient), ferment completes in 36-48 hours. In winter (18-22 °C), ferment takes 3-4 days. Cooler climates (Northeast US, Europe) typically 4-5 days. Taste daily starting at the 36-hour mark.

🔴 **No Limits**

Premium Tepache (🔴 — Miami Tropical)

- Peels + core of 1 Homestead farmers market pineapple OR Robert Is Here tropical market pineapple (Pablo's Miami supplier network — tropical fruit specialist in Homestead, year-round access to ripe tropical varieties)
- 200 g Mexican piloncillo (Mexican Latin market — standard cone form)
- 2 L filtered or spring water (NOT chlorinated tap water)
- 1 Mexican cinnamon stick (true cinnamon, cinnamon verum — softer, sweeter than Ceylon-style grocery cinnamon)
- 4 whole cloves
- 2 star anise pods
- 2 cm fresh ginger, sliced
- 2 tbsp Thai tamarind paste (adds sharper acid note)
- Optional: zest of 1 lime added at strain stage

Service & Cocktail Ingredients

- Chilled tepache in a pitcher, served over ice
- 🔴 **Pablo cocktail pattern:** 60 ml tepache + 30 ml mezcal (Del Maguey Vida or similar artisanal) + dash of fresh lime + Tajín-rimmed glass
- Alternative: 100 ml tepache + splash of sparkling water for a lower-alcohol spritzer
- Fresh pineapple slice or mint sprig for garnish
- Small glass cups for amuse-bouche service (30-50 ml per)
- Small toothpicks with mini pineapple cubes for the cocktail garnish

EQUIPMENT

Your Kit

- [ ] Large (3-4 L) glass jar OR ceramic crock — NOT metal, NOT plastic (fermentation acids react with metal; plastic absorbs odors)
- [ ] Cheesecloth or coffee filter for cover (NOT a tight lid)
- [ ] Rubber band or string to secure cheesecloth
- [ ] Long wooden spoon (for daily stir)

- [ ] Fine-mesh strainer + large bowl (for straining at end)
- [ ] Clean glass bottles or pitchers for storage (1 L size ideal)
- [ ] Labels + permanent marker (date each bottle)
- [ ] pH strips (optional but recommended — verify final pH 3.5-4.0)
- [ ] Refrigerator space for storage

MISE EN PLACE

Before You Start

- [ ] Pineapple at peak ripeness (golden-yellow color, soft when pressed, sweet aroma from base)
- [ ] Peel pineapple with a sharp knife — save peels + core + crown in a bowl. Eat the flesh NOW or refrigerate for later (not part of the ferment)
- [ ] Large fermentation jar cleaned thoroughly (hot water + soap, rinsed well — chlorine-free)
- [ ] Piloncillo weighed (200 g)
- [ ] Water measured (2 L — filtered or spring, chlorine-free)
- [ ] Spices staged (cinnamon stick, cloves, star anise, ginger, tamarind if using)
- [ ] Cheesecloth cut to fit the jar mouth, rubber band ready
- [ ] Label ready for the jar (date of start)

MAKE-AHEAD

Timeline

Day 0 · 10 AM — Eat pineapple flesh, prep scraps

Peel the pineapple with a sharp knife. Cut off and discard the crown (or save for planting). The edible flesh is NOT part of the ferment — eat fresh, or save for other dishes. Save: the peels (outer skin), the core (the fibrous cylinder), and any trimmed bits. These go into the ferment.

Day 0 · 10:10 AM — Assemble ferment

In a large glass jar: combine pineapple peels + core + 200 g piloncillo + 2 L water + cinnamon stick + 3-4 cloves + optional spices (🔴: star anise, ginger, tamarind). Stir with a long wooden spoon to dissolve the piloncillo. Place peels so most are submerged; some floating is fine.

Day 0 · 10:15 AM — Cover + label

Cover the jar mouth with a piece of cheesecloth. Secure with a rubber band. The cloth allows CO2 to escape and prevents insects from entering. Do NOT use a tight lid — the CO2 pressure could rupture the jar. Label with start date.

Day 0 · 10:20 AM — Position at room temp

Place the jar in a clean corner of the kitchen at room temperature (22-28 °C ideal). Avoid direct sunlight (degrades flavor + heats unevenly). Summer Miami: any kitchen counter. Winter Miami or cooler climates: somewhere warm (near the oven, on top of the fridge).

