

# Comté

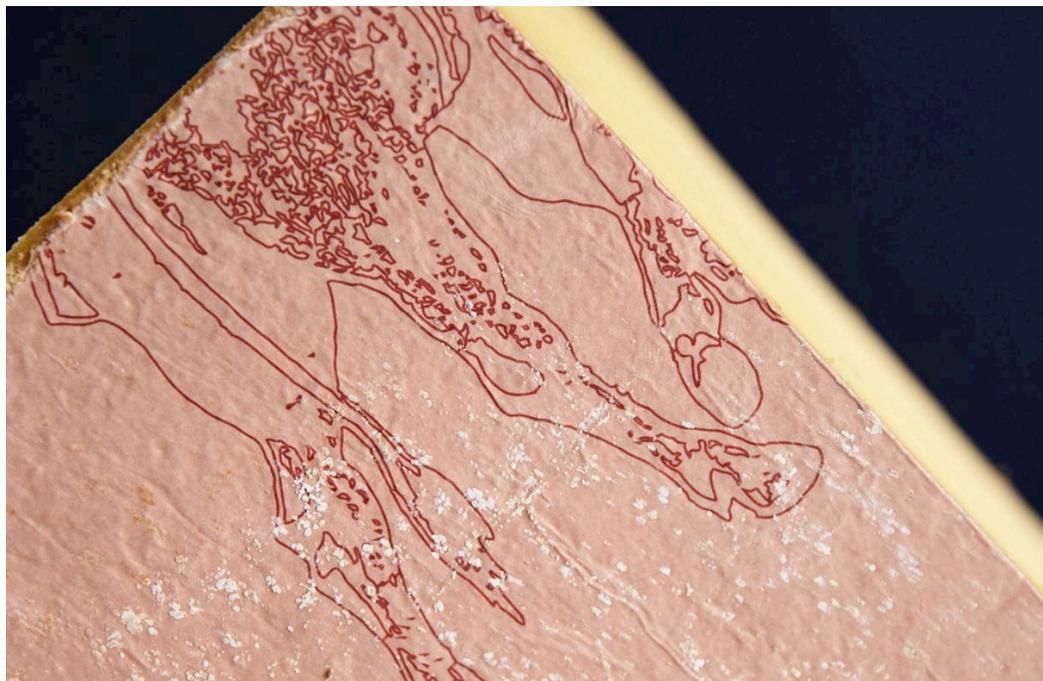


Milk type: Cow

Milk treatment: Raw

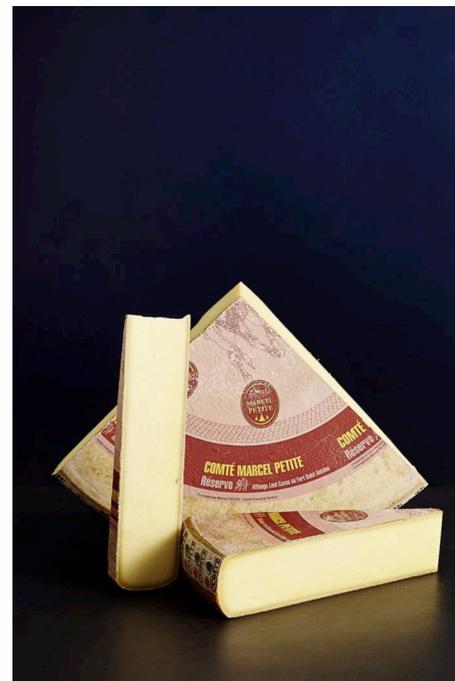
Coagulant type: Animal rennet

Location: Franche-Comté, France



Comté is a hard cheese made in the Franche-Comté region of Eastern France. The Comté we sell is matured by Marcel Petite at Fort Saint Antoine for 12-18 months. It has a creamy texture with occasional crystals, sweet and nutty to savoury and vegetal flavours.

Comté is made with raw milk and animal rennet in small dairies called 'fruitières'.



The breed of cow is mainly Montbéliard with around 5% coming from French Simmental.

Each morning the milk arrives and is pumped into large copper-lined vats. While this is happening a whey starter is added (the whey is from the previous day's make incubated overnight). When full, the vat is stirred and the temperature increased to between 31° and 33°C. The milk is held at this temperature for a period of 'ripening' lasting 30-45 minutes. After this a second whey starter is added along with the rennet. This is then stirred for a few minutes and then left to set. The curd is cut about 30 minutes after the addition of the rennet.

Cutting of the curd is done mechanically by bladed paddles attached to a rotary motor running over the vat. Initially the cutting is slow and gentle. After a few minutes the speed is increased along with the temperature. The curd is 'cooked' to 55°C. After the cooking temperature is reached the curds are stirred for approximately 15 minutes before being transferred to moulds where the curds are pressed for around 20 hours. From the press the wheels of Comté are taken to the fruitière's own cellars where they are salted and turned for 2-4 weeks before being picked up by Marcel Petite for maturing. When we select our cheeses we are looking for length and depth of flavour; sweet caramelised onion, rich nuttiness and even some more savoury meaty and vegetal notes. The texture is creamy, dense and smooth with an occasional protein crystal crunch.