

Paneer (Homemade Cheese)



Yield: 12 serves | **Rating:** 5/5 | **Prep:** 3 min | **Cook:** 10 min | **Other:** 4 hr | **Source:** #ParlezPantry

Paneer, also known as ponir or Indian cottage cheese, is a fresh acid-set cheese common in the Indian subcontinent (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka) made from cow or buffalo milk. It is a non-aged, non-melting soft cheese made by curdling milk with a fruit- or vegetable-derived acid, such as lemon juice. Its acid-set form (curd) before pressing is called chhena.

The origin of paneer is debated. Ancient Indian, Afghan-Iranian and Portuguese-Bengali origins have been proposed, but whilst the jury remains out on this it is clear that this is very much an Asian creation.



Ingredients

Equipment:

- 1 Colander
- 1 Saucepan
- 1 Thermometer
- Cheesecloth
- 1 Slotted spoon

Ingredients:

- 3 ½ l milk (whole)
- 60 ml water (cold)
- 2 tsp acid (citric, nothing special here as lemon juice shall suffice)
- 2 tsp salt

Notes

A good addition to serve with chapati, puri, pakoras, keema or a dhal.

Method

1. Dissolve 2 tsp citric acid in 60ml of cold water.
2. Heat the milk to 88C but do not burn it, so run the hob at a lower heat for longer.
3. Add the citric acid solution to the milk and stir gently.
4. Wait for 10 minutes whilst allowing it to cool. You should have a clear and defined structure that is both curds and whey, and, yellowish. If not, then heat the milk again to 88C and add a little more citric acid.
5. Transfer the curds and whey into a colander that is lined with cheesecloth with the slotted spoon. Drain until the whey is no longer running out of the cheesecloth. Sprinkle on the salt and mix into the curds. Do not discard the whey, I shall run an article on how to reuse.
6. Gather the corners and edges of the cheesecloth whilst giving it a squeeze to remove as much whey as possible then tie it up into a bundle.
7. Place the cheesecloth bundle onto a chopping board and place another board, plate, or similar on top of it. Add weight to the upper board to approximately 1kg and leave it in place for 1 hour.
8. Over the next 3 to 4 hours increase the weight gradually until you have approximately 3kg pressing down on the cheese.
9. Your paneer will be at its best after circa 4 hours of pressing. This cheese is fresh and ready to eat immediately and can be stored in a fridge for up to 10 days. Smile, you just made your first cheese.