Day 1 · Same time — First stir

Stir the ferment once with a clean wooden spoon. You should see bubbles forming around the pineapple peels — active wild-yeast fermentation. If no bubbles yet: pineapple may have been under-ripe or water may have chlorine; wait another 12-24 hours.

Day 2 · Miami summer — First taste test

Miami summer (ambient >25 °C): at 36 hours, strain 1 tbsp and taste. Should be: mildly fizzy, slightly sour, pineapple-forward. If flat: 12-24 more hours. If too sour: STRAIN NOW and stop the ferment (refrigeration halts the process).

Day 2-3 · Standard climate — Daily taste

Taste daily. The flavor progression: day 2 sweet-fizzy, day 3 balanced fizz-sour, day 4 sour-dry. Pull at your preferred point. Classical Mexican preference: day 3 (balanced fizz-sour-pineapple).

Day 3 (Miami) / Day 4 (cool) — Strain

When the flavor is where you want it: strain everything through a fine-mesh strainer into a large bowl or pitcher. Discard the peels + cores. The liquid is tepache — ~2 L.

Strain day · +30 min — Bottle + refrigerate

Pour the strained tepache into clean glass bottles or pitchers. Cap tightly. Refrigerate. Refrigeration halts further fermentation — the flavor locks at whatever point you strained. 🔴 addition: zest of 1 lime stirred in at this point brightens the final flavor.

Day 4+ · Serve cold

Pour over ice in small glasses (100-150 ml per serving). Serve on its own or as a cocktail mixer. 🔴 Pablo cocktail: 60 ml tepache + 30 ml mezcal + dash of lime + Tajín-rimmed glass = the Miami-Mexican summer cocktail. Keeps refrigerated 1-2 weeks, flavor peaks in first 5-7 days.

METHOD

The Cook

1 Prep + Assembly — 10 Minutes of Work

1. Choose a ripe pineapple. Signal: golden-yellow color (not green), slight softness when pressed, sweet aroma from the base end. Under-ripe pineapple has less wild yeast and less sugar — weaker ferment.
2. Peel the pineapple with a sharp knife, catching the peels in a clean bowl. Cut off the crown and leaves (save for planting if desired, or discard).
3. Cut the pineapple flesh from the fibrous core. The flesh is NOT part of the ferment — eat it fresh, add to morning fruit bowls, or save for other dishes (Miami Hot hot sauce UMAMI-8 #2, grilled pineapple, pineapple gazpacho, etc.). The CORE is part of the ferment.
4. Combine in a large glass jar (3-4 L capacity): all the pineapple peels + the fibrous core + any trimmed bits + 200 g piloncillo (unwrapped) + 2 L filtered water + 1 cinnamon stick + 3-4 cloves + optional spices (star anise, ginger slices, tamarind for 🔴).
5. Stir with a long wooden spoon to dissolve the piloncillo. The sugar should fully dissolve within 2-3 minutes of stirring.
6. Cover the jar mouth with cheesecloth secured with a rubber band. The cloth allows CO2 produced during fermentation to escape while preventing insects and debris from entering. Do NOT use a tight-fitting lid — CO2 pressure can rupture glass.
7. Label the jar with the start date. Place in a clean corner of the kitchen at room temperature (22-28 °C ideal), out of direct sunlight.

> 🔬 **WHY THIS WORKS**
>
> Wild yeast fermentation is distinct from cultured yeast fermentation. Pineapple skin carries naturally-occurring yeasts (primarily Saccharomyces species, plus various non-Saccharomyces wild yeasts) and bacteria (primarily Lactobacillus). These microorganisms are diverse but not controlled — the fermentation produces a complex, less-predictable result than a cultured beer or kombucha. The piloncillo provides the sugar substrate; the pineapple provides the yeast population; the water provides the medium; the spices add flavor without interfering with fermentation. The cheesecloth cover allows CO2 escape while preventing airborne contamination. The mouth-diameter of the jar matters for cheesecloth security — use a wide-mouth fermentation jar, not a narrow-mouth wine carboy. Reference: Fermentation chapter 4 (Wild Yeast Ferments); Food Science Core chapter 5.

