COOKING PASSION SINCE 1877

The complete guide to storing cheese

Ingredients

Method

Different cheese varieties can require different storage methods to ensure they maintain their unique flavours and textures. To keep the blues away, here are some simple storage techniques for most types of cheese:

How to store soft cheese

Soft and semi-soft cheeses include white mould cheeses like brie and camembert, or soft blue cheese varieties. To allow the cheese to 'breathe' you should never wrap them in cling wrap. Instead, wrap them in cheese paper or parchment paper to stop the cheese from sweating and preserve the mild flavours. These can then be placed in an airtight container and stored towards the bottom of your fridge.

How to store hard cheese

To stop hard cheeses such as aged gouda or parmigiana-reggiano from losing their intensity you should never store them in the freezer unless grated or shredded. Instead, wrap in waxed parchment paper first and follow it up with aluminium foil or loose plastic wrap.

How to store fresh or brined cheese

Fresh cheeses that come in their own water or brine, such as mozzarella or feta, should be left in their original packaging to best preserve their flavour. You can change the brine every couple of days to maintain freshness as well, simply mixing a solution of sea salt and water.

What if my cheese gets mouldy?

To grow mould on cheese there needs to be an element of oxygen, which is why blue cheese is pierced throughout its aging process. When not pierced, the mould only develops on the outside. If you discover that your hard cheese has grown mould you can safely cut off the mouldy section and continue eating the rest of the cheese, as the hard nature of the cheese means that oxygen isn't able to penetrate the deeper layers. If the greens and blues have sprouted on your cream cheese, however, its best left for the bin.

Can I store cheese in the freezer?

While you can technically freeze most varieties of cheese, some will fare better than others. Firmer varieties, such as cheddar or gouda, will experience less damage in terms of texture and taste, but still should not be stored in the freezer for longer than 6 months. Make sure to wrap them securely in cheese paper, then a layer of plastic wrap and finally a layer of foil to ensure there is no cross-contamination in the freezer.

It isn't so easy for all varieties unfortunately! Fresh cheese like mozzarella should never be stored in the freezer as it gets rubbery and loses its flavour quickly. When in doubt, think of the moisture content: Hard, dry cheeses are good to go in, while softer varieties should be left in the fridge or eaten as soon as possible.

What do I do with leftovers from my cheese platter?

If you've put together a scrumptious cheese platter for your party and are left with a couple of mini wedges at the end of the night, you might be tempted to wrap them up and pop them in the fridge for future use. Stop right there! After sitting out at room temperature all day they will have started to lose their flavour. Instead, try repurposing them in a delicious cheese recipe, such as Macaroni Cheese or a quiche.

Notes

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