



HOW TO MAKE SINLESS FRESH FORMAGE

Crafting Low-Carb Fresh Cheeses In Your Own Kitchen



TABLE OF CONTENTS

About The Author	01
Introduction	03
PART ONE: FRESH CHEESES	05
Chapter 1: Getting Started	08
Chapter 2: The Science of Starters	15
Chapter 3: Essential Cheese Making Equipment	17
Chapter 4: Citric Acid-Based Fresh Cheeses:	19
1 Mozzarella (quick-set version)	24
2 Ricotta	26
3 Paneer	31
4 Mascarpone	35
5 Queso Blanco	39
6 Burrata (made with mozzarella)	43
7 Bocconcini (small mozzarella balls)	47
Chapter 5: Mesophilic Fresh Cheeses:	49
1 Cream Cheese	53
2 Feta	57
3 Queso Fresco	61
4 Cottage Cheese	65
5 Fromage Blanc	69
6 Quark	73
7 Chèvre (Fresh Goat Cheese)	77

About the Author

Shari MAC's passion for cheese has been a defining aspect of her culinary career. As co-host of the national TV series "Simply Wine and Cheese" with the late Al Waxman, MAC shared her extensive knowledge and enthusiasm for cheese with viewers across the country. Her expertise extends beyond television. She wrote Canada's Cheese and Wine Lovers' Cookbook and continues to teach cheesemaking classes throughout her province, passing on her skills and love for the craft to others.

MAC's journey in the culinary world began at a young age, with her love for baking blossoming at 12 years old. She would create delicious treats like banana bread for her family, filling their home with warm, inviting aromas. This early passion laid the foundation for her lifelong journey in the culinary world.

Over the past decade, MAC has dedicated herself to perfecting low carb dishes, including breads and baked goods. Her latest passion project involves mastering low-carb sourdough bread, a challenge she's been working on for over a year. She has successfully created recipes for low-carb sourdough starter, breads, and baked goods, combining her extensive culinary knowledge with a commitment to healthful eating. Hence the creation of Sinless Sourdough.

MAC's career spans over three decades in the world of traditional wine and gourmet food. Her accomplishments include:

- Best-selling and International award-winning cookbook author
- Syndicated columnist, food editor, and recipe developer
- Creator of innovative learning tools like the Icewine Flavour Wheel and Canadian Wine Wheel
- Contributor to sensory science programs at George Brown College and CCOVI at Brock University

Despite her success in the gourmet food world, MAC faced personal health challenges, including a 70-pound weight gain. Determined to reclaim her health, she embraced a Keto diet and later transitioned to a low carb lifestyle. This transformation, along with giving up alcohol, led to successful weight loss and improved well-being.

Today, MAC channels her culinary expertise into Sinless Sourdough and blogging and teaching about low carb cooking, and homemade cheesemaking. Her Keto and Low Carb recipes, complete with Non-Alcoholic Wine Pairing Notes, can be found on her website, ketopaleosharimac.com.

Introduction

I'm thrilled to share with you my passion for making low-carb fresh cheeses at home! As a long-time cheese lover, cookbook author, and cheesemaking teacher, I've spent years exploring the delightful world of cheese. Today, I'm excited to introduce you to the art of making fresh, low-carb cheeses at home.

Let me start by saying that cheese-making is not just a culinary skill – it's a fascinating blend of science and artistry. The process of turning milk into cheese involves complex chemical reactions, bacterial cultures, and careful temperature control. It's like conducting a delicious symphony in your own kitchen!

While cheese is often embraced in low-carb and keto diets, it's important to understand that not all cheeses are created equal when it comes to carbohydrate content. Cheese is made from milk, which naturally contains carbohydrates. Some cheeses have more than others.

This is where the beauty of homemade cheese comes in – by making your own, you can control the carb content and sodium levels to fit your dietary needs. Why settle for store-bought when you can craft your own perfectly tailored fresh cheeses?

What many of my cheesemaking students discovered is that homemade fresh cheeses taste so much better than the store-bought versions. Once you've tasted homemade cream cheese, for example, you'll never go back to the store-bought version. So why not enjoy a homemade cheese that's more delicious and lower in carbs?

My journey into cheese-making has been nothing short of exhilarating. It all started when I decided to make homemade mozzarella for a dinner party. The result? A delightful goat's milk mozzarella that I used to create a mouth-watering hors d'oeuvre. The



experience reignited my passion for cheese-making and set me on a mission to master the art of crafting fresh cheeses at home. Now I love to prepare homemade fresh cheeses with lower carbs.

Making homemade cheese is akin to a scientific experiment, requiring precision and patience. It's a partnership with Mother Nature, where you must respect the natural fermentation process. Using high-quality ingredients, maintaining proper temperatures, and following instructions carefully are key to success. Even your home environment can play a role in the cheese-making process!

I'm eager to guide you through this low-carb cheese-making adventure. Together, we'll explore the science behind cheese-making, learn to create delicious fresh cheeses, and discover how to incorporate them into low-carb recipes that sing with flavor.

The Cheese Recipes

Each of the cheese recipes suggest the use of a low carb milk. Each brand of milk has their own nutritional values. Therefore the nutritional values in the milk are important so you can track your macros. I'm using Fairlife milk nutritional values to give you a general idea of the nutritional values for the milk recipes. Remember that if you use a different brand then the values will be different.

All the cheese recipes are based on using 1 gallon of Fairlife whole milk. The nutritional values are as follows:



For 1 Gallon (16 cups):

Calories: 2400

Total Fat: 128g

Saturated Fat: 80g

Trans Fat: 0g

Cholesterol: 480mg

Sodium: 1920mg

Total Carbohydrates: 96g

Dietary Fiber: 0g

Total Sugars: 96g

Protein: 208g

Fairlife whole milk has a higher protein content than regular milk, which is beneficial for cheese production. A gallon of Fairlife whole milk contains:

- 208g of protein
- 128g of total fat
- 96g of carbohydrates (sugars)

In cheesemaking, the main components that contribute to cheese yield are protein (casein) and fat. The higher protein content in Fairlife milk suggests it could potentially produce more cheese than regular milk.

Typically, for regular whole milk, the cheese yield is about 10-15% of the milk volume. However, given Fairlife's higher protein content, we might expect a slightly higher yield.

A conservative estimate for Fairlife whole milk might be around 15-20% yield. For a gallon of milk (which is approximately 3.79 liters or 3,790 grams):

15% yield: $3,790 \text{ g} * 0.15 = 568.5 \text{ grams of cheese}$

20% yield: $3,790 \text{ g} * 0.20 = 758 \text{ grams of cheese}$

So, from one gallon of Fairlife whole milk, you could expect to produce approximately 570-760 grams of fresh cheese, or about 1.25 to 1.67 pounds.

It's important to note that this is an estimate, and actual yield can vary based on factors such as the specific cheesemaking process, temperature, type of cheese being made, and the efficiency of curd formation and separation.

To round this off to give you a general estimate of the nutritional value of your fresh homemade cheese, I've gone with halfway between 570 to 760 grams. Based on this here are the values:

So, the halfway point between 1.25 and 1.67 pounds is:

1.46 pounds

662.24 grams (rounded to two decimal places)

Now let's look at the nutritional values of the fresh cheese:

Nutritional Values for 1.46 Pounds (662.24 grams) of Fresh Cheese

- Calories: 2400
- Total Fat: 128g
- Saturated Fat: 80g
- Trans Fat: 0g
- Cholesterol: 480mg
- Sodium: 1920mg
- Total Carbohydrates: 96g
- Dietary Fiber: 0g
- Total Sugars: 96g
- Protein: 208g

These values assume that the entire nutritional content of the milk is retained in the cheese, which is a reasonable approximation for fresh cheese.

CHAPTER 1

GETTING STARTED



Essentials:

- What Milk is Best for Cheese Making?
- Flavoring Cheese
- Starters (or cultures)
- Coagulants
- Cheese Salt
- Equipment
- Preparation
- Warming the Milk
- Adding Cultures
- Adding Rennet
- Checking for a Clean Break

When you make cheese at home, picking the right milk is crucial. Talk to farmers and local cheese makers. Have fun exploring your options! Remember, freshness is key. Don't open the milk container until you're ready to start. One gallon of milk will give you about 2 pounds of fresh cheese. Support small, local farms and dairies. Once you find a milk source you like, stick with it. Always buy the freshest milk available.

Let's break down the different types of milk:

Raw Milk: This comes straight from cows, goats, sheep, or water buffalo. It's packed with natural bacteria and organisms. These days, it's hard to find raw milk unless you're buddies with a local dairy farmer.

Pasteurized Milk: Louis Pasteur invented this process back in 1862. It kills dangerous bacteria by heating the milk to 172°F for at least 15 seconds. While pasteurization is great for safety, it can weaken cheese curds. To fix this, add Calcium Chloride when making cheese.

Ultra-Pasteurized Milk: Most grocery store milk is ultra-pasteurized. It's heated to 212°F for at least a second, killing all organisms – good and bad. This milk isn't great for making homemade cheese, even with added Calcium Chloride.

Homogenized Milk: This process mixes the cream evenly throughout the milk. It creates a consistent fat content, texture, and flavor.

For low-carb cheese making, the fat content of your milk matters. Higher fat milk typically results in lower carb cheese. When making fresh cheeses at home, you can control the carb content by choosing higher fat milk options.

Low-Carb Milk:

I want to note that specific brand availability can vary by region and may change over time. Always check the nutritional information on the packaging, as formulations can be updated. Here are some brands known for their low-carb milk products:

1. Fairlife
2. Carbmater (Kroger brand)
3. Hood Calorie Countdown
4. Organic Valley Ultra
5. Mootopia
6. Maple Hill Organic Zero Sugar

The process of lowering carbs in milk typically involves one or more of these methods:

- 1 Filtration:** Ultra-filtration is the most common method. It uses a fine membrane to separate the milk components. This process removes some of the lactose (milk sugar) while retaining proteins and other nutrients. The filtered milk is then often recombined with cream to achieve the desired fat content.
- 2 Enzyme treatment:** Some producers add the enzyme lactase to break down lactose into simpler sugars (glucose and galactose). While this doesn't reduce the total carbohydrate content, it can make the milk taste sweeter without added sugars and be more digestible for lactose-intolerant individuals.
- 3 Blending:** Some products blend milk with water and add milk proteins to maintain a milk-like nutritional profile while reducing overall carbohydrate content.

The percentage of carb reduction can vary significantly between brands and methods:

- Filtration methods typically reduce carbohydrates by 50–75%. For example, regular milk contains about 12g of carbs per cup, while filtered milk might contain 3–6g per cup.
- Enzyme-treated milk doesn't necessarily reduce total carbohydrates but breaks down lactose, which can affect how the body processes these carbs.
- Blended products can achieve even higher reductions, with some brands claiming up to 90% fewer carbs than regular milk.

It's important to note that while these products can be part of a low-carb diet, they are processed foods. Some may contain additives to maintain texture and flavor. Always read labels carefully and consider how these products fit into your overall dietary goals.

Creative Ways to Flavor Low-Carb Cheeses:

Flavoring your homemade low-carb cheeses can transform them from simple to spectacular. Here are some creative ways to add variety and excitement to your cheese-making process:

Infusing the Milk:

- 1 **Herbs and Spices:** Add fresh herbs like basil, thyme, rosemary, or spices such as garlic powder, onion powder, and paprika directly into the milk before you start the cheese-making process. This allows the flavors to infuse deeply into the cheese.
- 2 **Citrus Zest:** For a refreshing twist, add lemon or orange zest to the milk. This works particularly well with soft cheeses like ricotta or cream cheese.