2 The Ferment — 36 Hours to 4 Days

1. At the 24-hour mark: stir the ferment once with a clean wooden spoon. You should see bubbles forming in the liquid and around the pineapple peels — this is active wild-yeast fermentation. If no bubbles: pineapple was under-ripe, water was chlorinated, or room temperature is too cold. Wait another 12-24 hours; if still no activity by day 2, abort and restart with ripe pineapple + filtered water.
2. Stir once daily — same time each day. The stir prevents a surface layer from forming and ensures even fermentation throughout. 30 seconds of gentle stirring is enough.
3. Timing by climate: Miami summer (25-32 °C ambient) = 36-48 hours; Miami winter (18-22 °C) = 3-4 days; cooler climates (Northeast US, Europe) = 4-5 days. The temperature directly controls fermentation speed via yeast metabolic rate.
4. First taste test: Miami summer at 36 hours; standard climates at 48 hours. Use a clean spoon. The flavor should be: fizzy (visible/audible carbonation), slightly sour (lactic acid building), pineapple-forward (fruit character dominant).
5. Flavor progression: Day 2 = sweet-fizzy (early stage); Day 3 = balanced fizz-sour-pineapple (classical Mexican target); Day 4 = drier, more sour, less sweet (over-fermented for most palates).
6. Stop the ferment by straining when flavor is where you want it. The Miami warning: what takes 3-4 days in a Michigan basement takes 2 days in Miami, and the difference between 'perfect' and 'too sour' can be 12 hours. Taste frequently.
7. Warning signs: pink or black mold on the surface (abort — contamination), off smell like rotting (abort), excessive pressure (if using a sealed container, which you shouldn't be).

> 🔬 **WHY THIS WORKS**
>
> Wild-yeast fermentation proceeds in phases. Phase 1 (0-24 h): yeast population establishment. The wild yeasts on the pineapple skin multiply exponentially, outcompeting other microbes. Phase 2 (24-72 h): active fermentation. Sugar metabolism produces CO2 (carbonation), ethanol (low levels, ~0.5-2% ABV), and lactic acid (sour character). Phase 3 (72+ h): equilibrium. The fermentation slows as sugar depletes and alcohol + acid levels inhibit further yeast activity. Phase 4 (4+ days): degradation. If left too long, the flavors become harsh, the fruit character fades, and in extreme cases vinegar bacteria take over and convert the ethanol to acetic acid. The optimal harvest window is Phase 2 — active, flavorful, balanced. Miami's warmth accelerates all phases; cooler climates slow them. Reference: Fermentation chapter 4 (Wild Yeast); Food Science Core chapter 5.

3 Strain + Bottle + Refrigerate

1. When the tepache is at your preferred flavor stage: pour the entire contents through a fine-mesh strainer into a large bowl or clean pitcher. Discard the pineapple peels, cores, and spices — they've given everything they have.
2. The strained liquid is tepache — approximately 2 L. If it seems thick, strain a second time through a coffee filter or cheesecloth for a clearer result.
3. (🔴) Add the zest of 1 lime and stir — the lime zest brightens the finished flavor without adding acid. Optional but elevating.
4. Pour into clean glass bottles or pitchers. Cap tightly. Refrigerate.
5. Refrigeration HALTS the fermentation. The flavor locks at whatever point you strained — further changes are minimal in the fridge at 4 °C.
6. Storage: keeps refrigerated 1-2 weeks. Flavor peaks in the first 5-7 days and slowly declines from there. After 2 weeks, the drink may taste slightly more sour than at bottling.
7. If stored in sealed bottles and the ferment continued slightly before refrigeration: some residual carbonation may build up. Open carefully — tepache can be fizzy and splash if shaken or warmed.

