



The age-old
science of storing
cheese comes
home.



Patent No. 10, 092, 017

For centuries, professional cheese makers and keepers have created highly controlled environments to preserve and store cheese.

These specialized cheese caves control humidity, air flow, temperature, materials, and light. When these factors are balanced properly, cheeses can mature to their ideal ripeness and achieve peak flavor and texture. A specialized environment for preserving cheese has never been accessible to the home cook.

Until now.



“The Cheese Grotto is a revolutionary new product that’s ready to bring the art of cheese preservation right into your home refrigerator.” – *Culture Magazine*

“The Cheese Grotto solves a problem every cheese lover faces: How can I prolong or maintain my cheeses at their optimal stage of ripeness?” – *Max McCalman, Cheese Expert*

“This device is the right and only way to keep and store cheese.” – *Steve Jenkins, Cheese Expert*

GETTING STARTED

Your Grotto is made to order, so it may smell of wood laminate upon arrival. You can wash the Grotto inside and out with hot water and a splash of distilled vinegar or soap. Allow to air dry before use.

Use a clean cloth or paper towel to apply a thin, even coat of mineral oil (included) to the bamboo surface of the Grotto. This will help protect the Grotto against stains.

Unwrap the clay brick and submerge in clean, warm water for 2 minutes. Wipe excess water off the bottom of the brick.

Place the brick in the slot in the base of the Grotto.

Replenishing the moisture in the clay brick weekly will ensure consistent humidity regulation.

Remove the shelves and hand wash. Allow to dry completely before placing cheese on your shelves.

Place your cheeses, unwrapped, in the Grotto, and they will live a long, happy life.

Fine-tune the humidity in your Grotto for your cheese storage needs. Learn more about managing humidity in your Grotto on page 3.

TIPS & TECHNIQUES

For long term storage of cheese, the FDA recommends keeping the Cheese Grotto at refrigeration temperatures (34 to 39 degrees F, preferably 39).

However, founder Jessica Sennett prefers to store certain aged styles of cheese at room temperature, below 70 degrees F. An ambient temperature range from 45-60F most accurately replicates the environment of a cheese cave.

Store different types of cheese on different shelves. (See our guide to cheese style preservation on page 4.) This keeps the active cultures from mingling and best preserves the individual character of each cheese. The most pungent styles (blue cheeses and aromatic cheeses with orange-colored rinds) should be stored on a separate shelf.

Give each cheese room to breathe- around one inch between pieces will allow proper air circulation. Certain cheeses such as mozzarella and feta require storage in brine, and are not suited to storage in the Grotto.

To age homemade cheese, make sure that your Grotto is placed in an environment with the proper temperature range for the style of cheese you are making. The temperature and humidity requirements for making cheese are precise and we recommend using a thermometer and hygrometer to verify that you are maintaining the correct environment for the style of cheese you are making.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

The Cheese Grotto™ (Patent No. 10, 092, 017) combines age-old cheese wisdom with modern innovation to create a perfect cheese preservation environment. The Grotto's humidity-regulating brick, is comprised of clay, an ancient and traditional material. A sustainable bamboo plywood, provides a strong, resilient and washable surface for storing and beautifully displaying cheese.

The Cheese Grotto is expertly crafted from the highest quality, sustainable materials. It is designed to be enjoyed with friends and family for years. Each Grotto is made in East Durham, New York.



Two removable shelves hold up to six pounds of cheese. Bamboo can be hand-washed and will not warp with use.

Grooved shelf contours provide gentle air flow around the cheese.

After a quick submersion in water, the clay brick slowly releases moisture into the air, keeping unwrapped cheeses at the optimal humidity.



At 8 1/2 " high and 7 " wide, the Grotto is sized to fit comfortably in your refrigerator or on your countertop.

The ventilated back panel can open or close to customize airflow.



Glass panels allow easy monitoring and attractive display of your cheese as it ripens.

A solid brass doorknob secures the Grotto door closed.

With a 12" depth and pull-out shelves, the Grotto provides ample surface to store a number of cheeses

The natural bamboo construction allows the cheese to breathe, providing a healthy environment for the live cheese cultures.