Adding Flavors to Curds or Finished Cheese:

- 1 **Fresh Herbs:** Mix chopped fresh herbs like chives, parsley, or dill into the curds before pressing them. This not only adds flavor but also a beautiful visual element.
- 2 **Spices:** Incorporate spices such as black pepper, red pepper flakes, or cumin into the curds. This can give your cheese a unique and bold taste.
- 3 **Low-Carb Sweeteners:** For a slightly sweet cheese, add small amounts of low-carb sweeteners like stevia or erythritol. This can be particularly appealing in cream cheese or mascarpone.

Specific Cheese Flavor Combinations:

- 1 **Garlic and Herb Goat Cheese:** Combine goat cheese with minced garlic and a mix of fresh herbs. This makes a flavorful spread perfect for low-carb crackers.
- 2 **Pepper Jack Cheese:** Add chopped jalapeños and red pepper flakes to your cheese curds to create a spicy pepper jack cheese.
- 3 **Smoked Cheese:** Use a smoker or liquid smoke to give your cheese a smoky flavor. This works well with semi-hard cheeses like gouda or cheddar.

Enhancing Stability with Calcium Chloride:

When making low-carb cheeses at home, you can use reduced-carb milks as a starting point.

It's important to keep in mind that low-carb cheeses can be less stable in the context of home cheesemaking, primarily due to the reduced sugar content and altered protein-to-moisture ratio.

However, adding calcium chloride can help correct this instability and improve the cheese-making process.

Here's how calcium chloride can benefit low-carb cheese production at home:


Calcium chloride helps restore the calcium balance in milk, which is particularly important when using pasteurized milk or making low-carb cheeses.

It enhances milk coagulation, resulting in firmer curds and better overall cheese structure. This is crucial for low-carb cheeses, as they may have a compromised protein matrix due to reduced sugar content. The addition of calcium chloride also improves the effectiveness of rennet, leading to more efficient and consistent curd formation.

For home cheesemaking, the recommended dosage of calcium chloride is typically 1/4 teaspoon (1.2 ml) per gallon (3.8 liters) of milk.

To use calcium chloride effectively, dilute it in cool, distilled water before adding it to the milk. It's best to add the calcium chloride solution to the milk before starting the cheese-making process, ideally before adding cultures and rennet.

Some homemade cheesemakers even prefer to add calcium chloride to the milk the night before, allowing ample time for it to rebalance the calcium content. This is what I personally do.



By using calcium chloride in your low-carb cheese recipes, you can help ensure better curd formation, improved texture, and increased stability in your homemade cheeses, compensating for some of the challenges associated with reduced sugar content.

CHAPTER 2

THE SCIENCE OF STARTERS:



Starters are crucial in cheese-making. They convert milk sugar (lactose) into lactic acid, increasing acidity and helping coagulation. For low-carb cheeses, choose starters that efficiently convert lactose.

Options include:

1. Vinegar
2. Citric Acid (lemon juice or powder)
3. Mesophilic Starters (for cooler temperatures)
4. Thermophilic Starters (for warmer temperatures)

Use freeze-dried powder starters for homemade cheese. Store them in your freezer for up to two years.

Coagulants: The Magic of Rennet:

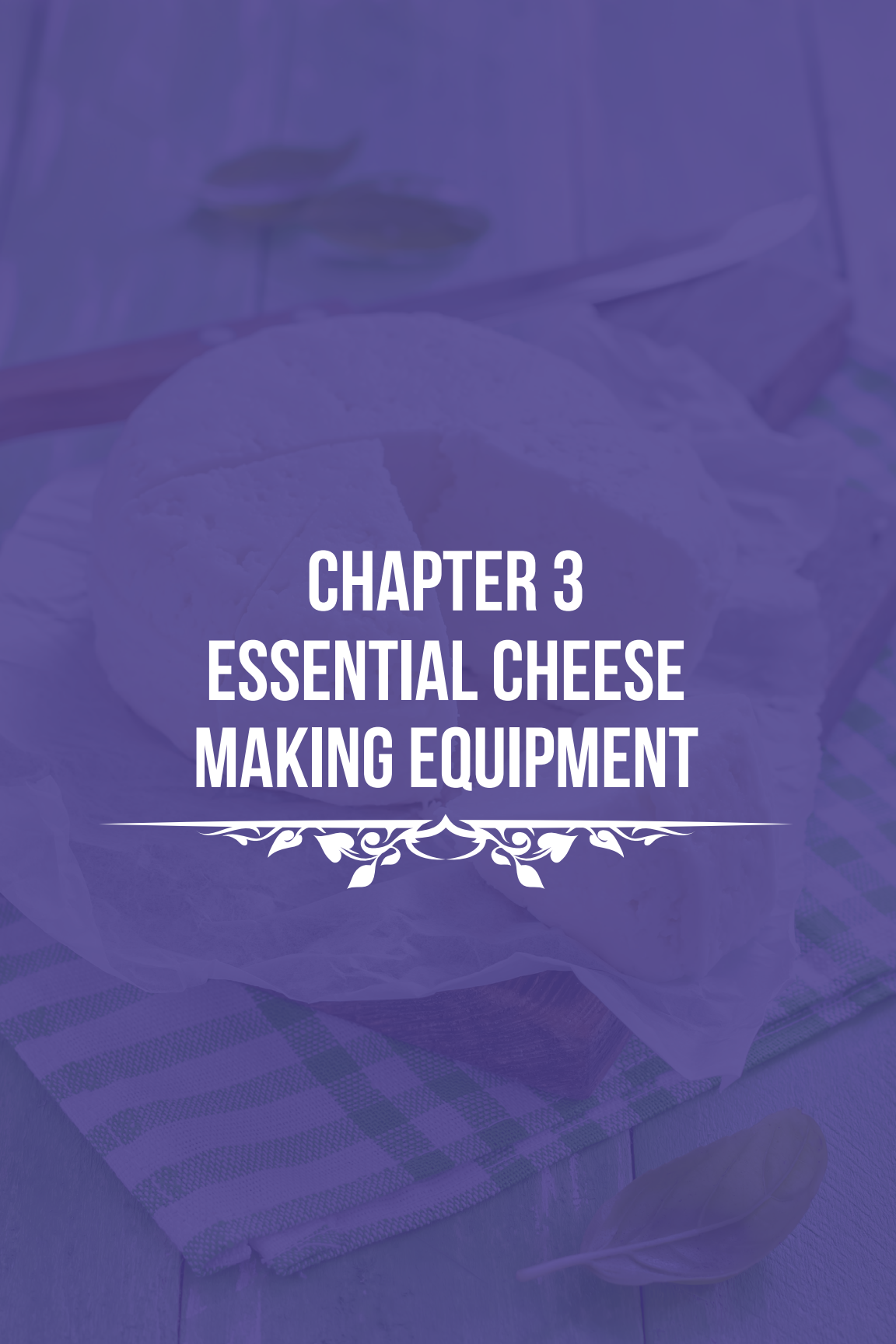
Rennet separates curds from whey. Choose from liquid, tablet, or powder forms. Animal rennet, vegetable rennet, and chymosin (a vegetarian option) are all suitable for low-carb cheese-making. Always use non-chlorinated water with rennet for best results.

The Importance of Salt:

Salt is your ally in low-carb cheese-making. It draws out moisture, halts fermentation, preserves cheese, and adds flavor without adding carbs. Use it to mix into curds, form rinds, create brines, or preserve your cheese.

Keeping It Clean:

Sanitation is non-negotiable. Everything that touches your cheese must be spotless. Boil what you can, and use a bleach solution (1 oz per gallon of water) for items you can't boil. Rinse thoroughly.



CHAPTER 3

ESSENTIAL CHEESE MAKING EQUIPMENT



Gather these tools:

1. A 2-gallon stainless steel pot
2. An accurate thermometer
3. Cheesecloth
4. A stainless ladle with holes
5. A stainless straight blade knife
6. A colander
7. A small bowl for brining
8. A measuring cup
9. Rubber gloves for stretching cheese

Preparing to Make Low-Carb Cheese:

Start with a pristine workspace. Sterilize all utensils and surfaces. Have everything ready before you begin.

Heating Milk and Curds:

Use a double boiler or a sink with heated water. Monitor temperatures carefully. Heat slowly and consistently, never exceeding the recipe's stated temperature.

Adding Cultures and Rennet:

Measure cultures precisely. Sprinkle them on the milk, let them melt, then stir thoroughly. Dilute rennet in cool, non-chlorinated water before adding. Stir with an up-and-down motion, then around the pot in both directions.

Checking for a Clean Break:

Use a sterile knife or clean finger. Run it through the curd at a slight angle, about 3cm deep. Look for a clean separation with clear whey pooling in the break. If it's mushy, wait longer.

Enhancing Stability with Calcium Chloride:

Low-carb cheeses can be less stable because they have less sugar. Adding calcium chloride helps improve the cheese's stability and texture.

How much to use:

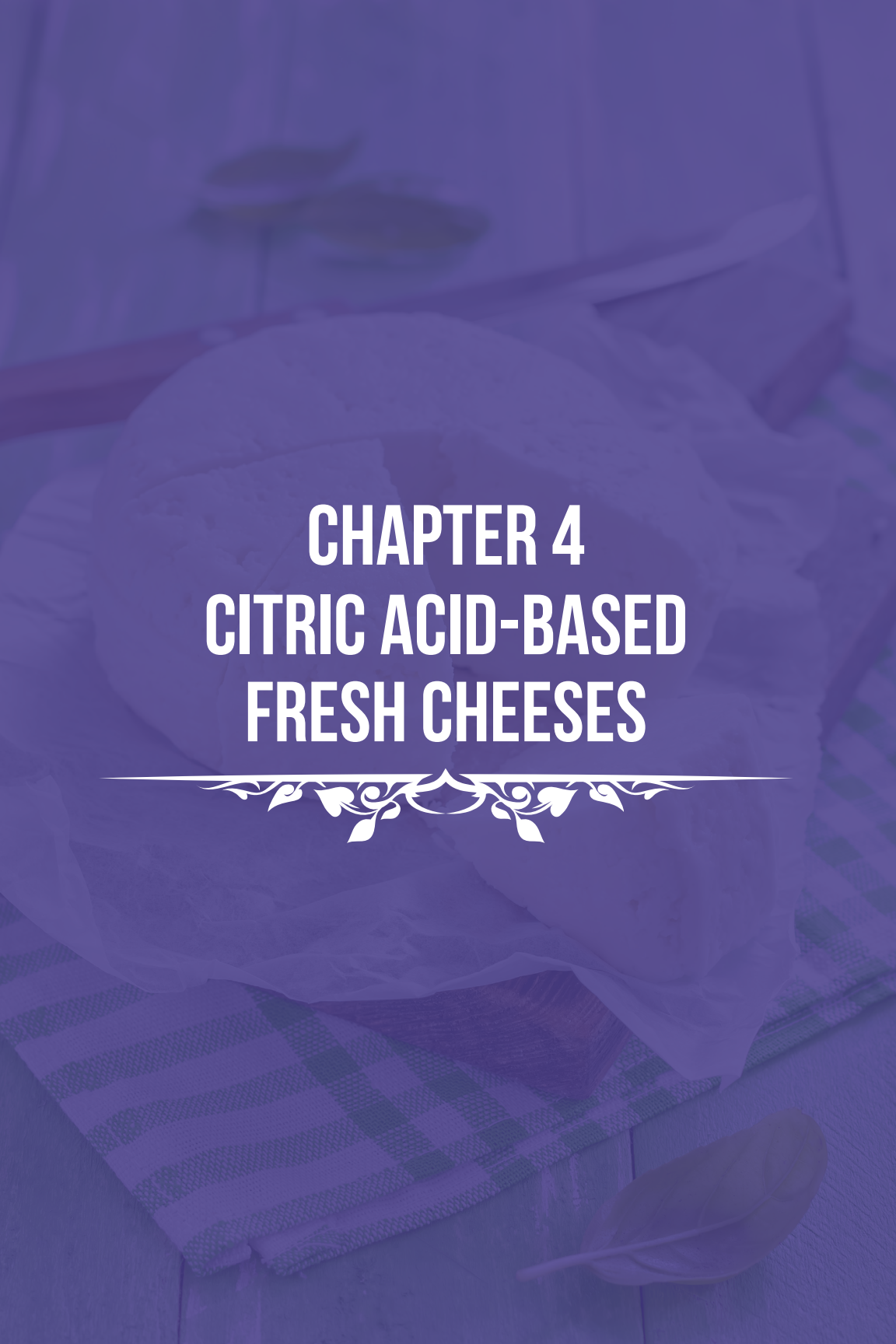
Use 1/4 teaspoon (1.2 ml) of calcium chloride for each gallon (3.8 liters) of milk

How to dilute and add calcium chloride:

- 1 Measure the required amount of calcium chloride.
- 2 Dilute it in cool, distilled water:
 - Use about 1/4 cup (60 ml) of water for each 1/4 teaspoon of calcium chloride.
- 3 Stir the mixture until the calcium chloride is fully dissolved.
- 4 Add this diluted solution to your milk before you start making cheese.

