

# Monterey Jack Cheese

## Ingredients:

1 gallon whole milk  
Mesophilic Culture MA011 [(LL) Lactococcus lactis subsp. lactis (LLC)  
Lactococcus lactis subsp. cremoris]  
1/2 Junket Rennet tablet or Liquid rennet per manufacturers

instruction

Salt for brine



Monterey Jack with Pepperoni

## Directions:

1. Heated the milk to 88F then add starter culture and ripen for 60 minutes.
2. Next add rennet to form a solid curd. This will take about 40 minutes.
3. Once the firm curd was established cut into 1/2" cubes then let rest for about 5 minutes before stirring for another 20 min. At this point the curds are extremely fragile and must be handled with care.
4. Next begin a long slow stirring while we slowly raised the temp to 100F over 40 minutes. This step dries the curd out by removing the whey from the curd.
5. Stir slowly for another 30 minutes watching the individual curds become smaller and toughen up.
6. The next step in the kettle is to 'pitch' or let the curds sink to the bottom for 25-30 minutes with gentle stirring every 3 to 5 min. Here they will now not lose as much moisture but will continue to produce lactic acid.
7. The final step was a simple texture test. Take up a small handful of curd and squeeze it to compact. If it breaks apart into individual curds easily with your thumb it is ready if it sticks together let it set for another 10 minutes.
8. Now the curd is ready to go into a draining cloth spread inside a colander. Then bring the ends of the cloth together and the entire curd mass is shaped into a nice round ball pulling the cloth up and consolidating it as the whey runs off.
9. Next a board is placed on your draining surface under the ball of curd. The top is then tied off with string and the extra cloth is carefully spread evenly over the surface. Another board is placed on top and a light weight of 5-8 lbs is carefully balanced on top. This will be the weight for about 1hr and then a weight of about 25 lbs will be used for another 4-6 hours. At this point remove all weight and let the cheese rest at 68-75F overnight.
10. The next morning the cheese is placed in saturated brine for 24 hours. (See thread on brines).

11. The next day (3rd day) the cheese is removed from the brine and allowed to dry off for another 2 days establishing a firm rind. It then goes to a cooler cave (54F) where it continues to dry off more.

12. After about 5-8 days and the rind becomes quite dry, a light coat of olive oil\* can be applied and repeated every 3-5 days for about a week.

12. Following this a good brushing every 3-7 days until a firm coat is established and apply a bit more oils as needed. This cheese will be ready in 3-8 months

\*Ig Vella at Vella Cheese applies a mixture of oil, red pepper, and cocoa to the rind for a really nice brown crust and a very rustic looking cheese