



INGREDIENTS

Serves 4

- 500 g (1 lb 2 oz) Taleggio cheese
- 4 tbsp white wine
- 1 rustic bloomer loaf of white bread
- 20 slices salami (freshly sliced)
- vegetable oil for frying

METHOD

Crostini

- 1 Cut 3 slices (about 2 cm thick) of bread and paint with oil.
- 2 Heat a ribbed grill pan (or frying pan) to a high heat. Place the bread in the pan and lower the heat.
- 3 Toast until golden for 2-3 minutes on each side.

Salami strips

- 1 Cut the salami into chunky strips approx. 75 mm (3") long.

Fondue

- 1 Peel the skin off the cheese and dice into 1 cm cubes.
 - 2 Pour just enough wine into a pan to cover the base. Bring the wine to a simmer.
 - 3 Carefully add the cheese into the pan. It is best to keep it on a low heat because you want the cheese to melt, but not to go so far that it splits.
 - 4 Stir to produce a smooth texture. The consistency should be like thin mayonnaise.
- Pour the mixture into a warm ceramic bowl and serve immediately with the crostini and salami strips.



ABOUT CHEESE



Making your own yoghurt is fun, cheaper, and you can add your own flavours such as peanut butter, or lemon curd. But you will need to buy 'live' yoghurt to make a starter culture. You can make your own yoghurt by, first of all, taking a vacuum flask and filling it three-quarters full with milk. (Sterilised or UHT milk is best, but if you don't have this kind of milk, heat the milk you do have until it boils and then simmer for about 5 minutes.) You'll also need about 2 tbsp of 'live' yoghurt to half a litre of milk. (Be prepared to try different brands of live yoghurt to find the one that works best for you.)

The milk needs to be at body temperature - 37°C (98°F) - so a thermometer is helpful here. Empty the milk into another container and warm the inside of the vacuum flask with some hot water. Pour a little of the milk into a jug, then stir in some 'live' yoghurt until the mixture is smooth. Pour that back into the rest of the milk and stir well. Pour the hot water out of the flask and tip in your yoghurt and milk mix. Leave it for about 8 hours. Then tip the yoghurt out into a bowl and put it in the fridge to thicken. Stir in some crushed fruit or honey. Yummy!

- Adding wine to a fondue keeps the melted cheese from getting stringy or seizing up. Wine also helps to make the sauce smooth as it contains water and tartaric acid.
- The term 'big cheese' originated in mediaeval times as an expression of envy. The more money you had, the more cheese you could buy.
- In 1546, John Heywood wrote in his *Proverbs* that 'The moon is made of a greene cheese.' Variations on this sentiment were repeated for many years, so that some people have assumed that this was once a serious belief. But Heywood was probably trying to be clever and others enjoyed repeating this 'proverb' as silly nonsense.
- Melted and seasoned cheese on toast was first called Welsh rabbit in the 18th century. It is also incorrectly known as rarebit, or Welsh rarebit, although the dish has nothing to do with rabbits and probably nothing to do with Wales either.

If these facts have inspired you to learn more about the animals from which milk, the raw material for cheese, is obtained, then you might like to take our short course, *Studying mammals* (S182), which is based around videos of the BBC *Life of Mammals* TV series.