Important tips:

- Always dilute calcium chloride before adding it to milk.
- Add the diluted calcium chloride to your milk before beginning the cheese-making process.
- Use cool, distilled water for dilution to avoid any unwanted minerals or contaminants.



CHAPTER 4

CITRIC ACID-BASED FRESH CHEESES





Citric acid-based cheeses, such as mozzarella and ricotta, have a long history dating back to ancient times in Italy. These cheeses are made using citric acid or other acidic substances like lemon juice or vinegar to coagulate the milk, rather than relying solely on bacterial cultures or rennet. This method allows for quicker production and results in fresh, mild-flavored cheeses.

While traditionally associated with Italian cuisine, similar acid-set cheeses are made worldwide, such as paneer in India and queso fresco in Latin America. In the low-carb world, these cheeses have gained popularity due to their versatility and naturally low carbohydrate content.

Mozzarella, for instance, is widely used in low carb friendly dishes like cauliflower crust pizzas, low-carb lasagnas, and cheese-based breadsticks.

Ricotta can be used in keto cheesecakes, stuffed zucchini boats, and as a base for dips. The quick-set nature of these cheeses also makes them ideal for home cheesemaking, allowing low-carb dieters to easily create fresh, additive-free cheese at home.

Additionally, the mild flavor of these cheeses makes them excellent vehicles for incorporating herbs, spices, and other low-carb ingredients, further expanding their use in keto cooking.

Mozzarella Cheese: Origin and Characteristics

Mozzarella is an iconic Italian cheese that originated in the southern regions of Italy, particularly in Campania. This fresh, semi-soft cheese is traditionally made from the milk of Italian water buffaloes, though cow's milk versions are now common worldwide. The name "mozzarella" comes from the Italian verb "mozzare," meaning "to cut off," referring to the process of cutting the cheese curds during production.



Authentic mozzarella di bufala has a delicate, slightly sour flavor with a smooth, elastic texture. It's prized for its high moisture content and stringy consistency when melted. The cheese is typically bright white in color and often comes in small balls or larger loaves.

Low-Carb:

For those following a low-carb diet, mozzarella is an excellent choice as it's naturally low in carbohydrates. Traditional mozzarella contains only trace amounts of carbs, making it suitable for ketogenic and other low-carb diets. Some manufacturers also produce specialized low-moisture, part-skim mozzarella that can be even lower in carbs and calories.

Appearance: Fresh mozzarella is usually sold in round balls or ovals, submerged in whey or water to maintain its moisture. It has a shiny, porcelain-white exterior and a soft, creamy interior. When sliced, it reveals a slightly stringy texture that becomes more pronounced when melted.

Uses: Mozzarella is incredibly versatile in the kitchen. It's a staple in many Italian dishes, most famously as a topping for pizza and in Caprese salad. It's also used in lasagna, on sandwiches, and in various baked dishes. When melted, it develops a stretchy, gooey texture that's perfect for dishes like eggplant parmesan or as a topping for baked vegetables. In low-carb cooking, mozzarella can be used to create cheese-based pizza crusts, as a low-carb breading alternative, or in keto-friendly versions of traditional Italian dishes.

Nutritional Considerations: Mozzarella is high in protein and calcium while being relatively low in fat compared to many other cheeses. It's naturally low in carbohydrates, with most varieties containing less than 1 gram of carbs per ounce. This makes it an excellent choice for those following low-carb or ketogenic diets. However, it's worth noting that fresh mozzarella can be high in sodium, so those watching their salt intake should consume it in moderation.

Other Names and Slight Variations:

- Fior di latte: Cow's milk mozzarella
- Mozzarella di bufala: Buffalo milk mozzarella
- Burrata: A variation filled with cream and stracciatella
- Bocconcini: Small mozzarella balls
- Ovolini: Egg-sized mozzarella

Quick Mozzarella Recipe



Prep Time: 15 minutes



Total Time: About 1 hour

Equipment Needed:

- Large stainless steel pot
- Thermometer
- Long knife for cutting curds
- Slotted spoon
- Microwave-safe bowl
- Rubber gloves
- Cheesecloth
- Colander



Ingredients:

- 1 gallon low-carb milk
- 1/4 tsp calcium chloride diluted in 1/4 cup cool spring water
- 1 1/2 tsp citric acid dissolved in 1/2 cup cool spring water
- 1/4 tsp liquid rennet diluted in 1/4 cup cool spring water
- 1 tsp salt (optional)

Instructions:

1. The night before: Add the diluted calcium chloride to the milk and stir gently. Refrigerate overnight.
2. The next day: Pour the milk into the large pot. Add the citric acid solution and stir gently.
3. Heat the milk to 90°F (32°C), stirring gently. Use the thermometer to monitor temperature.
4. At 90°F, remove from heat and slowly stir in the diluted rennet. Stir for 30 seconds, then let sit undisturbed for 30 minutes.
5. Check the curd. It should look like custard and separate from the whey when you cut it. If it's too soft, let it sit for a few more minutes.
6. Cut the curd into 1-inch cubes using the long knife and let rest for 5 minutes.
7. Heat the curds to 105°F (40°C), stirring gently. Hold at this temperature for 5 minutes.
8. Scoop out the curds with the slotted spoon into the microwave-safe bowl.
9. Microwave the curds for 1 minute. Drain off the whey from the bowl and knead the curds with spoons or gloved hands.
10. Microwave for 30 seconds, drain, and knead again. Repeat this step until the cheese is smooth and pliable.
11. Add salt if desired and knead it in.
12. Stretch and fold the cheese until it's shiny. Form it into a ball.
13. Place in ice water for 5 minutes to cool, then store in the refrigerator.

Note

This recipe is adapted for low-carb milk, which may affect the final texture. The cheese may be softer than traditional mozzarella due to the lower protein content in low-carb milk.

Ricotta: Origin and Characteristics:

A common ingredient in many Italian dishes, ricotta is a whey cheese traditionally made from sheep or cow's milk. The creamy white curd is naturally a little grainy with a slightly sweet taste. It lends itself to savory pasta dishes or to desserts like cannoli. The name literally means 'recooked'.



Ricotta Salata is a firm, salted version. During the cheese-making process, the curds coagulate with the use of citric acid, never rennet. The process uses whey for producing, the water-soluble elements of milk. However, nowadays this cheese is often made from whole milk and even with cream to make a creamier version.

Low-Carb Ricotta:

For those following a low-carb diet, it's possible to make ricotta using low-carb milk alternatives. Unsweetened almond milk or coconut milk can be used as a base, though the texture and flavor may differ slightly from traditional ricotta. When using these alternatives, it's important to add a source of protein, such as whey protein powder, to help with curd formation. The process remains similar, using heat and an acid like lemon juice or vinegar to create curds. The resulting low-carb ricotta can be used in various keto-friendly recipes, providing a creamy texture without the added carbohydrates.

Appearance: Ricotta curds are creamy white in appearance, slightly sweet in taste, and contain around 13% fat (though this can vary in low-carb versions). In this form, it is somewhat similar

in texture to some cottage cheese variants, though considerably lighter. It is highly perishable. However, ricotta also comes in aged varieties, which can be preserved longer.

Uses: Ricotta is used as filler in savory dishes like calzone, pizza, manicotti, lasagna and ravioli, and as a favorite in Italian desserts, such as cheesecakes and cannoli. It can be beaten until smooth and mixed with sugar (or low-carb sweeteners), cinnamon, fresh fruit and even chocolate. Combined with eggs and low-carb grain alternatives like cauliflower rice, then baked firm, ricotta is also a main ingredient in Neapolitan pastiera, one of Italy's many "Easter Pies." In low-carb cooking, ricotta can be used to create keto-friendly versions of these traditional dishes, offering a way to enjoy Italian flavors while maintaining a low-carb lifestyle.

Nutritional Considerations: Traditional ricotta is relatively low in carbohydrates compared to many other dairy products, containing about 3-4 grams of carbs per 100 grams. However, for those following a strict ketogenic or very low-carb diet, even this amount may be too high. Low-carb ricotta made from almond or coconut milk can have even fewer carbohydrates, often less than 1 gram per serving, making it an excellent option for those monitoring their carb intake closely.

Other Names and Slight Variations:

Spain: Requeson

Portugal and Brazil: Queso Fresco

India: Paneer or Chhena

Romania: Urda

Ricotta Recipe:



Prep Time: 10 minutes



Total Time: About 45 minutes

Equipment Needed:

- Large stainless steel pot
- Thermometer
- Slotted spoon
- Cheesecloth
- Colander
- Large bowl

Ingredients:

- 1 gallon low-carb milk
- 1 cup 18% cream
- 1/4 tsp calcium chloride diluted in 1/4 cup cool water
- 1/3 cup lemon juice or white vinegar
- 1/2 tsp salt (optional)



Instructions:

1. The night before: Add the diluted calcium chloride to the milk and cream and stir gently. Refrigerate overnight.
2. The next day: Pour the milk into the large pot.
3. Heat the milk slowly to 185°F (85°C), stirring occasionally to prevent scorching. Use the thermometer to monitor temperature.
4. Remove from heat and slowly stir in the lemon juice or vinegar. Stir gently for 1-2 minutes.
5. Let the mixture sit undisturbed for 20 minutes. You should see the curds separating from the whey.
6. Line the colander with cheesecloth and place it over a large bowl.
7. Gently ladle the curds into the lined colander. Let drain for 10-15 minutes for a moist ricotta, or up to 1 hour for a drier cheese.
8. If desired, stir in salt to taste.
9. Transfer the ricotta to a storage container and refrigerate. Use within 5-7 days.

Paneer Origin and Characteristics:

Paneer is a fresh cheese that originated in the Indian subcontinent, particularly popular in South Asian cuisine. This unaged, non-melting cheese is traditionally made by curdling hot milk with lemon juice, vinegar, or other food acids. The name "paneer" is derived from the Persian word "panir," which means cheese.



