

How to Make Goat Cheese Recipe – Chèvre

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Goat Cheese or chevre, no matter what you call it; is go-o-o-o-o-o-d! Sorry, I couldn't resist. It's unbelievably easy to make, not to mention inexpensive compared to the cost of a store-bought portion. Seriously, it's about half the cost. By the way, you don't need a goat, or even a friend with a goat. My local Wegmans store carries goat milk in their organic food section. I was fortunate enough once to have had access to fresh goat milk. My daughter had a college friend whose family had a farm with goats. She graciously gave me a gallon. Aahhh, that was fabulous!

Goat cheese is made by a process known as acid/heat coagulation. It is the oldest method of cheese making in the world. Lemon juice and vinegar are the acids used to break apart the protein structure of the milk once it has reached a certain temperature. The most

specialized equipment you will need is a digital thermometer.

Goat cheese and goat milk production date back to around the 5th millennium when goat herding was increasing along the plains of the Euphrates river. Goats were a mobile food supply which made pastoralism easier for shepherds and herders. As a result, milk production increased during this time and consequently cheese-making too. Goat cheese makes an appearance in Greek mythology. In Homer's epic tale *The Odyssey* the Cyclops Polyphemus is found molding goat cheese into rush molds. There is also evidence of cheese-making from drawings found in Egyptians tombs. By the time of the Roman Empire cheese-making was already an established art.

When making goat cheese you need to be aware of the fact that the curds and whey will not separate in the same manner as they do with whole milk. The texture of goat cheese will not contain the larger curds that are typical of ricotta. Yes, the recipe for ricotta will be forthcoming soon. In order to improve the separation I use two types of acids: lemon juice and vinegar. You should make sure that you have a double or triple layer of fine cheese cloth so the tiny solids don't go through. I like to add herbs to my goat cheese. My choice is tarragon, because of its sweet taste. I think it adds a nice contrast the slightly acidic taste of the goat cheese.

I am actually very proud to say that I recently taught a French student and friend, Hélène how to make goat cheese. Goat cheese or chèvre as it is known in France is her favorite cheese. She was amazed. "I am going to teach my dad." she said. She started to rattle off all the wonderful dishes one can make with goat cheese including a tomato tart with goat cheese and basil that sounds positively fabulous. Yes, I will extract the recipe from her and post it. Hélène also likes to drizzle honey over her goat cheese. She advises the use of a honey without a distinctive flavor. I haven't tried this yet, but you can bet the goat farm I will! The steps to make this are pretty easy.

Prep time: 5 mins

Cook time: 15 mins

Total time: 20 mins

Serves: 4-6

Ingredients:

- 1 qt. goat milk
- juice of two lemons
- 1 oz. of vinegar
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- Dried herbs of your choice

Instructions:

1. Line a colander with two or three layers of fine cheesecloth.
2. In a heavy bottom sauce pan heat the goat milk until it reaches 180°F. Stir frequently to ensure even heat throughout.
3. Remove from heat; add the lemon juice, and stir a couple of times until combined.
4. Add the vinegar, stir briefly until combined and allow it to sit for about 10 minutes.
5. Slowly pour into the cheesecloth. Add the salt and stir lightly.
6. Gather the ends of the cheesecloth, and tie them with kitchen string. Tie to your faucet.
7. Allow it to hang and drip for about 1 hour.
8. Sprinkle with dried herbs of your choice.
9. Refrigerate and serve when set.