



national science week 2021

Ricotta Cheese

This recipe makes around 140g. Ricotta is a simple cheese to make and one you can eat with pasta, salad, on toast or add to other recipes like spinach and ricotta rolls.



Time required: 20 minutes

Recipe difficulty: Easy

Ingredients

750m full cream milk
35 mL white vinegar or lemon juice
¼ tsp salt

Equipment

Large saucepan
Large bowl
Measuring spoons
Measuring cups
Stove
Spoon
Colander
Muslin cloth/ cheese cloth / new chux cloth
Food thermometer

Method

1. Pour the milk into saucepan, add salt and place over a medium heat.
2. Heat the milk slowly, stirring from time to time.
3. When it is almost at boiling point, (82-85°C) remove from the heat, and add the vinegar or lemon and stir gently.
4. Curds will start to form.
5. Stir for around one minute.
6. Let pan sit for around 10 minutes while the curds form.



7. Line a colander with a large piece of dampened muslin/clean chux and place over a larger bowl (if you wish to keep the whey – the pale yellow/green clear liquid).
8. Gently pour the ricotta into the colander. For safety reasons make sure you don't pour while the liquid is hot.
9. Allow to drain for 10 minutes. If you prefer drier cheese, twist the cheese in the cloth to squeeze out extra liquid.
10. The ricotta is now ready for your next recipe adventure.
11. Store in clean, airtight container for up to seven days.

What's going on?

This is a simple cheese made using an acid (lemon juice/vinegar). This causes the proteins to coagulate and curdle or clump together and make the cheese. The lumps or solids are the curds while the clear, coloured liquid is referred to as whey. "Traditional" ricotta is usually made with whey, not milk.

Ricotta is made differently than harder cheeses like cheddar. The ricotta curds are quite soft and weak. They hold more moisture and unlike cheddar cheese, ricotta-doesn't melt.

Tips

- When making ricotta never use UHT milk. For best results use full cream milk.
- If your milk doesn't develop curds when you add the acid (vinegar or lemon juice) then you may need to add a little more vinegar/lemon juice.
- If using fresh lemon juice, don't use meyer lemons they are not acidic enough.
- There are some recipes that suggest also adding cream. Try these for a richer result.



Curds developing



Straining the curds from the whey

Did you know?

Eating cheese slows tooth decay! When eaten at the end of a meal the cheese can help reduce acid in your mouth which in turn can slow tooth decay.