Authentic paneer has a mild, milky flavor with a firm yet creamy texture. It's prized for its ability to hold its shape when cooked, making it an excellent protein source in vegetarian dishes. The cheese is typically white in color and often comes in blocks or cubes. For those following a low-carb diet, paneer is an excellent choice as it's naturally low in carbohydrates. Traditional paneer contains only trace amounts of carbs, making it suitable for ketogenic and other low-carb diets. Some manufacturers also produce specialized low-fat paneer that can be even lower in calories while maintaining its protein content.

Appearance: Fresh paneer is usually sold in blocks or cubes. It has a smooth, white exterior and a firm, slightly grainy interior. When sliced, it reveals a uniform texture that remains intact even when heated. **Uses:** Paneer is incredibly versatile in the kitchen. It's a staple in many Indian dishes, most famously in palak paneer (spinach and cheese curry) and paneer tikka. It's also used in stuffed flatbreads, kebabs, and various curry dishes. When cooked, it maintains its shape and texture, absorbing the flavors of the dish it's prepared in.

In low-carb cooking, paneer can be used as a meat substitute, in salads, or as a protein-rich addition to vegetable dishes.

Nutritional Considerations: Paneer is high in protein and calcium while being relatively low in carbohydrates. It's naturally low in carbs, with most varieties containing less than 1 gram of carbs per ounce. This makes it an excellent choice for those following low-carb or ketogenic diets. However, it's worth noting that paneer can be high in fat, so those watching their calorie intake should consume it in moderation.

Paneer Recipe:



Prep Time: 15 minutes (plus overnight preparation)



Total Time: About 24 hours (including overnight preparation and setting time)



Equipment Needed:

- Large stainless steel pot
- Thermometer
- Long-handled spoon
- Cheesecloth or muslin cloth

- Colander
- Large bowl
- Heavy weight (like a cast iron pot or books)
- Flat surface (like a cutting board)

Ingredients:

- 1 gallon low-carb milk
- 1/4 tsp calcium chloride diluted in 1/4 cup cool water
- 1/3 cup lemon juice or white vinegar
- 1/2 tsp salt (optional)

Instructions:

1. The night before: Add the diluted calcium chloride to the low-carb milk and stir gently. Refrigerate overnight.
2. The next day: Pour the prepared milk into the large pot and heat it over medium heat, stirring occasionally to prevent scorching.
3. When the milk reaches about 185°F (85°C), turn off the heat and add the lemon juice or vinegar. Stir gently for 1-2 minutes.
4. Let the mixture sit undisturbed for 10 minutes. You should see the milk separating into curds and whey.
5. Line the colander with cheesecloth and place it over a large bowl.
6. Carefully pour the curds and whey into the lined colander. Let it drain for 5-10 minutes.
7. Gather the edges of the cheesecloth and rinse the curds under cool water to remove any lemon or vinegar flavor.
8. Twist the cheesecloth to squeeze out excess water, then shape the curds into a flat disc.
9. Place the wrapped paneer on a flat surface and put a heavy weight on top. Let it press for 3-4 hours or overnight in the refrigerator.
10. Once set, unwrap the paneer and cut it into cubes.

Note

Using low-carb milk may result in a lower yield and potentially a softer texture compared to traditional paneer. The calcium chloride helps stabilize the proteins, but the final product may still differ from paneer made with regular milk. Store the paneer in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3-5 days, or freeze for longer storage.

Mascarpone: Origin and Characteristics:

Mascarpone is a luxurious Italian cream cheese that originated in the Lombardy region of Northern Italy, likely during the Renaissance period in the late 16th or early 17th century. The name is believed to derive from the Lombard word "mascarpa," meaning "quark" in English.



Appearance: Mascarpone is an ivory-colored, exceptionally smooth, and easily spreadable fresh cream cheese. It has a soft texture that is buttery, creamy, and thick, with no rind.

Uses: This versatile cheese is used in both sweet and savory dishes. It's famously known as a key ingredient in tiramisu, but it's also used in cheesecakes, as a frosting for cakes, and as a topping for fruits. In savory applications, it can be added to pasta sauces, risottos, and used as a spread. Its rich, buttery texture makes it an excellent addition to various dishes, enhancing their creaminess and flavor.



Nutritional Considerations: Mascarpone is high in fat, with a butterfat content of up to 75%. This high-fat content contributes to its luxurious mouthfeel and rich flavor. However, due to its high calorie and fat content, it should be consumed in moderation, especially for those with dietary restrictions.

Low-Carb Considerations: Mascarpone is naturally low in carbohydrates, making it suitable for low-carb and ketogenic diets. However, it's important to be mindful of portion sizes due to its high calorie content.

Production Process: Mascarpone is made by curdling milk cream with an acid, typically lemon juice or vinegar. After curdling, the cream is drained and then lightly pasteurized. Unlike many cheeses, mascarpone does not use rennet in its production process.

Other Names and Variations:

- In some regions, it may be called "Italian cream cheese"
- There are variations in fat content, with some producers offering lower-fat versions

Mascarpone's unique combination of creamy texture, mild flavor, and versatility has made it a beloved ingredient in Italian cuisine and beyond, prized by chefs and home cooks alike for its ability to enhance both sweet and savory dishes.

Mascarpone Recipe:



Prep Time: 20 minutes



Total Time: About 24 hours (including overnight preparation and setting time)

Equipment Needed

- Large stainless steel pot
- Thermometer
- Long-handled spoon
- Cheesecloth or muslin cloth
- Colander
- Large bowl
- Heavy weight (like a cast iron pot or books)
- Flat surface (like a cutting board)



Ingredients

- 1 gallon low-carb milk
- 1/4 tsp calcium chloride diluted in 1/4 cup cool water
- 1 pint heavy cream (36–40% fat)
- 1/3 cup lemon juice or 1/4 tsp tartaric acid dissolved in 2–3 tbsp water

Instructions

The Night Before

1. Add the diluted calcium chloride to the low-carb milk and stir gently. Refrigerate overnight.

The Next Day

1. Heat the Milk and Cream: Pour the prepared milk and the heavy cream into the large pot. Set up a double boiler by filling a 2-quart pot with 2–3 inches of water and placing a metal bowl large enough to hold the milk and cream on top of the pot.

2. Heat to 185°F (85°C): Slowly heat the water, raising the milk/cream temperature to 185–190°F (85–88°C). Stir occasionally to prevent scorching. You will notice it starting to foam at about 175°F (80°C).
3. Add Acid: Once the mixture reaches the desired temperature, remove it from heat and let it sit for 5 minutes. Then, add the lemon juice or diluted tartaric acid. Stir very gently because a curd will begin to form almost immediately. This will not be a firm curd like other cheeses but rather many small curd bits that will soon look like a thin cream of wheat consistency.
4. Cool the Mixture: Allow the hot cream mixture to cool in an ice bath for 10 minutes.
5. Drain the Curds: Line the colander with cheesecloth and place it over a large bowl. Pour the cooled cream mixture into the lined colander.
6. Set the Cheese: Gather the corners of the cheesecloth and cover over the cream. Place a heavy weight on top and let it drain for about 24 hours in the refrigerator.

Final Steps

1. Unwrap and Store: After 24 hours, unwrap the mascarpone and transfer it to a storage container. Store in the refrigerator and use within 5–7 days.

Note

- Using low-carb milk may result in a slightly different texture and yield compared to traditional mascarpone made with regular milk.
- The calcium chloride helps stabilize the proteins, but the final product may still differ from mascarpone made with regular milk.
- This recipe yields approximately 1–1.5 pounds of mascarpone, depending on the milk and cream used.

Enjoy your homemade mascarpone in various sweet and savory dishes, such as tiramisu, cheesecakes, or as a rich spread!

Queso Blanco (Farmer's Cheese) Origin and Characteristics

Queso Blanco is a traditional Latin American cheese that has been enjoyed for centuries, particularly in countries like Mexico and Central America. This fresh, unaged cheese is made by curdling milk with an acidic substance such as lemon juice or vinegar, rather than relying on bacterial cultures or rennet. The name "queso blanco" means "white cheese" in Spanish, reflecting its characteristic white color and simple, pure flavor.



Authentic queso blanco has a mild, slightly tangy flavor with a firm yet crumbly texture. It's prized for its versatility in cooking, as it holds its shape well when heated. The cheese is typically sold in blocks or rounds and is often used in both savory and sweet dishes.

For those following a low-carb diet, queso blanco is an excellent choice as it's naturally low in carbohydrates. Traditional queso blanco contains only trace amounts of carbs, making it suitable for ketogenic and other low-carb diets. Some manufacturers also produce specialized low-fat versions that can be even lower in calories while maintaining its protein content.

Appearance: Fresh queso blanco is usually sold in blocks or rounds. It has a smooth, white exterior and a firm, crumbly interior. When sliced, it reveals a uniform texture that remains intact even when heated.

Uses: Queso blanco is incredibly versatile in the kitchen. It's a staple in many Latin American dishes, most famously in enchiladas, tacos, and salads. It's also used in soups, as a topping for grilled meats, and in various baked dishes. When heated, it softens but does not melt, making it perfect for frying or grilling. In low-carb cooking, queso blanco can be used as a protein-rich addition to salads, as a topping for vegetables, or in keto-friendly versions of traditional Latin American dishes.

Nutritional Considerations: Queso blanco is high in protein and calcium while being relatively low in fat compared to many other cheeses. It's naturally low in carbohydrates, with most varieties containing less than 1 gram of carbs per ounce. This makes it an excellent choice for those following low-carb or ketogenic diets. However, it's worth noting that queso blanco can be high in sodium, so those watching their salt intake should consume it in moderation.

Other Names and Variations

- **Queso Fresco:** A similar fresh cheese that is slightly softer and more crumbly.
- **Paneer:** An Indian cheese made in a similar way, often used in South Asian cuisine.
- **Farmer's Cheese:** A fresh cheese with a similar texture and flavor, common in Eastern European cuisine.

Enjoy your homemade queso blanco in a variety of dishes, from traditional Latin American recipes to innovative low-carb creations!

Queso Blanco Recipe:



Prep Time: 20 minutes



Total Time: About 1 hour

Equipment Needed

- Large stainless steel pot
- Thermometer
- Long-handled spoon
- Cheesecloth or muslin cloth
- Colander
- Large bowl

Ingredients

- 1 gallon low-carb milk
- 3 cups buttermilk
- 1/4 tsp calcium chloride diluted in 1/4 cup cool water
- 1/2 cup lemon juice or white vinegar
- 1/2 tsp salt (optional)



Instructions

The Night Before

1. Add the diluted calcium chloride to the low-carb milk and buttermilk and stir gently. Refrigerate overnight.

The Next Day

1. **Heat the Milk:** Pour the prepared milk/cream mixture into the large pot. Heat slowly to 185°F (85°C), stirring occasionally to prevent scorching. Use the thermometer to monitor the temperature.

- 2. Add Acid:** Once the milk reaches 185°F, remove it from the heat and slowly stir in the lemon juice or vinegar. Stir gently for 1-2 minutes. You should see the milk start to curdle, forming curds and whey.
- 3. Let it Sit:** Allow the mixture to sit undisturbed for about 10 minutes to let the curds fully form.
- 4. Drain the Curds:** Line the colander with cheesecloth and place it over a large bowl. Carefully pour the curds and whey into the lined colander.
- 5. Rinse the Curds:** Gather the edges of the cheesecloth and rinse the curds under cool water to remove any lemon or vinegar flavor.
- 6. Drain and Press:** Twist the cheesecloth to squeeze out excess water. If you prefer a firmer queso blanco, you can place a heavy weight on top of the wrapped curds and let it press for 30 minutes to 1 hour.
- 7. Salt and Store:** If desired, mix in salt to taste. Transfer the queso blanco to a storage container and refrigerate. Use within 5-7 days.

