

Mozzarella Cheese Making Recipe

Italian in origin, famed for its use in North American style pizza. Categorized as a fresh cheese as it is not really never pressed or aged and thus not a hard cheese. You can eat the cheese the same day you make it. An interesting note about mozzarella is its ability to be frozen and stored for up to six months and then thawed and used, with little loss in flavor. Note: true Italian Mozzarella is made from Buffalo milk, however most mozzarella is made using skim cow's milk. In reality you can use any type of milk, although the taste and texture will vary.

Ingredients

- 1 US gallon cow's milk.
- Thermophilic Starter Culture.
- Rennet, amount as per package directions or your experience.
- Litmus paper or digital pH.

Directions

1. Heat the milk to 90 F / 32.5 C.
2. Add 2 oz. thermophilic culture.
3. Ripen the milk for 45-60 minutes.
4. Dissolve the 1/2 tab rennet into 4 tablespoons water and then stir into the milk for at least 5 minutes to ensure even distribution.
5. Let the milk set for 60 minutes.
6. Once the milk has set, cut it into 1/2 inch cubes.
7. Let it cook at 90 F / 32.5 C for another half hour.
8. Over the next half hour slowly raise the temperature of the curds to 105 F / 40.5 C.
9. Let it cook at 105 F / 40.5 C for another 5-10 minutes.
10. Drain the whey by pouring through a cheesecloth lined colander.
11. Place the curds into a double boiler with the bottom pot filled with water maintained at 105 F / 40.5 C.
12. You'll need to periodically drain the whey while the curds are cooking.
13. Flip the curds periodically so they are evenly heated. They should melt together.
14. Let the curds cook at this temperature for 2-3 hours.
15. When the curds are done cooking test the pH, it should be 5.2-5.3.
16. If the pH isn't 5.2-5.3, it won't spin. Allow it to cook a little longer.
17. Cut the curd mass into 1/2 inch cubes.
18. Drain off any excess whey.
19. Place the curds directly into water that is 170 F / 76.5 C. Don't overheat!
20. Use two large wooden spoons and work the curds by pressing them together.
21. A ball of cheese will begin to form.
22. When the ball is the right size, take it out and work it with your hands, stretching the mass over itself.
23. Do this several times with each ball. If necessary the ball can be put back into the water to warm it up so that it can be stretched further.
24. Then immediately dunk the cheese into a cold saturated brine solution.
25. Let the cheese soak for 60 minutes.
26. The cheese can be eaten fresh, kept in plastic wrap in the refrigerator for about 10 days or frozen for several months. The cheese does taste better if it is allowed to rest in the refrigerator for 24 hours before eating.

By far the hardest step is the stretching, spinning step. If you just can't get it to work right, you might try putting the cheese mass into a microwave at a low setting for several seconds. Warm it up, and then work it.