

30 Minute Fresh Mozzarella

Equipment:

stainless steel pan (6-8 quart) – do not use aluminum pan
thermometer (easy to read between 40 F to 120 F)
stainless steel or plastic colander
cheesecloth
microwave safe bowl

Ingredients:

1/4-1 rennet tablet*
1/4 cup cold non-chlorinated water (bottled water works)
1 gallon whole milk (or 14 cups reconstituted dry milk and 2 cups whipping cream)
2 teaspoons citric acid
1-2 teaspoons salt

Method:

Crush rennet tablet and dissolve in cold water.

Pour milk in stainless steel pan; sprinkle milk with citric acid and stir gently to blend; heat milk over medium-medium/low heat to 88-90 degrees (milk will begin to curdle or clump). Add prepared rennet and stir in an up /down motion for 30-60 seconds to blend; stop stirring and continue to heat to 105 degrees or until curd and whey begin to separate (test curd by gently pressing the back of a spoon against the curd (whey will appear as a greenish liquid).

Line colander with cheesecloth; gently pour curds and whey into colander or scoop curds from pan; place curds in microwave safe bowl. Microwave 30-60 seconds on high; remove from microwave and gently press whey from curds with hands (draining off additional whey). Repeat process 2-3 more times microwaving in 20-30 seconds intervals. As curds press together and cheese is warm (almost too warm to handle**) knead cheese like bread dough until it is smooth and pliable (like pulling taffy). If needed, microwave cheese in 10 seconds intervals to keep cheese warm and pliable. Knead salt in during final stages. Cheese is done with it is smooth. Form cheese into a ball and place in cold water to cool. When cheese is cold, remove from water and place in plastic wrap. Use within a week. Fresh mozzarella is delicious with marinated tomatoes, olives and basil.

Notes:

Recipe takes between 30-60 minutes to make. Homemade cheese is fun to make delicious to eat. Professional cheese makers use precise acidity and commercial rennet (with consistent results) this recipe is for the average cook using supplies and ingredients readily available in the supermarket. For more detailed cheese making instructions and sources for cheese making supplies refer to a cheese making book, such as "Home Cheese Making" by Ricki Carroll. Recipe makes approximately 12-14 ounces fresh mozzarella cheese.

* Rennet may be liquid or tablet form. Purchase rennet in Jello section of the grocery store (Junket is a common brand); purchased in health food and food storage supply stores; or may be purchased on line (google cheese making supplies).

**Wearing food grade rubber gloves will protect hands.

“Marinated Tomato Basil Mozzarella Salad”

This is a delicious salad made with fresh Mozzarella, herbs and tomatoes. Serves 6

- 5 medium slicing tomatoes
- 8 ounces fresh Mozzarella cheese
- 4 tablespoons chopped fresh basil
- 3 tablespoons snipped fresh parsley
- 3 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon fresh ground black pepper
- 1-2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 6 cups fresh spinach leaves, cleaned
- olives for garnish, optional



Peel tomatoes, if desired. Cut each tomato into 8 wedges or into slices and arrange in bottom of 9x13 glass cake pan. As needed, slice fresh Mozzarella cheese into wedges or dice and arrange on top tomatoes. Chop basil and snip parsley; sprinkle over tomatoes.

Combine vinegar, sugar, oil, salt, pepper, and garlic; stir until sugar is dissolved. Pour marinade over tomatoes and cheese. Cover and refrigerate at least 2 hours to blend flavors (may refrigerate overnight).

Drain juice from tomatoes, reserving juice to be used as a dressing. To serve, place spinach leaves on individual plates; arrange tomato wedges on spinach bed; top with slices or dices of cheese. Sprinkle each salad with approximately 1-2 tablespoons dressing (i.e. reserved marinade and juice from the tomatoes).

Notes: As tomatoes stand in the marinade they create juice. This juice becomes the dressing for the salad.

“Cheese Balls”

All cheese balls are best if refrigerated 4 hours to overnight to blend flavors, and may be prepared 1-2 weeks ahead.

Tomato Bacon Cheese Log

- 1/4 cup chopped sun dried tomatoes in oil, drained
- 1/3 cup chopped cooked bacon
- 1 package (8 oz) cream cheese, softened
- 2 cups shredded Mozzarella, Colby, or Monterey Jack cheese (8 oz)
- 1/8 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/4 cup finely snipped fresh parsley
- toast, baguette slices, crackers, vegetables

Drain tomatoes well and finely chop; finely chop cooked bacon. Combine tomatoes, bacon, softened cream cheese, shredded cheese and garlic powder; mix until well blended. Cover



and refrigerate until firm enough to shape. Shape into a log and roll in snipped fresh parsley. Chill until ready to serve. Serve with crackers, toast, bread slices, vegetables.

Blue Cheese Spinach Ball

- 1 package (10 oz) chopped frozen spinach, thawed
- 2 packages (8 oz ea) cream cheese, softened
- 6 ounces Blue cheese, crumbled
- 1 clove garlic, finely crushed
- 1 sliced almonds
- toast rounds, crackers, vegetables

Thaw spinach and drain well (squeeze out excess moisture). Add softened cream cheese, crumbled Blue cheese and finely crushed garlic; mix well. Cover and refrigerate until cheese is firm enough to shape into a ball. Shape into ball and roll in sliced almonds. To serve, allow to warm to room temperature, serve with toast rounds, crackers and vegetables.

Cream Cheese Chocolate Peanut Butter Ball

- 2 cups mini milk chocolate chips*
- 1 package (8 oz) cream cheese, softened
- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar
- 3/4 cup peanut butter

apple slices

*Mini chocolate chips works best, but if unavailable chop chips and set aside. Beat together softened cream cheese, sugar, brown sugar and peanut butter. Spoon mixture into a bowl lined with plastic wrap. Cover and refrigerate until firm enough to shape (2-4 hours). Form cheese into a smooth ball; roll ball in chocolate chips, pressing chips into sides and top of ball. Cover and refrigerate until firm. Serve with slices of apple.

“Pimiento Cheese Filling”

- 1 package (8 oz) cream cheese, softened
- 1 jar (4 oz) pimiento, partially drained
- 4 cups shredded sharp cheddar cheese
- 1/4 + cup mayonnaise, more to less for desired consistency

Place cream cheese, pimiento and cheddar in food processor, blend. Add enough mayonnaise to create desired consistency. May partially thin with evaporated milk; may add minced garlic or garlic powder and minced dill pickle if desired. Spread on crackers and sandwiches.