Note

- Using low-carb milk may result in a slightly different texture and yield compared to traditional queso blanco made with regular milk.
- The calcium chloride helps stabilize the proteins, but the final product may still differ from queso blanco made with regular milk.

Enjoy your homemade queso blanco in various dishes, such as salads, tacos, or as a snack on its own!

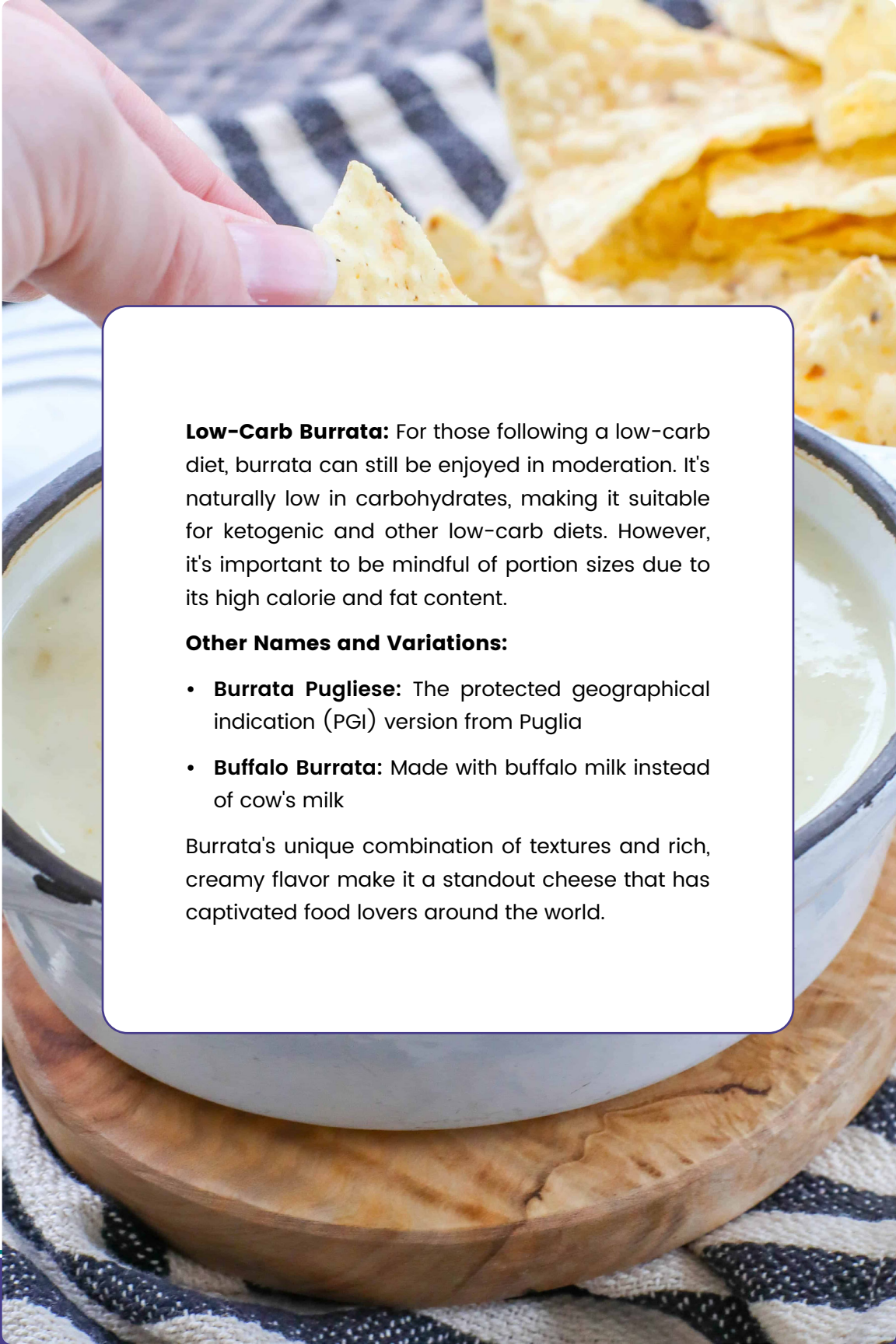
Burrata Origin and Characteristics:

Burrata is a luxurious Italian cheese that originated in the Apulia region of southern Italy, specifically in the province of Bari. Created in the early 1900s as a way to use leftover mozzarella curd, burrata has since become a beloved delicacy worldwide. The name "burrata" comes from the Italian word "burro," meaning butter, which aptly describes its rich, buttery flavor.

This fresh, semi-soft cheese is characterized by its unique structure: a solid outer shell of mozzarella filled with a creamy mixture of stracciatella (torn mozzarella strings) and cream. Burrata is traditionally made from cow's milk, though buffalo milk versions also exist.

Appearance: Burrata has a distinctive round shape resembling a small sack, with the top typically tied using food-grade raffia. When cut open, the creamy interior slowly seeps out, creating a visually appealing contrast. The cheese is bright white in color and usually weighs between 100g and 1000g. **Uses:** Burrata is incredibly versatile in the kitchen. It's often served fresh at room temperature, paired with ripe tomatoes, basil, and crusty bread, drizzled with olive oil. It can also add a luxurious touch to salads, pizzas, and pasta dishes. For a sweet twist, burrata pairs well with ripe berries, honeydew melon, and grilled figs.

Nutritional Considerations: Burrata is relatively high in calories and fat, with about 250 calories and 20g of fat per 100g serving. It's a good source of protein (12g per 100g) and calcium (250mg per 100g). Due to its high fat content, it should be consumed in moderation, especially for those with dietary restrictions.

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a triangular, golden-brown cracker. In the background, a white ceramic bowl filled with burrata cheese is visible, resting on a thick wooden cutting board. The burrata is a soft, creamy cheese with a white rind, partially submerged in a light-colored liquid. The entire scene is set against a dark and light striped fabric background.

Low-Carb Burrata: For those following a low-carb diet, burrata can still be enjoyed in moderation. It's naturally low in carbohydrates, making it suitable for ketogenic and other low-carb diets. However, it's important to be mindful of portion sizes due to its high calorie and fat content.

Other Names and Variations:

- **Burrata Pugliese:** The protected geographical indication (PGI) version from Puglia
- **Buffalo Burrata:** Made with buffalo milk instead of cow's milk

Burrata's unique combination of textures and rich, creamy flavor make it a standout cheese that has captivated food lovers around the world.

Buratta Recipe:



Prep Time: 1-2 hours



Total Time: About 24 hours (including overnight preparation and setting time)

Equipment Needed:

- Large stainless steel pot
- Thermometer
- Long-handled spoon
- Cheesecloth or muslin cloth
- Colander
- Large bowl
- Ice bath



Ingredients:

- 1 gallon low-carb milk
- 1/4 tsp calcium chloride diluted in 1/4 cup cool spring water
- 1/4 tsp liquid rennet diluted in 1/4 cup cool spring water
- 2 tsps citric acid, dissolved in 1/2 cup cool spring water
- 2 tbsp 18% cream
- Salt to taste

Instructions:

The Night Before:

1. Add the diluted calcium chloride to the low-carb milk and stir gently. Refrigerate overnight.

The Next Day:

1. Pour the prepared milk into the large pot. Add the citric acid solution and stir gently.

2. Heat the milk to 90°F (32°C), stirring occasionally.
3. At 90°F, remove from heat and slowly stir in the diluted rennet. Stir for 30 seconds, then let sit undisturbed for 5 minutes.
4. Cut the curd into 1-inch cubes and let rest for 5 minutes.
5. Heat the curds to 105°F (40°C), stirring gently. Hold at this temperature for 5 minutes.
6. Drain the curds in a cheesecloth-lined colander. Reserve some of the whey.
7. Heat the whey to 180°F (82°C). Dip the curds in the hot whey for 5-10 seconds to make them pliable.
8. Stretch and fold the curds until smooth and shiny. Divide into two portions.
9. For the outer shell: Using $\frac{3}{4}$ of the cheese, form one portion into a pouch.
10. For the filling: Tear the other $\frac{1}{4}$ portion into small pieces and mix with the cream and salt to taste.
11. Fill the pouch with the cream mixture and seal it closed.
12. Place in an ice bath to cool, then refrigerate.

Note

- Using low-carb milk may result in a slightly different texture compared to traditional burrata.
- Burrata is best consumed within 1-2 days of making.
- The calcium chloride helps stabilize the proteins in the low-carb milk.

Enjoy your homemade burrata with roasted tomatoes, fresh basil, and a drizzle of olive oil.

Bocconcini Origin and Characteristics:

Bocconcini is a traditional Italian fresh cheese that originated in the Naples region. The name "bocconcini" means "small mouthfuls" in Italian, referring to its small, bite-sized shape. This semi-soft cheese is a member of the mozzarella family, made from cow's milk or water buffalo milk.

Authentic bocconcini has a delicate, milky flavor with a smooth, elastic texture. It's prized for its high moisture content and mild taste. The cheese is typically bright white in color and comes in small, egg-sized balls.

For those following a low-carb diet, bocconcini is an excellent choice as it's naturally low in carbohydrates. Traditional bocconcini contains only trace amounts of carbs, making it suitable for ketogenic and other low-carb diets. Some manufacturers also produce specialized low-moisture bocconcini that can be even lower in carbs and calories.

Appearance: Bocconcini is usually sold in small, round balls, often packed in water or whey to maintain its moisture. It has a smooth, porcelain-white exterior and a soft, slightly stringy interior.

Uses: Bocconcini is incredibly versatile in the kitchen. It's a staple in many Italian dishes, most famously in Caprese salads and as a pizza topping. It's also used in pasta salads, skewers, and various appetizers. In low-carb cooking, bocconcini can be used in salads, as a snack with low-carb vegetables, or in keto-friendly versions of traditional Italian dishes.

Nutritional Considerations: Bocconcini is high in protein and calcium while being relatively low in fat compared to many other cheeses. It's naturally low in carbohydrates, with most varieties

containing less than 1 gram of carbs per ounce. This makes it an excellent choice for those following low-carb or ketogenic diets. However, it's worth noting that bocconcini can be high in sodium, so those watching their salt intake should consume it in moderation.

Other Names and Variations:

- Ciliegine: Smaller, cherry-sized mozzarella balls
 - Perline: Very small, pearl-sized mozzarella balls
 - Ovoline: Egg-sized mozzarella balls (slightly larger than typical bocconcini)
- Enjoy your homemade or store-bought bocconcini in a variety of low-carb dishes, from simple salads to more complex keto-friendly Italian-inspired recipes!

Bocconcini Recipe:



Prep Time: 1-2 hours



Total Time: About 24 hours (including overnight preparation and setting time)

Equipment Needed

- Large stainless steel pot
- Thermometer
- Long-handled spoon
- Cheesecloth or muslin cloth
- Colander
- Large bowl
- Ice bath
- Rubber gloves



Ingredients

- 1 gallon low-carb milk
- 1/4 tsp calcium chloride diluted in 1/4 cup cool water
- 1 1/2 tsp citric acid dissolved in 1/2 cup cool water
- 1/4 tsp liquid rennet diluted in 1/4 cup cool water
- 1 tsp salt (optional)

Instructions

The Night Before

1. Add the diluted calcium chloride to the low-carb milk and stir gently. Refrigerate overnight.

The Next Day

1. Prepare the Milk: Pour the prepared milk into the large pot. Add the citric acid solution and stir gently.
2. Heat the Milk: Heat the milk to 90°F (32°C), stirring occasionally. Use the thermometer to monitor the temperature.

