



TECHNOLOGICAL NOTE NUMBER 3

PORTUGUESE CHEESE



Portuguese cheese

SERRA DA ESTRELA



The Serra da Estrela Cheese Dos Lobos is handmade cheese, produced with raw milk extreme from sheep of the race Serra da Estrela mostly during the months of November to March in the area of Oliveira, the Serra da Estrela (Star Mountain) region, belonging to the area demarcated for this production.

Components:

The production of the cheese has to follow very rigorous rules. It is made from sheep milk. Its particular qualities result from slow draining of curdled raw sheep's milk which has been coagulated by using local *Cynara cadunculus* thistle rather than rennet.

Features and content:

Classification: Protected Designation of Origin - PDO Serra da Estrela

Shape: whole, well-formed cylinder, regular, with lateral bulging and slightly on the upper side, no defined edges, smooth and thin, colour of straw yellow uniform. **Crust:** consistently malleable, allowing some fluctuation.

Maturation (days): 120

Fat content: a moisture content of 61% to 69%, fat in dry matter of 45% to less than 60%.

Texture: cured semi-soft cheese, slightly yellowish white uniform, pulp - close-grained, moderately buttery with cutting zone easily deformable, oily look with no or little eyes obtained by slow draining of the curd after coagulation of milk by the action of milk thistle (*Cynara cardunculus*, L.)

Flavour & Fragrance: smooth sweet bouquet, clean and slightly acidic

Validity: 90 days

Conservation: Refrigerated at temperatures of about 0 to 5 ° C

Technological process:

The production of cheese Serra da Estrela nowadays still follows the old traditional procedure and it is the oldest and most famous Portuguese cheese. The Serra da Estrela (Star Mountain) is the pasture for the “Serra da Estrela” sheep breed which is considered to be the one with the best milky capacity. So that the cheese can achieve its highest quality and it should always be made from the same milking.

The shepherds take the flock to the pasture early in the morning and return in the evening. The women and daughters make the cheese following the techniques their ancestors taught them. The shepherd should wisely choose the pasture for his sheep because certain grass can give a bad taste to the cheese. The commonly named “Queijo da Serra” (Mountain Cheese) is a cured buttery cheese usually white or yellowish. Its maturation period has specific norms and must last thirty days at least. The texture of the paste varies depending on its age, from a very soft semi-liquid when young, to a soft but sliceable solid when older. It is a cured cheese created by artisanal producers with a white or slightly yellow colour and a uniform creamy consistency with at most a few small holes in it. It is formed into a somewhat irregular wheel with slightly bulging sides and upper surface. It typically has a soft well-formed rind, smooth and thin with a uniform straw-yellow colour, and is traditionally bound in cloth.

Awards:

The “Queijo da Serra” was nominee one of the “7 Gastronomy Wonders of Portugal” in 2011.



QUEIJO SALOIO (“SALOIO CHEESE”)



Right in the “Saloia” region, the “Queijo Saloio” was firstly produced in a small farm where its owner would transform, through a handmade method, the milk from his own flock into delicious regional cheeses.

“A good milk will make a good cheese”, he would say, making his cheese through the traditional way whose origin gets lost in the memory of the people of the region.

More than four decades after, the art of producing regional cheese of high quality and strong tradition still is the cornerstone of “Queijo Saloio”.

Every day the cow, goat and sheep milk is carefully selected as are the coagulation and curing processes. Tradition and technology work hand in hand to assure the safety and hygiene of the product.

Ingredients

Cow's milk, pasteurized goat and sheep, calcium chloride, rennet, lactic ferments and salt.

Produced from three milks - cow, goat and sheep pasteurized. Regional Saloio cheese is characterized by having a fresh lactic odor. Cylindrical shape is defined and slight bulging edges. Its taste is acid, fresh cream, having a thin shell yellow straw and its paste is ivory white with some eyes evenly distributed.

Features and content:

Classification: Artisanal

Shape: cylindrical shape is defined and slight bulging edges

Maturation (days):

Fat content: 45-60% of fat

Texture: semi-soft cheese

Flavour & Fragrance: its taste is acid, fresh cream, having a thin shell yellow straw and its paste is ivory white with some eyes evenly distributed

Validity: 120 days

Conservation: it should be kept at room temperature between 0-15 ° C

Awards:

International Cheese Awards Nantwich 2013 EST.1897

QUEIJO DE SERPA ("SERPA CHEESE")



The Serpa Cheese is a semi-soft buttery cheese. It is undoubtedly perfect for special moments following Serpa's best tradition. The Serpa cheese is of exceptional quality and irresistible taste.

At Monte Vale de Faia, near Serpa, where the Queijaria Guilherme is located, the cheeses that are produced meet the highest standards of hygiene and quality. Here the first quality milk is selected and drawn from the best herds in the region.

Ingredients

sheep milk

Features and content:

Due to the improvement of the manufacturing process and the selection of the milk used, this is the most famous cheese of the Alentejo Region and one of the

best Serpa Cheeses ever. As a consequence, a unique consistence and taste is achieved. A real treat for those who make meals the highlight of the day.

The cheeses produced are known for their exceptional quality, because it kept its traditional way of manufacturing. The products show unique characteristics resulting from the strain of cattle, from the pastures where they feed, the climate, which joins the secular art, refined over time by the milk processing techniques.

Classification: Protected Designation of Origin cheese - PDO Queijo De Serpa

Maturation (days): 30 days

Fat content: 45-60%

Texture: semi-soft buttery cheese releases a soft bouquet, clean, its texture is creamy in the mouth, and homogeneous flux

Flavour & Fragrance: slightly acidic

Validity: 365 days

Conservation: in cool, dry place

Use:

Ideal for a snack or appetizer for a main meal with their characteristics further enhanced when accompanied by mature white wine. It is undoubtedly perfect for special moments.

Awards:

It has always been an awarded cheese and it is a Protected Designation of Origin cheese which means it obeys to a strict quality control and has the certification on its label.

2 gold medals and 1 silver medal in the National Contest of Portuguese Traditional Cheeses:

Gold Medal in the National Competition for Portuguese Traditional Cheese with Qualified Names and

Gold Medal in the National Agriculture Fair 2011



QUEJO DA ILHA (ISLAND CHEESE)



The cheese from S. Jorge Island (Azores) is a fully traditional and natural product without any additives or food colouring. Made exclusively of raw whole pasteurized cow milk which is manufactured in small dairies throughout the island.

The health of these animals, which are milked under the highest hygiene conditions, as well as the fast transportation of the milk to the dairies, guarantees the quality of this cheese.

This is cheese with strong aroma – feature which becomes stronger with age. The cheese from S. Jorge Island is known worldwide.

Ingredients: raw whole pasteurized cow milk

Features and content:

A traditional cheese, with a long maturity period. For the real cheese lovers. Its long maturity period (9 months) gives it a unique flavour and a guarantee of quality that places it in the special cheeses category. Produced from pasteurised cow's milk whose fat content has been standardised. Produced in a non-continuous process, in open tanks. It is a semi-hard matured cheese, yellow coloured, with small irregular holes.

Classification: Artisanal

Maturation: 30 days of natural maturation and 60 days in environmental controlled basements

Fat content: 45-60%

Texture: cured semi-hard or hard

Flavour & Fragrance: a clean and mildly spiced taste and strong aroma

Validity: 8 months

Conservation: <10°C

Awards: Best Cow cheese of extended maturation in 2011 and 2012.