

After spending quite a bit of time in the Pickle and Chutney Pavilion at Slow Food Nation over Labor Day, I feel qualified to say that...WE ARE AT A PICKLE PINNACLE. Pickles have finally reached the height of grandeur and respect that they are due. Pickles are no longer just a warehouse-club item purchase that gets stuck at the back of the fridge. Or just a cheap condiment whose ingredients aren't scrutinized. They are a gourmet food and they're increasingly being recognized as an integral part of a healthy diet, especially when naturally fermented. Home pickling has become the latest DIY (do-it-yourself) craze. I have written several articles on [my fermentation fetish](#) (I have an entire category devoted to it), so this is a topic dear to my heart.

At the Pickle and Chutney Pavilion, it was a pleasure to meet Bob and Joe McClure, two young (and I might add, stylish) craftsmen who are bringing the old tradition of pickling to the modern age. While not naturally fermented, they are using a delicious vinegar-brine recipe handed down from their great-grandmother for two variations of pickled cucumbers: spicy (rated: house on fire) and garlic dill. They also sell a relish. They buy ingredients from local farmers and and take their time (2 months) to let the hot-brine process churn out a perfectly crispy, tangy pickle.

They sell their products [online](#) and also through retailers in NY, MI, CA, PA, IL, MA, UT, and NC. If you get a moment, check out their quirky [McClure's Pickles](#) web site, especially their [About page](#) which includes their "pickle legend" and a 40s-style video commercial starring the [Apple Sisters](#) and Bob McClure in a funny / subversive take on the Andrews Sisters + seedy MC.

With their intentionally clashing ties and shirts and trucker hats, they would fit in as SF Mission Street hipsters but instead Bob McClure is an actor and writer in New York and Joe operates the Midwestern branch of the company in Detroit where he is finishing his Ph.D. in physiology. They are funny guys as you can see in the video.