QUICK REFERENCE

Timing Cheat Sheet

STEP	TIME	CUE
Pineapple purchased, ripe check	`Day 0 morning`	Golden-yellow, slight give, sweet aroma from base
Peel pineapple, save peels + core	`10 min`	Scraps separated, flesh set aside for eating
Assemble: scraps + piloncillo + water + spices in jar	`5 min`	Everything submerged or near-surface, sugar dissolved
Cover with cheesecloth, position at room temp	`1 min`	Cloth secured with rubber band, kitchen counter spot
Daily stir, daily taste starting Day 2	`1 min per day`	Bubbles visible, flavor progressing through phases

STEP	TIME	CUE
Strain at preferred flavor stage	5 min	Fizzy + balanced fizz-sour-pineapple
Bottle + refrigerate	5 min	Sealed glass bottles, dated labels
Pour cold over ice, serve	1 min	100-150 ml per serving, optional mint sprig

TROUBLESHOOTING

Emergency Protocols

🚨 **NO BUBBLES AFTER 48 HOURS**

Three possible causes: (1) pineapple was under-ripe — not enough wild yeast. (2) water was chlorinated — chlorine kills yeast. (3) temperature is too cold — move to a warmer spot near the oven. If still no activity after 72 hours, abort and restart with a ripe pineapple + filtered water.

🚨 **WHITE FILM / FILM ON THE SURFACE**

Kahm yeast — harmless but indicates ferment is past peak. Skim off the film with a clean spoon. Strain the ferment immediately — it's likely at the sour end of acceptable flavor. Kahm yeast is common and not dangerous, just a signal of timing.

🚨 **PINK, BLACK, OR FUZZY MOLD**

ABORT — throw out the entire batch. These molds produce mycotoxins that are NOT destroyed by cooking or further fermentation. Prevention: use a clean jar; keep scraps largely submerged; don't extend beyond 4-5 days.

🚨 **TEPACHE IS TOO SOUR**

Over-fermented. Can dilute with 1:1 water or sparkling water for a lighter drink. Alternative: use as a salsa brightener (1 tsp in your next tomato salsa) or cocktail mixer (sourness balances mezcal or tequila). Not wasted, just rebranded.

🚨 **TEPACHE TASTES STRONGLY OF CINNAMON OR CLOVE — SPICE-FORWARD**

Too much spice OR infused too long. Next time: halve the cinnamon + cloves OR remove them at the 24-hour mark (not left in the ferment for the full duration). For this batch: dilute with 1 part water to 2 parts tepache to reduce spice intensity.

🚨 TEPACHE IS FLAT / NO FIZZ

Fermentation was weak — under-ripe pineapple or cool temps. The drink still works as a tepache flavor but won't have the characteristic effervescence. Next time: use a ripe pineapple at peak season. Alternative for this batch: serve over ice with sparkling water to add some fizz.

🚨 TEPACHE BUBBLES OVER WHEN OPENED

Bottled too early (continued fermenting in bottle) OR stored warm. Open over a sink, carefully. Release pressure slowly. Prevention: refrigerate immediately after straining; do not bottle in hot kitchen and let sit.

🚨 TEPACHE IS CLOUDY IN STORAGE

Normal — wild-yeast fermentations produce cloudy beverages. The cloudiness doesn't affect flavor or safety. For clearer tepache: strain twice (through mesh + through coffee filter) at bottling.

🚨 MIAMI SUMMER FERMENT IS HAPPENING TOO FAST

In July-September Miami heat, ferment can complete in 24 hours. Start tasting at 18 hours; strain as soon as flavor is where you want it. This is the Miami trade-off: fast results with narrow timing window. For more control: move jar to the coolest corner of the house or a basement.

DEEP DIVES

Technique Notes

🟡 Universal: Miami Heat Accelerates Everything

CLIMATE FACTOR · FERMENTATION SPEED · UNIVERSAL

Miami's year-round ambient temperature (25-32 °C in summer, 18-22 °C in winter) directly controls wild-yeast fermentation speed. Mexican tepache takes 3-4 days at 22 °C; in Miami summer (30 °C), it completes in 36-48 hours. This is a blessing and a curse: fast turnaround means same-week gratification, but narrow timing windows mean you cannot walk away from the ferment. Apply the same Miami-speed factor to any room-temperature fermentation: kombucha, sauerkraut, wild-yeast sourdough starter, kimchi. Always taste frequently in Miami summer; always set timers. For more control, use a cooler spot in the house (north-facing room, air-conditioned space). For more fermentation predictability: refrigerated slow-ferment methods. Reference: Fermentation chapter 1 (Miami Factor); chapter 4.

