

Sample Workshop Outline

Day 1 - Start lactic cheese, discuss and start clabber, the natural starter on which the course is focused.

Day 2 - Make rennet curd for feta.

Day 3 - Drain Lactic (chèvre if made from goat milk). Salt Feta. Start Caciocavallo or tomme.

Day 4 - Make Halloumi and ricotta. Stretch Caciocavallo. Salt and shape lactic.

Day 5 - Make Queso Fresco or alternative cheese. Discuss cheese aging, resources, tools, and close with group review.

I will focus on 2 broad styles: Lactic and rennet curd. I concentrate on cheeses that can be eaten fresh or aged, with the option of being consumed at any point in their ripening. In addition to the fresh lactic will learn to make Feta, Halloumi, and Ricotta. If we have cow milk we will make a stretched cheese called Caciocavallo. If goat or sheep, an aged wheel called Tomme.

- Lactic - Is easy to make, can be consumed fresh or made into a range of shapes and ripened to various stages (1-8 weeks). The method demonstrated (aged in a mason jar, in the refrigerator) is simple, but many formats and aging styles can be elaborated.
- Feta - It is an easy cheese to keep, and is essentially a fresh cheese preserved in salt brine. No aging space is required.
- Stretched curd - If we have cows milk. Caciocavallo is a mozzarella-like cheese that can be eaten fresh or aged. Having the proper conditions to age cheese is one of the most difficult aspects of cheesemaking, and caciocavallo is the most forgiving style to age.
- Tomme - A smaller-sized aged cheese that can be developed in multiple directions. I will discuss washing with salt water to develop a sticky, stinky washed rind that can be taken to an extreme. Or it can be brushed periodically, allowing a “natural rind” to develop.

- Ricotta - Made from whey can be eaten fresh, or made into an aged cheese, called Ricotta Salata in Italy. We will make it as a part of the process of making halloumi, which is boiled in whey.

Day 1 - We will jump right in, start a lactic cheese, and introduce a large amount of information that will be elaborated on in the coming days. We will initiate a starter, and feed my premade one. This technique is the core of the workshop.

In the morning we will start lactic cheese with the pre-made starter. While demonstrating this, I will begin the days presentation on:

- CHEESE SCIENCE LEVEL ONE (fermentation, coagulation)
 - What is milk and how does it become cheese?

We will initiate a clabber starters from raw milk.

- HOW TO: initiate and maintain our starter.

After lunch we will discuss:

- NATURAL CHEESE FUNDAMENTALS (Clabber

and kefir starters, coagulants, materials, contrast this with the industrial paradigm)

- Cheese style #1 concepts: Lactic

Day 2 - We will introduce rennet coagulation by making a curd that will become feta.

- **STARTERS:** Feed our premade clabber, check new clabber started day 1. This will be done on days 3, 4, and 5 as well.
- Cheese style #2 concepts: rennet curd

After lunch, I we will discuss:

- **SOURCING MILK** that is fresh and microbially rich, and generating clabber as a test.
- **MICROBES, HEAT, AND ACID** as the basis of food safety.

Day 3 - We will salt our feta. We will also ladle and drain the lactic curd made on day 1.

The schedule will vary depending on how these cheeses are fermenting. This teaches a valuable lesson, that there is no set timeline, and we must use our senses to

monitor the fermentation.

- **START CACIOCAVALLO**, the aged version of Mozzarella. Or Tomme if goat/sheep milk.
 - This will be a firmer curd, with a higher cook than mozzarella. This introduces the concept of expelling moisture from curd during the make for an aged cheese.

After lunch we will discuss:

- **CHEESE SCIENCE LEVEL 2** - discussing the role of moisture content, pH, and salt in preserving cheese.

Day 4 - We stretch the Caciocavallo, or salt Tomme, and decide the day's schedule. The lactic curd will be salted, eaten, packed into jars, and made into shapes.

- With the mornings milk we will make the curd for halloumi.

After lunch we will finish the halloumi and discuss:

- Cheese Style #3 Acid and heat coagulated (ricotta, paneer)
- **MAKE RICOTTA** from whey, and talk about other things you can do with whey (sodas, cooking/baking, souring into an acid).

We then move into a discussion of coagulants, the options available, how rennet is made, and how you can work with fig sap or thistle flowers.

- I will pass around a dried abomasum so students can smell it and identify the unique flavor in Parmigiano, which we will sample.

Day 5 - Is a bit more open, and will depend on how the previous days went. We could make Queso Fresco, or freestyle something based on the milk we have, climate/season, interest of the class.

- Today we begin to discuss cheese aging, and how to care for the caciocavallo, and aged lactic cheese in a jar.
- I will demonstrate methods of making aging spaces, using coolers with ice packs, plastic bins, or repurposed refrigerators.
- I encourage students to think about what would make sense for their milk, kitchen space, possible aging conditions, climate, and lifestyle.

After lunch we will review the science and methods that have been presented and demonstrated, and discuss ways

to continue the cheese education that has been seeded in the last 5 days.

- It is my preference that we close with a tasting of what we have made, and perhaps some other cheeses, and different types of ferments. That could extend past 5:30, with the consent of the host/organizer.