



# Anyone can become a cheese-maker!



Isn't it wonderful to be able to make as much as you can yourself in the kitchen? If you enjoy doing this, the kitchen generally turns into a culinary laboratory where there's lots to discover and learn. Did you know, for example, how easy it is to make your own cream cheese? The best thing about it is that you only need a few ingredients from the dairy as well as a little patience. Good cheese needs time - regardless of whether you're making a mature variety with rind, or soft cream cheese, which is what we're going to make now.

The key ingredient is crème fraîche, which is normally used to refine soups and make mashed potato smooth and creamy, but it also works well with thin apple slices.

Preparing it is easy: mix together 5 dl of full cream with 2 tbsp of natural buttermilk and pour it all into a big storage jar. Ask mum or dad to simmer enough water in a wide saucepan so that at least half the jar can be submerged in the water. You can then put jar in the water together and keep it there until the cream is lukewarm. Carefully remove the jar from the pan, cover with cling film and leave to stand in a warm place (e.g. on the tumble drier or near a radiator) for at least 24 hours. You can use this time to observe how the mixture becomes thicker and creamier. Stir once and then you're ready to serve your creamy cream cheese to the family.

Is there any left over? If you put crème fraîche into a coffee filter and leave it to drip overnight, you will wake up to a fine double-cream cream cheese in the morning! Yes, you read it right: super-creamy cream



cheese! And it's so easy to make yourself.

Who likes Ricotta? It's an Italian cream cheese made from full-cream milk and you use it to fill ravioli or even spread onto a slice of crusty bread. Add a dollop of honey and a few nuts and you'll have made yourself a lovely afternoon snack. We need full-cream milk for Ricotta, as the good fat in the milk helps the Ricotta to develop a structure. We also need natural buttermilk (no sour buttermilk, or the Ricotta will taste awful), as the acidity helps the milk to separate and then thicken when heated. To make Ricotta, line a drip sieve with a muslin cloth. Muslin is a very fine-pored material that allows water to drain off. Bring 2 litres of full-cream milk and 0.5 litre of natural buttermilk to the boil very slowly in a saucepan. You can stir the milk carefully with a dough scraper so that it doesn't sit at the bottom of the pan. As the milk gets warmer, fine Ricotta clouds start floating on top of the milk. Remove the pan from the heat, scoop out the Ricotta using a ladle and put it into the drip sieve you prepared earlier. Leave everything to drip slowly for around 4 hours, if necessary wringing out the excess liquid. The freshly prepared Ricotta is ready when it takes on a wonderful milk aroma.

How about another very simple recipe? Yoghurt cheese! Simply put 500 g of Greek full-fat yoghurt into a large muslin cloth, bundle the four corners together and tie with a piece of string. Leave to drip over the sink and wring out the liquid well at the end, which also means you automatically create the round cheese shape. You can use this cheese for salads. Simply sprinkle a handful of freshly chopped herbs over the cheese. Have I promised too much? That's how easy it is for anyone to become a cheese-maker!