🟡 Universal: Cheesecloth Cover, Never a Tight Lid

SAFETY · GAS MANAGEMENT · UNIVERSAL

Wild-yeast fermentation produces significant CO2. A tight-fitting lid on a fermenting jar creates pressure that can rupture the glass, spraying sugary fermenting liquid across the kitchen. Cheesecloth (or a coffee filter) covers allow CO2 to escape while keeping out insects, dust, and debris. Secure with a rubber band around the jar mouth. This rule applies to any wild-yeast or active lacto-fermentation: kombucha mother, sauerkraut (with weight and loose lid), wild sourdough starter (with loose lid or cheesecloth). Airlocks are the engineered solution for longer ferments (3+ weeks); cheesecloth is the classical solution for short ferments (2-7 days). Reference: Fermentation chapter 3 (Equipment).

🟡 Universal: Taste Daily, Don’t Just Time

FERMENTATION DISCIPLINE · ACTIVE MONITORING · UNIVERSAL

Tepache is a taste recipe, not a clock recipe. Temperature, pineapple ripeness, initial microbial population, and ambient conditions all affect the timing of peak flavor. Calendar-based recipes ('Day 3 is done') fail in Miami summer (faster) and winter (slower). The correct approach: start tasting at 36 hours, taste daily, strain when flavor is balanced (fizzy + slightly sour + pineapple-forward). This applies to all wild-yeast and short-ferment projects — kombucha, sauerkraut, kimchi, fermented hot sauce (UMAMI-8 #2). Trust your tongue over the calendar. Reference: Fermentation chapter 4 (Flavor Development).

🟡 Universal: Zero-Waste Pineapple Integration

WASTE PHILOSOPHY · KITCHEN ECONOMICS · UNIVERSAL

Tepache turns pineapple waste into value. The peels + core + crown — parts you'd throw away — become a fizzy, flavorful, shelf-stable beverage. Combined with eating the flesh (or using it in other recipes like the Miami Hot fermented hot sauce UMAMI-8 #2 or pineapple gazpacho), a single pineapple yields: (1) fresh fruit for morning bowls or dessert, (2) cooking applications for the flesh, (3) tepache from the scraps. Three uses from one purchase. Apply the same zero-waste logic to other produce: citrus peels for infused oils, tomato skins for stock, herb stems for pesto bases, vegetable scraps for kombu stock. Nothing wastes in a well-ordered kitchen. Reference: Pantry and Staples chapter 12 (Zero-Waste Practice).

🔴 No Limits: The Mezcal Cocktail Service Pattern

COCKTAIL · MIAMI-MEXICAN · PABLO SIGNATURE

The Pablo cocktail pattern: 60 ml tepache + 30 ml mezcal (Del Maguey Vida, Monte Alban, or similar artisanal) + dash of fresh lime + Tajín-rimmed glass. Shake or stir over ice. Garnish: fresh pineapple cube on a toothpick. Serve over ice in a rocks glass or coupe. The tepache's fermented-pineapple fizz carries the mezcal's smoky agave character; the lime brightens; the Tajín rim (chili-lime-salt powder) adds contrast on each sip. This is the Miami-Mexican summer cocktail — works for dinner-party cocktail hour, backyard gatherings, poolside service. Scales easily to a batch (500 ml tepache + 250 ml mezcal + 12 lime wedges + Tajín bowl for self-service rimming). The cocktail exists only because the tepache exists — one ferment enables the cocktail program. Reference: Sauces and Condiments chapter 14 (Cocktails); Dinner Party Orchestration chapter 6.

🔴 No Limits: The Ferment Family — Kimchi + Hot Sauce + Tepache

COLLECTION PHILOSOPHY · FERMENT ARC · PABLO PATTERN

Pablo's fermentation directory (UMAMI-8) now contains three recipes that together teach the full range of ferment science: Kimchi (UMAMI-8 #1) — vegetable lacto-ferment with salt discipline (2-3% salt by weight). Fermented Hot Sauce (UMAMI-8 #2) — pepper lacto-ferment with 3% salt, same discipline. Tepache (UMAMI-8 #3) — wild-yeast sugar ferment, NO salt, cheesecloth cover. Three recipes, three distinct microbial models (lactobacillus for kimchi + hot sauce, wild yeast for tepache), three different serving contexts (table condiment, hot sauce, beverage). Together they cover the approachable fermentation spectrum — home cook can master all three in a month. Apply the same 'cover-the-category' thinking to other recipe directories: UMAMI-6 Kamado with secreto + pizza + whole fish covers the direct-heat range. UMAMI-11 Grains with paella + caldoso + fideuà covers the Spanish rice-and-noodle family. Completeness matters. Reference: Fermentation chapter 1 (Overview).