3. Add Rennet: At 90°F, remove from heat and slowly stir in the diluted rennet. Stir for 30 seconds, then let sit undisturbed for 5–10 minutes.
4. Check the Curd: The curd should look like custard and separate from the whey when cut. If it's too soft, let it sit for a few more minutes.
5. Cut the Curd: Cut the curd into 1-inch cubes and let rest for 5 minutes.
6. Heat the Curds: Heat the curds to 105°F (40°C), stirring gently. Hold at this temperature for 5 minutes.
7. Drain the Curds: Scoop out the curds with a slotted spoon into a cheesecloth-lined colander. Reserve some of the whey.
8. Heat the Whey: Heat the reserved whey to 180°F (82°C). Dip the curds in the hot whey for 5–10 seconds to make them pliable.
9. Stretch and Form: Wearing rubber gloves, stretch and fold the curds until smooth and shiny. Form the curds into small balls (about the size of a cherry or a small egg).
10. Cool the Bocconcini: Place the formed bocconcini into an ice bath to cool and set.
11. Brine the Bocconcini: Prepare a light brine solution (1 quart of water with 1–2 tbsp salt). Place the cooled bocconcini in the brine and refrigerate.

Note

- Using low-carb milk may result in a slightly different texture compared to traditional bocconcini.
- The calcium chloride helps stabilize the proteins, but the final product may still differ from bocconcini made with regular milk.
- Bocconcini is best consumed fresh but can be stored in the brine in the refrigerator for up to 5–7 days.

Enjoy your homemade bocconcini in salads, appetizers, or as a delightful snack!



CHAPTER 5

MESOPHILIC CHEESES





Mesophilic fresh cheeses, such as fromage blanc and quark, have a rich history in European dairy traditions, particularly in France and Germany. These cheeses are made using mesophilic cultures, which thrive at moderate temperatures, as opposed to thermophilic cultures that require higher temperatures. This method allows for a slower fermentation process, resulting in a creamy, tangy cheese with a smooth texture. While fromage blanc and quark are traditionally associated with European cuisine, similar fresh cheeses are enjoyed worldwide, such as labneh in the Middle East and skyr in Iceland. In the low-carb world, these cheeses have gained popularity due to their versatility and naturally low carbohydrate content. Fromage blanc, for instance, is widely used in keto-friendly dishes like cheesecakes, dips, and as a spread for low-carb bread. Quark can be used in keto pancakes, smoothies, and as a base for savory spreads. The relatively simple process of making these cheeses at home makes them ideal for low-carb dieters looking to create fresh, additive-free cheese. Additionally, the mild flavor of these cheeses makes them excellent vehicles for incorporating herbs, spices, and other low-carb ingredients, further expanding their use in keto cooking.

Cream Cheese: Origin and Characteristics:

Cream cheese is a fresh, soft cheese that originated in the United States in the late 19th century. It was first produced in 1872 in New York state and gained popularity under the "Philadelphia Brand" name, which was later acquired by Kraft Foods in 1928.



Appearance: Cream cheese is ivory-colored with a smooth, creamy texture. It's easily spreadable and has no rind. The consistency can vary from soft and spreadable to slightly firmer, depending on the fat content and production method.

Uses: Cream cheese is incredibly versatile. It's commonly used as a spread on bagels, as a key ingredient in cheesecakes and frostings (especially for carrot and red velvet cakes), and in various savory dishes. It can be used in both sweet and savory applications, adding richness and creaminess to recipes.

Nutritional Considerations: Cream cheese is high in fat, with a minimum fat content of 33% required by FDA regulations. It's also relatively high in calories. There are low-fat and non-fat versions available for those watching their calorie or fat intake.

Production Process: Cream cheese is made by adding lactic acid bacteria to pasteurized cream or a mixture of milk and cream. This causes curds to form, which are then heated and drained. Stabilizers are often added to provide structure. The entire process is designed for the cheese to be eaten fresh without aging.

Low-Carb Considerations: Cream cheese is naturally low in carbohydrates, making it suitable for low-carb and ketogenic diets. However, it's important to check labels, as some flavored varieties may contain added sugars.

Other Names and Variations:

- Philadelphia cream cheese (a popular brand name)
- Flavored varieties (with herbs, vegetables, fruit, or smoked salmon)
- Whipped cream cheese (softer and more spreadable)

Cream cheese's mild flavor, creamy texture, and versatility have made it a staple in many households and professional kitchens. Its use extends from simple spreads to complex culinary applications, making it a beloved ingredient in both sweet and savory dishes.

Cream Cheese Recipe



Prep Time: 20 minutes



Total Time: About 24 hours (including overnight preparation and setting time)

Equipment:

- Large casserole dish
- Plastic wrap
- Colander
- Large bowl
- Cheesecloth or butter muslin
- Thermometer
- Ladle
- Mixing bowl
- Storage containers
- Small bowl for calcium chloride



Ingredients:

- 4 1/4 cups 18% cream
- 1/8 tsp mesophilic starter
- 1/4 tsp diluted calcium chloride (dilute in 1-2 tablespoons of water)
- 1 tsp salt

Instructions:

The Night Before:

- 1. Prepare Calcium Chloride:** In a small bowl, dilute 1/4 tsp of calcium chloride in 1-2 tablespoons of water.
- 2. Bring Cream to Room Temperature:** Allow the cream to sit out until it reaches room temperature (about 70°F/21°C).

- 3. Combine Ingredients:** Pour the cream into a large casserole dish. Add the diluted calcium chloride and mesophilic starter. Stir gently to combine.
- 4. Cover and Refrigerate:** Cover the dish with plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight.

The Next Day:

- 5. Let Stand:** Remove the casserole dish from the refrigerator and let it stand at room temperature for 12 to 16 hours. If your house is cool, place the covered dish in an oven with only the light turned on to maintain warmth.
- 6. Prepare for Draining:** Line a colander with double-layered cheesecloth or butter muslin and place it over a large bowl.
- 7. Ladle Curds:** Gently ladle the soft curds into the lined colander. Add the salt and mix lightly.
- 8. Drain:** Place the colander and bowl in the refrigerator and let it drain for 12–24 hours.
- 9. Turn Curds:** Halfway through the draining process, gently turn the curds over to expose the softer parts to the cloth for even draining.
- 10. Finish the Cheese:** Once the cheese has reached your desired consistency, transfer it to a mixing bowl. You can mix in any additional flavorings at this point if desired.
- 11. Store:** Spoon the cream cheese into storage containers and refrigerate to set.
- 12. Enjoy:** Your homemade cream cheese will keep in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.

Enjoy your homemade cream cheese on bagels, in cheesecakes, or as a spread with your favorite herbs and spices!

Feta: Origin and Characteristics:

Feta is a brined white cheese that originated in Greece. It has been a staple of Greek cuisine and culture for thousands of years, with its origins dating back to ancient times.

Appearance: Feta is a soft, white cheese with small or no holes. It has a crumbly texture with a slightly grainy consistency and no skin.

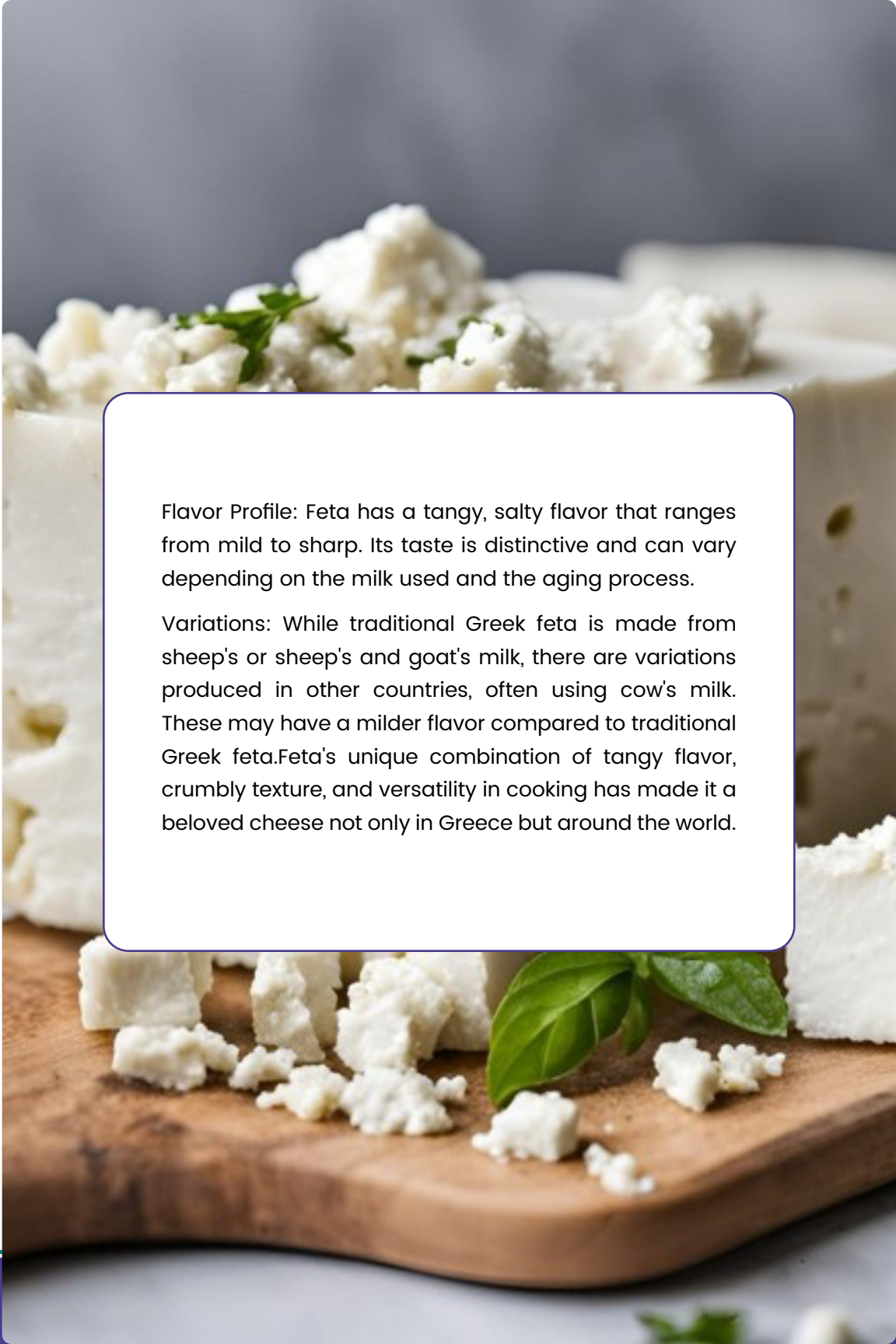


Production Process: Traditionally, feta is made from sheep's milk or a mixture of sheep's and goat's milk (with a maximum of 30% goat's milk). The cheese is aged in brine for at least 3 months, which contributes to its distinctive tangy and salty flavor.

Protected Designation of Origin (PDO): Since 2002, feta has been a protected designation of origin in the European Union. This means that only cheese produced in specific regions of Greece using traditional methods can be called "feta".

Uses: Feta is incredibly versatile in the kitchen. It's commonly used in salads (like the famous Greek salad), as a table cheese, in pastries (such as spanakopita), and in various cooked dishes. It can be served with olive oil and herbs, grilled, or used in sandwiches and omelets.

