

## **HOW TO MAKE MOZZARELLA AT HOME**

### **Ingredients**

2 gallons good quality whole milk (NOT ultra-pasteurized, non-homogenized if you can find it)

3 ½ tsp Citric Acid

½ tablet rennet OR ½ tsp liquid rennet

Large Pot or Dutch Oven

Colander lined with cheesecloth or fine-mesh sieve

Bowl for hot water

Slotted spoon or ladle

Thermometer

Curd Knife or long dull knife

Sharp Knife

Pickling/Brining Salt

Nitrile Gloves

**Sanitize all equipment with boiling water before starting.**

1. Pour cold milk into large pot or Dutch oven and sprinkle citric acid over the top of the milk while stirring. Make sure citric acid is completely dissolved before heating milk.
2. Place the milk pot into the sink and fill sink with very hot water to warm the milk to 90°F, stirring constantly. Alternately, you can heat milk over low heat on a stovetop, stirring constantly. As the milk heats it will curdle- this is normal. While heating, mix liquid or rennet tablet into ¼ cup of cool water.
3. When milk reaches 90°F, turn off heat (or drain water) and quickly add diluted rennet to the milk, gently stirring up and down for 30 seconds and then letting the milk rest, undisturbed, for 5 minutes. After 5 minutes, curd should be solid with the texture of jell-o - check the curd by pulling it away from the wall of the pot, or check for 'clean break' with a knife.
4. Cut the curd with the knife into ½ to 1-inch squares and let curds rest for 5 minutes.
5. Unfold cheesecloth and fold in half once, neatly draping over the colander, and place the cheesecloth-lined colander (or sieve) in a sink or over a pot.
6. Using a slotted spoon or ladle, scoop the curd from the pot into the colander with cheesecloth or sieve and allow the whey to drain, reserving some whey in the Dutch oven. You can also scoop both curd and whey into the colander with a bigger cup, but draining will take longer.

7. Let the curds and whey drain for 10-15 minutes, and when much of the whey has drained off, gently press the curd onto itself, facilitating draining and forming a single curd mass. If using cheesecloth you can carefully lift the curd out of the colander by pulling together the 4 corners of the cheesecloth. Curd is ready when it looks and feels solid and is no longer leaking whey. The draining process can take as long as an hour, so be patient!
8. As the curd drains, prepare hot water: it should be at least 175°F. Boiling is okay.
9. Prepare a brine: Add salt to a large bowl of room-temperature water and stir to dissolve- keep adding salt until it stops dissolving and some salt remains on the bottom. Then add 2-3 tbsp of clear whey.
10. Wearing gloves, cut or break the curd into 1-2 inch pieces. Take a handful of curds and place into a bowl - carefully pour hot water or whey over the curd just to cover it. Work the curd by pressing it together and folding in the hot water (with your gloved hands OR with a spoon) to facilitate even heating. As the curd begins to meld together, lift it from the hot water and begin to stretch.
11. Curd should be easy to stretch - it should stretch when lifted out of the water. If the curd does not stretch, check and adjust your water temperature and re-immerses the curd. The curd also might not be fully drained- let it drain for a few minutes longer and try again. If there continues to be stretching issues, it might be a milk problem - some store-bought milk is pasteurized at too high a heat or over-homogenized, and won't stretch.
12. If curd begins to cool too much, or if it begins to tear, place it back in the hot water to reheat. Drain and add more hot water if necessary. Form into a ball when the curd is very shiny- make an "OK" sign with your hand and press the curd through the hole in your fingers to create a smooth ball. Don't roll it like it's a ball of Play-Doh, use your hands to smooth the outside and form the ball from the outside in. Pinch off the remaining curd when the ball is your desired size.
13. At this point your mozzarella is finished! Place in brine and let sit for 20-40 minutes, depending on your saltiness preferences. Then refrigerate or enjoy right away!

## **WHERE TO BUY SUPPLIES**

**New England Cheesemaking Supply Company** - [www.cheesemaking.com](http://www.cheesemaking.com)

**Dairy Connection For Consumers** - [www.getculture.com](http://www.getculture.com)

**The Cheesemaker Equipment And Supplies** - [www.thecheesemaker.com](http://www.thecheesemaker.com)

## **RECIPE/REFERENCE BOOKS**

**Home Cheese Making: Recipes for 75 Homemade Cheeses** by Ricki Carroll

**Artisan Cheese Making At Home: Techniques And Recipes for Mastering World-Class Cheeses** by Mary Karlin and Ed Anderson

**Kitchen Creamery: Making Yogurt, Butter & Cheese At Home** by Louella Hill

**One-Hour Cheese: Fresh and Simple Cheeses You Can Make in an Hour Or Less** by Claudia Lucero

## **HOW TO TASTE CHEESE and HELPFUL DESCRIPTOR WORDS**

### **1. Look at it**

A cheese's appearance can tell you a lot about the type of milk, its style and overall condition. What color is the rind? What type of rind does it have: bloomy, natural, waxed or washed? What color is the inside? Are there any unusual fissures or holes? Of course, it helps to know what characteristics you're looking for – so the next time you buy a new cheese, ask your cheesemonger about its appearance.

### **2. Smell it**

A significant percentage of taste is affected by smell. I always smell food before I eat it for the first time! The aroma of a cheese conveys both its style and condition. As you might have guessed, “stinky” cheese does not mean “bad” cheese. Don't be afraid to taste a very smelly cheese, as it often has a very mild flavor. If you can, always taste cheese at room temperature, cold cheese does not reveal its full aroma and flavor. If a cheese is cold, break it up in your palm. This will warm the cheese and expose more surface area-- both important for releasing the cheese's aromas. Then take a good whiff and exhale through your nose.

### **3. Taste It**

When you taste a cheese, take your time. Breathe in, chew slowly, exhale through your nose. Allow yourself time to observe the flavor curve from the initial taste through the finish. Often, the difference between mediocre cheese and excellent cheese is in the finish – and you might not experience it until 30 seconds after first taste. Whether a cheese is mild or pungent, the cheesemaker's goal is to achieve balance among the five human taste areas: sweet, salty, sour, bitter and umami (Japanese for “savory”).

### **4. Describe it**

Like wine, describing cheese is not an easy task. Cheeses change flavor at different stages of the aging process and create different experiences to different people.

**Describing cheese is subjective- there is no right or wrong answer!**

## **HOW TO TASTE CHEESE and HELPFUL DESCRIPTOR WORDS**

Go beyond 'Sharp' and 'Mild'! These words simply make it easier for you to more specifically describe the flavors and textures you are experiencing:

### **Aroma & Flavor**

Barnyardy	Citrusy	Beefy	Grassy
Fruity	Lemony	Gamy	Vegetal
Earthy	Sweet	Herbaceous	Tangy
Straw/Hay	Buttery	Caramelly	Earthy
Nutty	Mushroomy	Catty	Smoky

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### **Texture**

Spreadable	Fluffy	Pillowy	Airy	Firm
Luscious	Rich	Delicate	Creamy	Supple
Dense	Soft	Pasty	Custardy	Dry
Chewy	Elastic	Moist	Velvety	Sandy
Sticky	Supple	Pliable	Bold	Thick
Flaky	Grainy	Tangy	Crumbly	Gelatinous