

QUESO BLANCO

(or PANIR or WHOLE MILK “RICOTTA” or CHENNA or...)

In Latin America they call it “Queso Blanco” (or “white cheese”), in India it’s “Panir” (or Paneer -- it’s sometimes made there with cow milk or buffalo milk), and it’s similar to chenna or farmer cheese or pot cheese or ricotta... Whatever you call it, it’s fairly bland and doesn’t melt. For an easy cheese that’s great for spreading on bagels, crumbling on pizza, substituting for tofu or ricotta, try this...

For ease of clean-up, spray an enamel or stainless steel pan (DON’T use aluminum) with a vegetable oil cooking spray. You may prefer to use a “double boiler” arrangement. Add a gallon of FRESH goat milk. Cover and heat SLOWLY to 185 degrees, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat. Slowly pour in “about” 1/4 cup of white vinegar*, stirring as you pour. Stop adding vinegar when you see the curds start to separate. The whey will be pale yellow-green.

Ladle out the curds, or pour carefully through a colander to separate. Add “about” 1 teaspoon salt to the curds. Flavor with herbs if desired.** Mix well and put into cheesecloth to hang and drain for several hours. Makes “about”*** 1 1/2 pounds, and will keep about two weeks in the refrigerator, if wrapped tightly in plastic wrap.

* You can substitute lemon juice or lime juice or cider vinegar. The flavor will vary slightly, and you may have to add more, or less. These are all called the “acid precipitant”. Try an experiment to see which you prefer.

** You can add them to the curds, or make plain cheese and roll them on the surface later.

*** At the end of your doe’s lactation cycle there are more solids in the milk, so the yield will increase. There may also be a difference among breeds.

Panir is traditionally flattened with weights into a thick disk, rather than hanging and draining in cheesecloth. It is customarily diced and sautéed, and is used throughout India in a variety of dishes including DAL, salads and vegetables. It’s an essential protein source in many vegetarian diets.

This cheese can be frozen. It may thaw out to a more crumbly texture.

DON’T THROW AWAY THE WHEY! It is full of protein and water-soluble vitamins and minerals. Some folks drink it, and it can be used in baking and soup stock, or to boil pasta or beans. If you have more than you can use, some goats will fight over it. If you have a pig or chickens, it’s great for them, too.

See other side for Nutritional Information