



## VALENCAY

### White Mold Ripened Goat Cheese

This cheese is a decadent french-style soft goat cheese that comes with its own mythology explaining its unique pyramidal shape. According to the legend, this Loire Valley cheese used to be made as a pointed pyramid. However, after Napoleon's military failures in Egypt he returned to France and became infuriated upon the sight of this pyramid shaped cheese. It reminded him of the Egyptian temples. With his sword he lopped off the top of the cheese before him, and Valencay has ever since been made as a pyramid with a flattened top to appease Napoleon's temper.

Making Valencay is both simple and tricky. If you have made Fresh Chevre, you will find that the preparation of the curd is almost the same in simplicity. The key is the aging process, which will take 3 or 4 weeks under controlled temperature and humidity conditions while the cheese is flipped daily. The result is an extraordinarily complex and delicious mixture of goaty tanginess, and soft brie-like texture and flavor with a salty, ashed rind that gives a little bite to the palate!

Keeps several weeks.

Yields 3, 3 oz. cakes.

#### INGREDIENTS

2 qts of Trader Joe's Summerhill Goat Milk or Redwood Hill Goat Milk or Fresh Goat Milk  
1/8 tsp. M4001 culture  
1/16 tsp. Penicillium Candidum  
1/16 tsp. Geotrichum Candidum  
1/8 tsp. liquid Calcium Chloride in 1 Tablespoon water  
1/8 tsp. liquid Rennet, in 1 Tablespoon water  
Edible Ash (salted)

#### EQUIPMENT

Stainless Steel Pot, 3 qts or more.  
Dial Top Thermometer  
Perforated ladle or slotted spoon

3 Pyramidal perforated molds  
Ripening box with inset for draining  
Hygrometer (to measure humidity)  
Cheese Paper

#### METHOD

1. Add the milk to the pot and bring to 86°F.
2. Remove from the heat to stir in the cultures. Sprinkle the MA4001 Culture and both the Candidum powders over the milk surface and let dissolve for 2-4 minutes before stirring. Mix into the milk with 20 top/bottom strokes. Wait 3 minutes.
3. Add calcium chloride water. Stir.
4. Add rennet water, stir and cover. Let stand at 72°F. for 12-18 hours (waiting longer results in a firmer curd).
5. Ladle the creamy curd (which looks like yogurt) into molds on a draining rack. Drain 12 hours at room temperature. Remove whey from the drain pan and continue draining 12-24 hours.
6. Using a salt shaker full of edible salted ash, sprinkle a thin layer on the exposed surface of the cheeses in their molds. Unmold and place them on the draining rack where you can apply ash to the other surfaces. Dry cheeses on the draining rack for at least 24 hours.
7. Once the surface of the cheese is no longer glossy with moisture, they can be placed into the climate controlled ripening cave (refrigerator). Good ripening results can be obtained with a temperature of around 45 degrees, and a humidity of 85-95%. Careful: Humidity above 95% can cause the skin to pull away, and low humidity will inhibit the blooming mold.
8. The white mold of the penicillium candidum will bloom around the ash coating and turn the cheeses white. After 1-2 weeks this fluffy white mold turns into a pasty rind you can wrap them in cheese paper.
9. Allow the cheeses to ripen internally for another week or two. Refrigerate and enjoy.

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