

THE OXFORD COMPANION TO
CHEESE

Edited by
CATHERINE DONNELLY

Foreword by
MATEO KEHLER



(Posilac) from the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in 1994.

The FDA, World Health Organization, and United States National Institutes of Health have independently asserted the safety for humans of milk and meat derived from cows treated with Posilac. Health Canada and the European Union did not approve r-bST for use in dairy cattle. Monsanto sold Posilac to Elanco in 2008.

Bauman, Dale E. "Bovine Somatotropin: Review of an Emerging Animal Technology." *Journal of Dairy Science* 75 (1992): 3432–3451.

R. K. McGuffey

Bovški sir (Bovec cheese) is a hard Slovenian protected designation of origin (PDO) cheese, about 6–10 pounds (2.5–4.5 kilograms) in weight, 3–5 inches (8–12 centimeters) high, and 8–10 inches (20–26 centimeters) in diameter. First mentioned in 1756 on a price list in the Italian town of Udine, Bovec cheese was historically valued much higher than other cheeses due to its excellent quality, and was used as a means of payment. It has retained its special status as a symbol of the rich farming and cheesemaking heritage of the town of Bovec, in northwestern Slovenia, close to the border with Italy. Today Bovec cheese is produced on farms and on two highland Alpine dairies in the municipality of Bovec and its surroundings, representing the area of protection.

Bovec cheese is made from raw sheep's milk of the Bovška Ovca breed, although varieties made with up to 20 percent cow's and/or goat's milk are allowed. Traditionally ripened evening milk is mixed with freshly drawn morning milk, warmed up to 95–97°F (35–36°C) and renneted. Cutting the coagulum with stirring during the subsequent scalding results in a firm wheat-size grain. The curd is settled to the bottom of the vat and gently pressed by hand. After cutting the curd mass with a copper wire into coarse lumps, each lump is removed from the whey and placed into a mold. Alternatively the entire curd mass may be scooped into the cloth drawn across the bottom of the vat by a stainless steel rod and, by pulling together the corners of the cloth, lifted out. Drained curd is cut into portions of appropriate dimension and transferred to molds that are often cloth-lined. After a few hours pressing and frequent

turning, the cheeses are brined or dry-salted. During maturation, which lasts for at least two months (57–66°F [14–19°C], 75–80 percent humidity), cheeses are frequently turned and, if necessary, wiped with brine-soaked cloth.

At this point the cheese develops a compact and homogenous texture with typical "shell" break that is liable to fracture but not crumble. Widely scattered eyes the size of lentils or peas are evident, with a few natural fissures allowed. The flavor becomes aromatic, intensive to mild-piquant, and the interior will be gray to pale yellow. The taste and smell are well rounded and pleasantly harmonized with slightly spicy notes. The rind is smooth and gray-brown in color, with a flat upper side and slightly convex peripheral side. The maturation period can be extended to two years.

Specification for Bovec cheese. Društvo rejcev drobnice Bovške, 2014. http://www.mkgp.gov.si/fileadmin/mkgp.gov.si/pageuploads/podrocja/Varna_in_kakovostna_hrana_in_krma/zasciteni_kmetijski_pidelki/Specifikacije/Bovski_sir_specifikacija.pdf.

Andreja Čanžek Majhenič and
Petra Mohar Lorbeg

Bra is a pressed, semi-fat protected designation of origin (PDO) cheese that bears the name of a small town, the capital of Roero, situated on the boundary between the Langhe and the plains of Cuneo in northwestern Italy. Bra PDO cheese is produced throughout the territory of the province of Cuneo as well as in the municipality of Villafranca Piemonte, in the province of Turin. Together, these areas produce about 730 tons of Bra PDO each year. The cheese produced in the mountain municipalities listed in the PDO can be labeled with the word "d'Alpeggio"; the background of the paper label is also colored a distinctive green.

Bra PDO cheese is made from pasteurized or raw cow's milk, but when necessary, a small amount of sheep's or goat's milk may be added. The milk (from one or two milkings) is often partially skimmed. After a double curd cutting, the cheese is pressed, put into molds, and salted. Bra PDO is made in two types, semisoft and hard. The semisoft cheese must be ripened for at least forty-five days, while hard must be ripened for at least six months. Both varieties have a

cylindrical form with a diameter of 11.8–15.7 inches (30–40 centimeters), a rounded edge of 2.7–3.5 inches (7–9 centimeters), and a weight of about 13–17.6 pounds (6–8 kilograms). Although both types have small, sparse eyes (holes), the interior paste of semisoft Bra is white or ivory but turns slightly yellow-ochre in the hard cheese. The soft type has a pleasant odor with milk, cream, and butter characteristics and a less intense taste that is mainly sweet. The hard type has a very aromatic odor with almond and spicy characteristics and a very savory taste. The hard type can also be grated.