MANAGING HUMIDITY

The Cheese Grotto allows you to customize and regulate humidity, just like a cheese professional.

Begin your cheese storage by making careful observations about the appearance of your cheese upon purchase. With practice, you'll develop the ability recognize and predict when your cheese needs more or less humidity.

TOO MUCH MOISTURE?

Cheeses with too much moisture benefit from a temporary, controlled drying out period called curing. When does your cheese need curing? Here are some of the most common indications:

- You purchase a soft cheese with rind that appears matted or damp and may smell slightly of ammonia.
- A proliferation of white, blue or hair-like brown mold appears on the cut surface or rind of your cheese.
- You add a large quantity (over two pounds) of soft cheese to your Grotto all at one time.

TOO LITTLE MOISTURE?

Certain situations may require increased humidity in your Grotto. To achieve this, you can replenish the water in your clay brick every three days. When would your cheese need higher humidity?

- The surface of your cheese slightly darkens and feels dry to the touch.
- You store small (3 oz. or smaller) pieces of cheese. These cheeses have more surface area, and will need higher humidity to prevent drying out.



CURING

In a refrigerated Cheese Grotto, you can cure cheeses by opening the back ventilation panel halfway for 24 hours. (Refrigerated air is harsh on cheese and fully opening the panel could be too severe.) If you are storing your Grotto at room temperature, open the ventilation panel fully for 24 hours. While curing cheese, you can temporarily withhold replenishing the moisture in your clay brick. After the curing period is complete, close the panel and continue replenishing water in the brick as usual.

MOLD

Mold is a natural part of high-quality, traditional cheeses. Cheese professionals know how to identify and manage molds. Cheeses with white, blue or brown molds are still good to eat! Gently scrape these molds off the cut surfaces of cheese. Pat down molds on the rind of cheese (taking care to not damage the rind.)

LONG -TERM STORAGE

When you are on vacation, the best way to ensure proper humidity is to stock up on cheese. Storing at least a half pound of soft cheese or a full pound of hard cheese will keep all your cheeses happy and hydrated while you are away.

CHEESE STYLE PRESERVATION GUIDE

Cheese Style	Normal Shelf Life <i>refrigerated, wrapped in plastic</i>	Refrigerated in Grotto <i>unwrapped</i>	Stored in Grotto <i>ambient room temperature (less than 70 F)</i>
Spreadable Logs <i>chèvre, sheep, cow</i>	7 days	2-3 weeks	8 days
Bloomy Rind <i>brie, triple crème</i>	7 days	4 weeks	2 weeks
Washed Rind* <i>aromatic cheeses with orange-colored rind</i>	7-10 days	2 months	2 weeks
Blue Cheeses*	7-10 days	2 months	2 weeks
Semi-Hard <i>smooth-textured, melt-able cheeses</i>	10-14 days	3-6 months	1 month
Hard <i>parmigiano reggiano</i>	1 month	5-12 months	1 month

* Store these styles on a separate shelf

MAINTENANCE & CARE

Hand wash only with hot water and soap or diluted, distilled vinegar. Distilled vinegar kills molds and is an effective way to sterilize the surface of your shelves.

Allow the Grotto shelves to air dry between uses.
For maintenance of the bamboo, apply food-grade mineral oil monthly.

To maintain the smooth glide of the shelves over time, you can rub carnauba or beeswax along the edges of the shelves, applying a thin coat of wax. Wax will help seal the wood from moisture.

Wood is a traditional surface for preserving cheese. If it is not cleaned regularly and properly, wood has the potential to harbor pathogens.

Though Cheese Grotto's Jessica Sennett is an expert at bringing out cheese's best flavors, she is not an expert in food safety and she does not offer any opinion about food safety. New York Department of Health regulations requires restaurants to store cheese at a temperature below 45 degrees F, except for up to two hours during preparation for food service. Nothing in Cheese Grotto's materials, including statements regarding the shelf life of cheese, is intended to (and the materials should not be interpreted to) conflict with food safety regulations and recommendations

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