

# FRESH CURD PREPARATION

Although a number of variations for stretching curd can be successful, this recommended procedure is designed to bring the curd up to the stretching temperature and back down to storage temperature very gently. This approach will ensure a finished product with a fresh dairy flavor, a milky white color and a tender texture.

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## PREPARE

- Heat 8 quarts of water on the stove to approximately 175-180°F.
- Remove 10 lbs. of Grande Fresh Curd from the cooler.
- Cut into  $\frac{1}{4}$ " strips with a knife or a wire curd harp. Place cheese in bowl.
- Weigh out 6.5 oz. salt. Set aside.

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## TEMPER

- Pour 4 quarts of 125-130°F hot tap water along the inside of the bowl, covering approximately  $\frac{1}{2}$ " over the surface of the curd.
- Gently separate the curd pieces to allow the water to uniformly temper the curd.
- Drain off water after 1 minute; curd temperature will be approximately 80-90°F.

3



## HEAT

- Pour 4 quarts of 175-180°F water along the inside of the bowl, covering approximately  $\frac{1}{2}$ " over the surface of the curd.
- Allow to sit undisturbed for 1 minute 30 seconds.
- Drain off water; curd temperature will be approximately 120-125°F.

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## COMPRESS/SALT/HEAT

- Firmly press the curd down, compressing into a mass at the bottom of the bowl.
- Dissolve pre-portioned salt into 3 quarts of 175-180°F water.
- Pour salted water along the inside of the bowl, covering 1" over the surface of the curd.
- Allow curd to sit undisturbed for 1 minute; monitor for a curd temperature of 135°F.

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## STRETCH

- When curd temperature is 135°F, begin to stretch, or pull, the curd using the paddle\*; the curd should be in one large, cohesive mass gently floating in the water.
- Start to work the curd, increasing the stretch as the curd becomes more pliable, careful to maintain 135°F temperature.
- Slowly raise the curd and hold above the mixing bowl, allowing gravity to stretch the mass. Repeat, keeping the curd in a cohesive mass, until the entire curd mass is of a smooth, uniform texture.

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## FORM

- Working quickly, form the curd into a log shaped mass to facilitate shaping the cheese.
- Roll the log mass into itself to create a ball shape at the end of the log.
- When the ball is the desired size, pinch it off at the base to form the ball; repeat until all balls have been formed.

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## COOL/STORE

- Place the formed balls into a running cold tap water bath of 60°F for 10-15 minutes.
- Transfer into a covered container with 34°F ice water and store in the cooler.

\*Note: Throughout stretching, maintain curd temperature of 135°F. Drain some water off to reduce the temperature, or add 175-180°F water to increase temperature.

# FRESH CURD TIPS



Grande's recommended procedure for working Fresh Curd is a best practice based on time and temperature. However, art also plays a role. When the curd is compressed, the chef will feel for an indication of the firmness and cohesive nature of the curd. With experience, a skilled chef will adjust the time, temperature and/or the amount of water to achieve the proper curd temperature.

## Temperature

When working with Grande Fresh Curd, best results will be achieved when the curd temperature is raised and lowered very gently. For this reason, tempering the curd with hot tap water before the stretching process, and a cold water bath before the ice water is recommended. The cheese is designed to come together very quickly and easily when the curd temperature is 135°F.

Some operators may commonly leave the fresh curd at room temperature for several hours prior to stretching. The 'Temper' step is the recommended procedure because the curd temperature can be controlled more consistently.

## Finishing Methods

Working Fresh Curd allows the flexibility to finish the product in different forms:

- For a variety of different size balls, logs or braids, form into the desired shape. After cooling, transfer to a covered container with ice water. If desired, one tablespoon of salt per half gallon of water can be added to create a brine solution. Or, tightly wrap each piece with plastic wrap and store in the cooler.
- For hand-made fresh mozzarella pinwheels, stretch curd into a ¼" sheet, add desired fillings (e.g. prosciutto, roasted peppers, etc.), and roll into a log shape. Tightly wrap each roll with plastic wrap and store in the cooler.
- To form a loaf, stretch the curd into a cohesive mass and place in a bread pan; place the pan in an ice water bath for 15 minutes. Remove the loaf from the pan, cover with plastic wrap and store in the cooler for 12 hours. Chop or slice into desired shape for use on pizza, flatbreads or sandwiches.

## Shelf Life

Every Fresh Curd case and pillow pack is marked with a Best Use By Date. Be sure to properly store the product below 37°F, but not freezing, for best performance.

Storage and handling methods can impact the quality and shelf life. Even under proper storage and handling, the finished product is best consumed as fresh as possible after opening the package, preferably within 1-2 days. Observe the following guidelines for the longest shelf life:

- Be sure to properly wash hands prior to stretching fresh curd.
- Always use clean equipment (e.g. bowls, paddle, knife, cutting board, curd harp, etc.). Bacteria from hands or equipment can shorten shelf life.
- Tightly wrap any open, unused curd with plastic wrap to avoid drying out and minimize exposure to other products in the cooler.

## Color

No matter the format, Grande Fresh Curd will always have a milky white color. Like all Grande cheeses, Grande Fresh Curd is all natural and does not include any whiteners or additives.

For more information on Fresh Curd visit us  
at [www.grandecheese.com](http://www.grandecheese.com).