PAIRING

What to Drink

🥃 Cocktail — Pablo Miami-Mexican Signature

Mezcal + Tepache (60/30 ratio, Tajín rim, lime)

The defining cocktail of Pablo's summer hosting. Tepache's fizzy-sour pineapple carries mezcal's smoky agave; Tajín adds chili-lime contrast. Works for dinner-party cocktail hour, backyard service, pool-side hosting. Batch-friendly for 8-12 guests.

🍺 Beer Alternative

Mexican lager (Modelo Especial, Pacifico, Tecate)

For casual service: Mexican lager + tepache on the side creates a fizzy-beer-forward Miami experience. Both work on a hot day, both pair with outdoor Mexican-adjacent food. Beer + tepache + Tajín is the classical summer-cookout combo.

🍷 Wine Pairing

Light rosé (Provence or Spanish rosado) or Vinho Verde

For tepache as a cocktail or refresher during dinner: light rosé or Vinho Verde don't compete with tepache's fruit character. Both chilled, both dry, both cut through Mexican/Miami-cuisine richness.

🍹 Non-Alcoholic Service

Tepache over ice with lime + mint (straight, no mixer)

Tepache is naturally flavorful enough to serve on its own. Over ice + lime wedge + mint sprig = refreshing summer drink for guests avoiding alcohol. Perfect for daytime Miami outdoor service, kid-friendly (low alcohol content — ~0.5-2% ABV is typically imperceptible to kids in 100 ml servings, but verify locally).

CONTEXT

Menu Ideas

Summer Cocktail Hour (dinner party 8-12 guests)

Batch the Pablo cocktail: 500 ml tepache + 250 ml mezcal + 12 lime wedges + Tajín bowl for self-service rimming. Passed at the start of a Mexican-leaning dinner party. Accompany with: cold snacks (ceviche UMAMI-2 #1, kanpachi crudo UMAMI-2 #2), Tajín-dusted cut fruit, small guacamole + chips. 30-45 min cocktail hour before dinner.

Summer Refresher (boat day / picnic / lunch)

Tepache straight over ice with lime + mint. 100-150 ml per serving in small glasses. Accompany with: grilled whole fish (UMAMI-6 #3), patatas bravas (UMAMI-7 #3), cold gazpacho (UMAMI-5 #1). Pair with the Pablo boat-day pattern. The drink is hydrating, refreshing, and not too alcoholic for outdoor daytime service.

Amuse-Bouche Pattern (formal Mexican-leaning dinner)

30-50 ml in small glasses passed at the start of a Mexican or Miami-Latin-fusion dinner party. The fizzy, slightly sour, pineapple-forward character primes the palate without committing to a specific course theme. Follow with a substantive first course (ceviche, kanpachi crudo, or salad). Elegant, unexpected, low-effort (the ferment did all the work).

Cross-Recipe Integration

Same pineapple feeds: UMAMI-8 #2 Miami Hot Fermented Hot Sauce (🔴 variant with Scotch bonnet + mango scraps), tepache (this recipe), fresh eating. Zero-waste pineapple pattern. Complements UMAMI-8 #1 Kimchi + UMAMI-8 #2 Hot Sauce to complete the fermentation directory — three recipes teaching lacto + wild-yeast ferments, salt + no-salt methods. Mezcal cocktail integrates with UMAMI-2 #2 Kanpachi Crudo service (pour alongside), UMAMI-4 #3 Tortilla Española (tepache works as a casual cocktail while tortilla is in the pan), outdoor cooks generally.

YOUR NOTES

Cook Log

Session Notes

Date: _____ · Serves: ____ · Rating: __ / 5

Use this space to record what you changed, what worked, and what you'd do differently next time. Your future self will thank you.