See also ITALY.

Assopiemonte DOP & IGP. <http://www.assopiemonte.com>.

Maffei, Piero. *I formaggi italiani. Storia, tecniche di preparazione, abbinamenti e degustazione*. Milan: Hoepli, 2010.

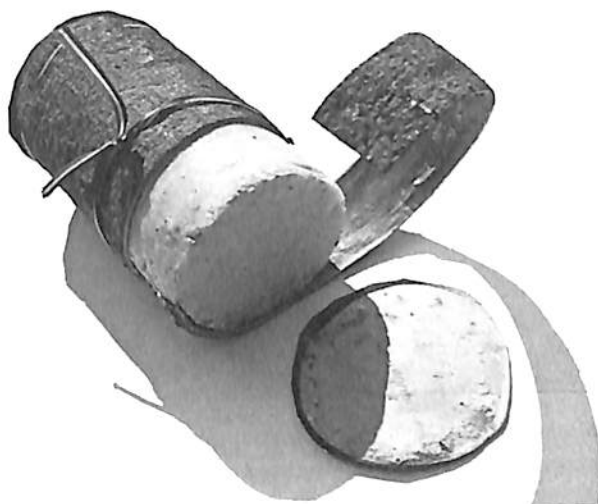
Ministero Agricoltura e Foreste. *DOC Cheeses of Italy: A Great Heritage*. Milan: Angeli, 1992.

Sardo, Piero, Gigi Piumatti, and Roberto Rubino eds. *Formaggi d'Italia: Guida alla scoperta e alla conoscenza*. Bra, Italy: Slow Foods Editore, 2005.

Giuseppe Zeppa

Brânză de Burduf is arguably Romania's most esteemed cheese, with a Slow Food Presidium working to protect and promote it. It is traditionally made in the Bucegi Mountains, a range of high peaks in the Southern Carpathians, where shepherds still move flocks of Turcana and Tiggae sheep, local heritage breeds, into the higher, cooler altitudes for the summer, and use their milk to make a range of *brânză* (cheese), from the Ricotta-like Urdă to the feta-like Telemea. See TRANSHUMANCE and URDĂ. As with both of these cheeses, Brânză de Burduf starts out as Caș, a fresh cheese made by curdling sheep's milk with rennet and draining the whey. It becomes Brânză de Burduf after the curds are broken into small bits, mixed with salt, and then packed into a "bellows" (*burduf*) traditionally made from a cleaned sheep's skin or stomach.

The most esteemed variation is aged in fir-tree bark that is stripped from the tree in spring and early summer, when it is most resinous, softened in whey, and then formed into cylinders. Packed with the curd and sealed at both ends with more bark, these logs of cheese are aged anywhere from three



Brânză de Burduf, one of Romania's best-loved sheep's milk cheeses, is aged in fir tree bark. Packed with the curd and sealed at both ends with more bark, these logs of cheese are aged anywhere from three weeks to three months. © OLIVIERO TOSCANI

weeks to three months. The yellowish-white paste takes on pine-like notes to complement the cheese's already spicy, sharp flavor. It melts beautifully, which may be why it is best known for adding a bright, creamy tang to the cornmeal porridge *mămăliga*. It can also be crumbled over fresh tomatoes or other vegetables to add a salty, spicy kick. While the bark-wrapped version is hard to find outside Transylvania, it is possible to find plastic-wrapped versions on the US market today.

FermaBucegi. <http://www.ferma-bucegi.ro>.
Slow Food Foundation for Biodiversity. "Bucegi Mountains Branza de Burduf." <http://www.fondazione Slow Food.com/en/slow-food-presidia/bucegi-mountains-branza-de-burduf>.

Tara Q. Thomas

Brazil, as with elsewhere in Latin America, has a cheese and cheesemaking tradition that began with the arrival of European colonizers. First Portuguese and later Italian settlers brought with them cattle and milking animals. The southeastern state of Minas Gerais is the foremost producing region in the country, with smaller dairy production in the states of São Paulo, Goiás, Paraná, and Rio Grande do Sul.