Nutritional Considerations: Feta is a good source of calcium and protein. However, it's also high in sodium due to the brining process, so those watching their salt intake should consume it in moderation.



Flavor Profile: Feta has a tangy, salty flavor that ranges from mild to sharp. Its taste is distinctive and can vary depending on the milk used and the aging process.

Variations: While traditional Greek feta is made from sheep's or sheep's and goat's milk, there are variations produced in other countries, often using cow's milk. These may have a milder flavor compared to traditional Greek feta. Feta's unique combination of tangy flavor, crumbly texture, and versatility in cooking has made it a beloved cheese not only in Greece but around the world.

Feta Recipe:



Prep Time: 1-2 hours



Total Time: About 24 hours (including overnight preparation and setting time)

Equipment Needed

- Large stainless steel pot
- Thermometer
- Long-handled spoon
- Cheesecloth or muslin cloth
- Colander
- Large bowl
- Cheese mold or small container with holes for draining
- Heavy weight (like a cast iron pot or books)
- Flat surface (like a cutting board)



Ingredients

- 1 gallon low-carb milk
- 1/4 tsp calcium chloride diluted in 1/4 cup cool spring water
- 1/4 tsp Feta mesophilic culture
- 1/4 tsp liquid rennet diluted in 1/4 cup cool spring water
- 1/4 cup non-iodized salt (for brining)

Instructions

The Night Before

1. Add the diluted calcium chloride to the low-carb milk and stir gently. Refrigerate overnight.

The Next Day

1. Heat the Milk: Pour the prepared milk into the large pot. Heat the milk slowly to 86°F (30°C), stirring occasionally. Use the thermometer to monitor the temperature.

2. **Add Culture:** Sprinkle the mesophilic culture over the surface of the milk. Let it rehydrate for 2 minutes, then stir gently to incorporate.
3. **Add Rennet:** Stir in the diluted rennet using an up-and-down motion for about 30 seconds. Cover the pot and let the milk sit undisturbed for 1 hour, or until the curd is set and gives a clean break when cut.
4. **Cut the Curd:** Cut the curd into 1/2-inch cubes using a long knife. Let the curds rest for 5 minutes.
5. **Cook the Curds:** Slowly heat the curds to 95°F (35°C) over 30 minutes, stirring gently to prevent matting. Maintain this temperature for another 30 minutes, stirring occasionally.
6. **Drain the Curds:** Line the colander with cheesecloth and place it over a large bowl. Carefully pour the curds and whey into the lined colander. Let the curds drain for 5 minutes.
7. **Press the Curds:** Transfer the drained curds to a cheese mold or a small container with holes for draining. Press the curds with a heavy weight for 4–6 hours, or until the whey stops draining.
8. **Brine the Cheese:** Prepare a brine solution by dissolving 1/4 cup of non-iodized salt in 1 quart of water. Remove the cheese from the mold and cut it into cubes. Place the cubes in the brine and refrigerate for 24 hours.

Final Steps

1. **Store:** After brining, transfer the feta to an airtight container. Store in the refrigerator and use within 1–2 weeks.

Note

- Using low-carb milk may result in a slightly different texture compared to traditional feta made with regular milk.
- The calcium chloride helps stabilize the proteins, ensuring a firmer curd.
- Feta cheese can be used in salads, sandwiches, or as a topping for various dishes.

Enjoy your homemade feta cheese in Greek salads, on flatbreads, or as a flavorful addition to your favorite recipes!

Queso Fresco Origin and Characteristics:

Queso Fresco is a traditional fresh cheese that originated in Mexico and is popular throughout Latin America. The name "queso fresco" means "fresh cheese" in Spanish, reflecting its simple, unaged nature. This cheese is made by curdling milk with rennet or an acidic ingredient like lemon juice or vinegar.

Authentic queso fresco has a mild, slightly tangy flavor with a crumbly yet creamy texture. It's prized for its versatility in cooking and its ability to crumble easily without melting completely when heated. The cheese is typically bright white in color and often comes in round blocks.

For those following a low-carb diet, queso fresco is an excellent choice as it's naturally low in carbohydrates. Traditional queso fresco contains only trace amounts of carbs, making it suitable for ketogenic and other low-carb diets. Some manufacturers also produce specialized low-fat versions that can be even lower in calories while maintaining its protein content.

Appearance: Queso fresco is usually sold in round blocks or wheels. It has a smooth, white exterior and a crumbly interior. When sliced or crumbled, it reveals a uniform texture that holds its shape well.

Uses: Queso fresco is incredibly versatile in the kitchen. It's a staple in many Mexican dishes, most famously as a topping for tacos, enchiladas, and salads. It's also used in soups, as a filling for chiles rellenos, and in various baked dishes. In low-carb cooking, queso fresco can be used as a protein-rich addition to salads, as a topping for grilled meats or vegetables, or in keto-friendly versions of traditional Mexican dishes.

Nutritional Considerations: Queso fresco is high in protein and calcium while being relatively low in fat compared to many other cheeses. It's naturally low in carbohydrates, with most varieties containing less than 1 gram of carbs per ounce. This makes it an excellent choice for those following low-carb or ketogenic diets. However, it's worth noting that queso fresco can be high in sodium, so those watching their salt intake should consume it in moderation.

Other Names and Variations:

- Queso Blanco: A similar fresh cheese that is slightly firmer
 - Panela: A Mexican cheese with a similar texture but made with whole milk
 - Requeson: A Mexican cheese similar to ricotta, sometimes used as a substitute for queso fresco
- Enjoy your homemade or store-bought queso fresco in a variety of low-carb dishes, from simple salads to more complex keto-friendly Mexican-inspired recipes!



Queso Fresco Recipe



Prep Time: 20 minutes



Total Time: About 1 hour

Equipment Needed

- Large stainless steel pot
- Thermometer
- Long-handled spoon
- Cheesecloth or muslin cloth
- Colander
- Large bowl
- Heavy weight (like a cast iron pot or books)
- Flat surface (like a cutting board)



Ingredients

- 1 gallon low-carb milk
- 1/4 tsp calcium chloride diluted in 1/4 cup cool spring water
- 1/4 cup lemon juice or white vinegar

Instructions

The Night Before

1. Add the diluted calcium chloride to the low-carb milk and stir gently. Refrigerate overnight.

The Next Day

1. Heat the Milk: Pour the prepared milk into the large pot. Heat the milk slowly to 185°F (85°C), stirring occasionally to prevent scorching. Use the thermometer to monitor the temperature.
2. Add Acid: Once the milk reaches 185°F, remove it from the heat and slowly stir in the lemon juice or vinegar. Stir gently for 1-2

minutes. You should see the milk start to curdle, forming curds and whey.

3. **Let it Sit:** Allow the mixture to sit undisturbed for about 10 minutes to let the curds fully form.
4. **Drain the Curds:** Line the colander with cheesecloth and place it over a large bowl. Carefully pour the curds and whey into the lined colander.
5. **Rinse the Curds:** Gather the edges of the cheesecloth and rinse the curds under cool water to remove any lemon or vinegar flavor.
6. **Drain and Press:** Twist the cheesecloth to squeeze out excess water. If you prefer a firmer queso fresco, you can place a heavy weight on top of the wrapped curds and let it press for 30 minutes to 1 hour.
7. **Salt and Store:** If desired, mix in salt to taste. Transfer the queso fresco to a storage container and refrigerate. Use within 5–7 days.

Note

- Using low-carb milk may result in a slightly different texture and yield compared to traditional queso fresco made with regular milk.
- The calcium chloride helps stabilize the proteins, but the final product may still differ from queso fresco made with regular milk.

Enjoy your homemade queso fresco crumbled over salads, in tacos, or as a delightful addition to your favorite dishes!

Cottage Cheese Origin and Characteristics:

Cottage cheese is a fresh, mild-flavored cheese curd product that originated in the United States. Its name is believed to have come from the fact that it was often made in cottages from leftover milk after making butter.

Authentic cottage cheese has a creamy, slightly tangy flavor with a distinctive texture consisting of soft, individual curds. It's prized for its high protein content and versatility in both sweet and savory dishes. The cheese is typically white in color and comes in varying levels of creaminess, from dry to extra creamy.

For those following a low-carb diet, cottage cheese is an excellent choice as it's naturally low in carbohydrates. Traditional cottage cheese contains only small amounts of carbs, making it suitable for ketogenic and other low-carb diets. Many manufacturers also produce low-fat versions that can be even lower in calories while maintaining high protein content.

Appearance: Cottage cheese is usually sold in tubs. It has a white, lumpy appearance with visible individual curds suspended in a light cream.

Uses: Cottage cheese is incredibly versatile in the kitchen. It's popular as a breakfast food, often paired with fruits or used in smoothies. In savory applications, it's used in dips, spreads, and as a filling for dishes like lasagna. In low-carb cooking, cottage cheese can be used as a high-protein base for desserts, as a topping for salads, or blended into creamy sauces for vegetables or meats.

Nutritional Considerations: Cottage cheese is exceptionally high in protein while being relatively low in fat and carbohydrates. It's naturally low in carbs, with most varieties containing about 3–4

grams of carbs per 1/2 cup serving. This makes it an excellent choice for those following low-carb or ketogenic diets. It's also rich in calcium and contains several other essential nutrients.

Other Names and Variations:

- Dry curd cottage cheese: Contains no added cream, resulting in a lower fat content
 - Farmer's cheese: A pressed version of cottage cheese, resulting in a firmer texture
 - Pot cheese: Similar to cottage cheese but with a drier texture
- Enjoy your store-bought or homemade cottage cheese in a variety of low-carb dishes, from simple protein-packed snacks to more complex keto-friendly recipes!



Cottage Cheese Recipe



Prep Time: 30 minutes



Total Time: About 2 hours

Equipment Needed

- Large stainless steel pot
- Thermometer
- Long-handled spoon
- Cheesecloth or muslin cloth
- Colander
- Large bowl
- Slotted spoon

Ingredients

- 1 gallon low-carb milk
- 1/4 tsp calcium chloride diluted in 1/4 cup cool water
- 3/4 cup white vinegar or 1/2 cup fresh lemon juice
- 1 tsp salt
- 3 tbsp heavy cream (optional)



Instructions

1. The night before: Add the diluted calcium chloride to the low-carb milk and stir gently. Refrigerate overnight.
2. Pour the prepared milk into a large, heavy-bottomed pot. Heat slowly to 190°F (88°C), stirring regularly to prevent scorching.
3. Remove from heat, add the vinegar or lemon juice, and stir a few times. Cover and let rest for 30 minutes.
4. Line a colander with doubled cheesecloth or a clean tea towel. Place the colander over a bowl to catch the whey.
5. Using a slotted spoon, carefully transfer the curds to the lined colander. Let drain for 30 minutes.
6. Gather the cheesecloth ends and rinse the curds under cold water until cool, gently squeezing the surface.
7. Transfer the curds to a bowl and break them up to your preferred size.
8. Add salt to taste and stir in the heavy cream if desired.
9. Chill for at least 30 minutes before serving for the best flavor.

Storage

Store the homemade cottage cheese in an airtight container in the refrigerator and consume within 5–7 days.

Note

- Using low-carb milk may result in a slightly different texture compared to traditional cottage cheese.
- The calcium chloride helps stabilize the proteins in the low-carb milk.
- You can adjust the creaminess by adding more or less heavy cream.

Enjoy your homemade cottage cheese as a healthy snack, in salads, or as a versatile ingredient in various recipes!

