



THE BEVERAGE PEOPLE

CROTTIN STYLE CHEESE

**REPRINTED from PETER DIXON with edits
from NANCY VINEYARD**

Aged soft-ripened lactic goat cheeses comprise a very large and diverse group of cheeses that originate in France. They can be served after only ten days of ripening or aged to the extent where they turn into hard grating cheeses. They vary widely in appearance and shape but are all relatively small, weighing from 2 to 12 ounces.

The most typical lactic goat cheeses of France are St. Maure, a log shaped bloomy; Valençay, a pyramid rolled in ashes after salting with a natural mold rind; Chabichou, a small cone with natural crust; Crottin de Chavignol, a puck with natural crust. The curd is characterized by having both rennet and lactic qualities because small amounts of rennet are used and a high level of acidity is developed before the curd can be ladled into the forms to begin the draining of whey. The curd is formed in the vat during a period of 15 to 28 hours depending on temperature. Because of their short aging period, these cheeses are made from pasteurized milk.

***We will be using Peter Dixon's instructions
tempered with our home cheesemaking
experience to make the Crottin style cheese.***

Cheese molds: 4 Crottin molds
5 Ramekins
Measuring spoons
Distilled or chlorine free water

Ingredients:

1 gallon pasteurized goat's milk
1/2 cup Whipping cream (cow milk)
Kosher salt for salting the wheels.
*Dilute each of the following ingredients in 5 Tbsp. of
distilled water and hold in small bowls.*
1/8 tsp. Mesophilic culture MM 100
1/16 tsp. P. Candidum
1/16 tsp. Geotrichum 17
1/8 tsp. calcium chloride
1/8 tsp. liquid rennet

Directions:

Bring all the milk to 68-75 °F
Add 1/8 tsp. MM100 to milk. Mix the culture in for 5 minutes. Wait 25 more minutes for milk to acidify.
Add calcium chloride solution. Stir the calcium chloride in for one minute.
Add the P. Candidum and the Geotrichum solutions and stir.
Add the rennet solution and stir it in for twenty seconds.

Fermentation:

Hold the temperature steady throughout the fermentation time for 15-28 hours until the **acidity of the whey** is at least pH 4.60 and not lower than pH 4.40. The expected time is 15-20 hours using 1/8 tsp. at 75 °F. Expect to hold this for an additional 8 hours if temperature drops to 72°F.

If you do not measure the acidity that develops, then the signs that the curd is ready are: curd cake is separated from the sides of the pot, there is a half inch layer of whey on top and there are some cracks in the curd body. When these conditions are developed, the curd can be gently ladled in small scoops directly into the crottin molds.

Draining:

Place the molds on a drain tray in a ripening box and leave loosely covered for the draining time. The temperature of the room determines how much whey is removed from the curd. The draining period regulates the body characteristics and determines the final quality of the cheese. This period can be from 15-36 hours at a temperature of 68-72 °F. (*Warmer conditions above 72 can promote gas formation and excessive moisture loss; lower temperatures than 68 inhibit whey drainage.*) Two hours after ladling, sprinkle a quarter teaspoon of kosher salt on the top of each curd in its form.

Flipping:

After waiting long enough for the cheese to drain, (it will be less than half the height in the

mold as you started) the cheeses can be turned and returned to the forms. Another quarter teaspoon of salt is sprinkled on top. The cheeses are left another 8 - 10 hours when they may be unmolded for the drying phase. *(Or until drainage appears to have stopped, although there will be a small amount of whey that continues to collect for the following few days.)*

Drying the Cheeses:

After draining is finished, the cheeses are removed from the forms and placed on drain matting set on open air shelving in a 60-65 °F room with air moving over the cheeses, improvise with a fan if necessary. If kept in a ripening box, leave uncovered and place a fan nearby to move air over the box. You can protect the cheese from dust with a loose cover.

Aging the Cheeses:

The cheeses should be turned over the next day and then left alone until there is visible mold growth on the surface. This should take three to five days. When there is growth, turn the cheeses over and move them to a more humid and colder place. This should be 45 - 48 °F and 85 - 90% relative humidity. Turn the cheeses every day or every other day until they are completely covered with white mold. This should happen within five to seven days. *(To make a mini-cheese cave keep the cheeses in covered plastic containers in a refrigerator. To ensure that there will be enough humidity, add a dampened paper towel to the corner of the box. The top can be cracked to let in air if there is condensation.)* In this way the cheeses can age for several weeks. It is a good idea to turn the cheeses and rub the mold down (use a dry paper towel) periodically to prevent the rind from getting too thick. The cheeses can be ripened for two or three weeks. Hold longer for stronger flavor. The best packaging is a breathable wrapper - Cheese Paper - made of plastic and wax paper. An alternative wrapper is parchment paper.

Resources:

French Cheeses, Masui and Yamada is great for visual images and some make procedures.
The Fabrication of Farmstead Goat Cheese, La Jaouen is an essential text.
Artisan Cheesemaking at Home, Mary Karlin supplies detailed home cheesemaking instructions.
The Beverage People for moral support and supplies!

Copyright ©2009 Peter Dixon and ©2015 The Beverage People
Contact: Peterhicksdixon@Gmail.com, www.dairyfoodconsulting.com