Fromage Blanc Origin and Characteristics:

Fromage Blanc is a fresh, creamy cheese that originated in northern France. The name "fromage blanc" means "white cheese" in French, reflecting its pure, unaged nature. This cheese is traditionally made by draining yogurt or by fermenting milk with lactic cultures.

Authentic fromage blanc has a mild, slightly tangy flavor with a smooth, creamy texture similar to yogurt or sour cream. It's prized for its versatility in both sweet and savory dishes. The cheese is typically bright white in color and often comes in a soft, spreadable form.

For those following a low-carb diet, fromage blanc is an excellent choice as it's naturally low in carbohydrates. Traditional fromage blanc contains only small amounts of carbs, making it suitable for ketogenic and other low-carb diets. Some manufacturers also produce low-fat versions that can be even lower in calories while maintaining its protein content.

Appearance: Fromage blanc is usually sold in tubs or small containers. It has a smooth, white appearance and a consistency that can range from thick and spreadable to slightly runny, depending on the brand and fat content.

Uses: Fromage blanc is incredibly versatile in the kitchen. It's popular as a breakfast food, often paired with fruits or used in smoothies. In savory applications, it's used as a spread, in dips, or as a base for sauces. In low-carb cooking, fromage blanc can be used as a high-protein substitute for sour cream or yogurt in many recipes, as a topping for berries or low-carb desserts, or as a creamy addition to savory dishes.

Nutritional Considerations: Fromage blanc is high in protein while being relatively low in fat and carbohydrates. It's naturally low in carbs, with most varieties containing about 3-4 grams of carbs per 100g serving. This makes it an excellent choice for those following low-carb or ketogenic diets. It's also rich in calcium and contains several other essential nutrients.

Other Names and Variations:

- Quark: A similar fresh cheese popular in German-speaking countries
 - Faisselle: A French variation that's slightly more liquid
 - Petit Suisse: A richer, creamier version of fromage blanc
- Enjoy your store-bought or homemade fromage blanc in a variety of low-carb dishes, from simple protein-packed snacks to more complex keto-friendly recipes!



Fromage Blanc Recipe:



Prep Time: 30 minutes



Total Time: About 12-24 hours (including draining time)

Equipment Needed

- Large stainless steel pot
- Thermometer
- Long-handled spoon
- Cheesecloth or muslin cloth
- Colander
- Large bowl

Ingredients

- 1 gallon low-carb whole milk
- 1/4 tsp calcium chloride diluted in 1/4 cup cool water
- 1/4 tsp mesophilic culture
- 2-3 drops liquid rennet diluted in 1/4 cup cool water
- 1/4 tsp salt (optional)



Instructions

1. The night before: Add the diluted calcium chloride to the low-carb milk and stir gently. Refrigerate overnight.
2. Heat the prepared milk to 86°F (30°C) in a large pot.
3. Sprinkle the mesophilic culture over the milk surface. Let it rehydrate for 2 minutes, then stir gently.
4. Add the diluted rennet and stir gently for 1 minute.
5. Cover and let sit at room temperature for 24 hours.
6. The curd should be set and pulling away from the sides of the pot. If not, wait a few more hours.
7. Line a colander with cheesecloth and gently ladle the curds into it.
8. Let drain for 6–12 hours at room temperature or in the refrigerator, depending on desired consistency.
9. Once drained to your liking, transfer to a bowl and add salt if desired.
10. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator and use within 1 week.

Note

Using low-carb milk may result in a different yield and texture compared to traditional fromage blanc. The calcium chloride helps stabilize the proteins in the low-carb milk, but the final product may still differ from fromage blanc made with regular milk.

Fromage blanc can be used as a spread, in dips, or as a base for desserts. Enjoy your homemade low-carb fromage blanc!

Quark Origin and Characteristics:

Quark is a fresh, creamy cheese that originated in Central Europe, particularly popular in Germany and Austria. The name "quark" is derived from the German word for curd. This cheese is traditionally made by fermenting milk with mesophilic lactic cultures, resulting in a high-protein, low-fat product.

Authentic quark has a mild, slightly tangy flavor with a smooth, creamy texture similar to Greek yogurt or fromage blanc. It's prized for its versatility in both sweet and savory dishes. The cheese is typically white in color and often comes in a soft, spreadable form.

For those following a low-carb diet, quark is an excellent choice as it's naturally low in carbohydrates. Traditional quark contains only small amounts of carbs, making it suitable for ketogenic and other low-carb diets. Some manufacturers also produce low-fat versions that can be even lower in calories while maintaining its protein content.

Appearance: Quark is usually sold in tubs or small containers. It has a smooth, white appearance and a consistency that can range from thick and spreadable to slightly runny, depending on the brand and fat content.

Uses: Quark is incredibly versatile in the kitchen. It's popular as a breakfast food, often paired with fruits or used in smoothies. In savory applications, it's used as a spread, in dips, or as a base for sauces. In low-carb cooking, quark can be used as a high-protein substitute for sour cream or yogurt in many recipes, as a topping for berries or low-carb desserts, or as a creamy addition to savory dishes.

Nutritional Considerations: Quark is high in protein while being relatively low in fat and carbohydrates. It's naturally low in carbs, with most varieties containing about 3–4 grams of carbs per 100g serving. This makes it an excellent choice for those following low-carb or ketogenic diets. It's also rich in calcium and contains several other essential nutrients.

Other Names and Variations

- Fromage Blanc: A similar fresh cheese popular in France
- Faisselle: A French variation that's slightly more liquid
- Skyr: An Icelandic dairy product similar to quark but thicker

Enjoy your store-bought or homemade quark in a variety of low-carb dishes, from simple protein-packed snacks to more complex keto-friendly recipes!



Quark Recipe:



Prep Time: 15 minutes



Total Time: 24-48 hours (including draining time)

Equipment Needed

- Large stainless steel pot
- Thermometer
- Long-handled spoon
- Cheesecloth or muslin cloth
- Colander
- Large bowl

Ingredients

- 1 gallon low-carb milk
- 1/4 tsp calcium chloride diluted in 1/4 cup cool water
- 1/4 cup buttermilk or 1/4 tsp mesophilic culture



Instructions

1. The night before: Add the diluted calcium chloride to the low-carb milk and stir gently. Refrigerate overnight.
2. Heat the prepared milk to 86°F (30°C) in a large pot.
3. Stir in the buttermilk or sprinkle the mesophilic culture over the milk surface. Let it rehydrate for 2 minutes, then stir gently.
4. Cover and let sit at room temperature for 24 hours.
5. After 24 hours, the milk should have thickened. If not, wait a few more hours.
6. Line a colander with cheesecloth and gently pour the thickened milk into it.
7. Let drain for 6–12 hours at room temperature or in the refrigerator, depending on desired consistency.
8. Once drained to your liking, transfer to a bowl and whisk until smooth.
9. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator and use within 1 week.

Note

Using low-carb milk may result in a different yield and texture compared to traditional quark. The calcium chloride helps stabilize the proteins in the low-carb milk, but the final product may still differ from quark made with regular milk. Quark can be used in both sweet and savory dishes, as a spread, or as a base for dips and desserts. Enjoy your homemade low-carb quark!

Chevre Origin and Characteristics:

Here's a description of Chèvre (goat cheese), adapted for a low-carb context:

Chèvre is a fresh, soft cheese that originated in France. The name "chèvre" means "goat" in French, as this cheese is traditionally made from goat's milk. It has been produced for thousands of years and is an integral part of French cuisine.

Authentic chèvre has a tangy, slightly tart flavor with a creamy texture that can range from soft and spreadable to firm and crumbly, depending on how long it's aged. It's prized for its versatility in both sweet and savory dishes. The cheese is typically bright white in color and often comes in small logs or rounds.

For those following a low-carb diet, chèvre is an excellent choice as it's naturally low in carbohydrates. Traditional chèvre contains only trace amounts of carbs, making it suitable for ketogenic and other low-carb diets. It's also relatively lower in lactose compared to cow's milk cheeses, which can be beneficial for some individuals.

Appearance: Chèvre is usually sold in small logs, rounds, or sometimes in crumbled form. It has a white, slightly chalky appearance and a texture that can range from creamy and spreadable to firm and crumbly.

Uses: Chèvre is incredibly versatile in the kitchen. It's popular in salads, often crumbled over greens or paired with beets. In savory applications, it's used as a spread, in dips, or as a filling for low-carb vegetables. In low-carb cooking, chèvre can be used as a high-protein addition to omelets, stuffed into chicken breasts, or as a creamy base for sauces.

Nutritional Considerations: Chèvre is high in protein and fat while being very low in carbohydrates. It typically contains less than 1 gram of carbs per ounce, making it an excellent choice for those following low-carb or ketogenic diets. It's also rich in calcium and contains several other essential nutrients.

Other Names and Variations:

- Goat Cheese: The English term for chèvre
- Bucheron: A log-shaped goat cheese with a bloomy rind
- Crottin: A small, round goat cheese that becomes harder as it ages

Enjoy your store-bought or homemade chèvre in a variety of low-carb dishes, from simple cheese plates to more complex keto-friendly recipes!



Chevre Recipe:



Prep Time: 30 minutes



Total Time: About 24–48 hours (including draining time)

Equipment Needed

- Large stainless steel pot
- Thermometer
- Long-handled spoon
- Cheesecloth or muslin cloth
- Colander
- Large bowl
- Cheese mold or small container with holes for draining



Ingredients

- 1 gallon goat milk (there's no low-carb version)
- 1/4 tsp calcium chloride diluted in 1/4 cup cool water
- 1/4 tsp mesophilic culture
- ¼ rennet tablet or 2–3 drops liquid rennet, diluted in 1/4 cup cool spring water

Instructions

The Night Before

Add the diluted calcium chloride to the low-carb goat milk and stir gently. Refrigerate overnight.

The Next Day

1. **Heat the Milk:** Pour the prepared milk into the large pot. Heat the milk slowly to 86°F (30°C), stirring occasionally. Use the thermometer to monitor the temperature.

2. **Add Culture:** Sprinkle the mesophilic culture over the surface of the milk. Let it rehydrate for 2 minutes, then stir gently to incorporate.
3. **Add Rennet:** Stir in the diluted rennet using an up-and-down motion for about 30 seconds. Cover the pot and let the milk sit undisturbed for 12–18 hours at room temperature, or until the curd is set and gives a clean break when cut.
4. **Cut the Curd:** If the curd is set, gently cut it into 1-inch cubes using a long knife. Let the curds rest for 5 minutes.
5. **Drain the Curds:** Line the colander with cheesecloth and place it over a large bowl. Carefully ladle the curds into the lined colander. Let it drain for 6–12 hours at room temperature or in the refrigerator, depending on desired consistency.
6. **Salt and Mold the Cheese:** Once the curds have drained to your liking, transfer them to a bowl and mix in the salt if desired. Pack the curds into a cheese mold or small container with holes for further draining and shaping.
7. **Set the Cheese:** Let the molded cheese drain for another 6–12 hours in the refrigerator.

Final Steps

Unmold and Store: After the cheese has set, carefully unmold it and transfer it to an airtight container. Store in the refrigerator and use within 1–2 weeks.

Note

- Using low-carb goat milk may result in a slightly different texture and yield compared to traditional chèvre made with regular goat milk.
- The calcium chloride helps stabilize the proteins, ensuring a firmer curd.
- Chèvre can be enjoyed fresh, spread on bread, crumbled over salads, or used in various recipes.

Enjoy your homemade chèvre in salads, on crackers, or as a delightful addition to your favorite dishes!