

From the Heart of Europe

CHEESES OF ITALY



From the Heart of Europe,
AOP Agriform produces PDO cheeses: Grana Padano, Parmigiano Reggiano, Asiago,
Piave, Montasio. PDO European Cheeses: Europe certifies its best products.

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AOPAGRIFORM



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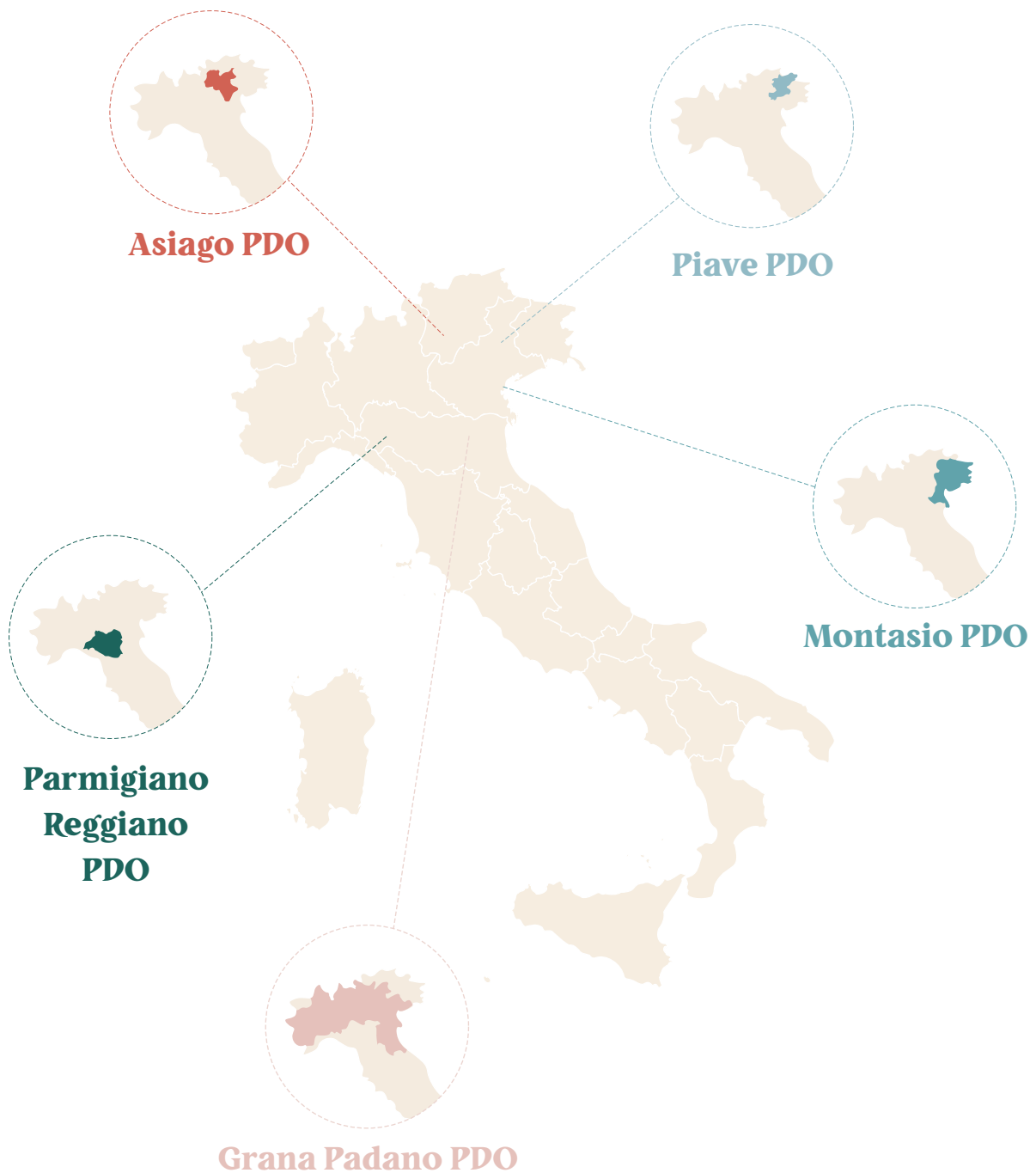
**ENJOY
IT'S FROM
EUROPE**



MADE WITH AMORE

From the Heart of Europe

CHEESES OF ITALY





About AOP AGRIFORM and the campaign

With the “From the Heart of Europe – Cheeses of Italy” campaign, AOP Agriform is showcasing 6 cheeses, all bearing the PDO mark: Grana Padano PDO, Parmigiano Reggiano PDO, Piave PDO, Montasio PDO, Asiago Fresco PDO and Asiago Stagionato PDO. Each one of these cheeses is the expression of Italian producers’ savoir-faire that has been passed down from generation to generation. AOP Agriform is dedicated to representing and promoting these cheeses, made with amore in Italy, in the United States.

About the PDO Seal

PDO (Protected Designation of Origin) is a trademark given by the European Union to products whose quality or characteristics depend essentially or exclusively on the territory in which they were produced and therefore cannot be imitated outside a determined production zone.

In order for a product to use the PDO mark, the production, transformation and processing phases must take place in a defined geographical area. This product must adhere to strict production rules established in the production specifications that are guaranteed by a specific supervisory body.

The AOP Agriform cheeses bearing the PDO mark are therefore those produced in the legally defined region of origin, in compliance with the production specifications.



The PDO mark ensures:

1. Reliability, because it relates to products regulated by Italian and EU laws.
2. Traceability, since the products come from a geographically defined area.
3. Connection to the territory since the products are obtained using traditional methods and have characteristics directly related to the territory where they are produced.
4. Typical nature, meaning that the product is obtained by respecting the traditional production and processing methods to maintain its typical nature.

Grana Padano PDO

About

A product of the Padana Plain, Grana Padano is a fine and widely appreciated cheese, a symbol of Italian gastronomic excellence throughout the world.

Obtained from semi-skimmed cows' milk, this semi-fat cheese has a hard, finely granular texture, a white or pale-yellow color and is enclosed in a dark yellow rind that is hard, smooth, and thick.

It has a fragrant aroma and a characteristic, persistent flavor. It is aged for an average of 16 months.



Characteristics

Average weight of a wheel: 77 lbs.

Diameter: 14-18 in.

Height: 7-10 in.



Aging

From 9 to 16 months

Over 16 months

Riserva: over 20 months



PDO
since 1996



History

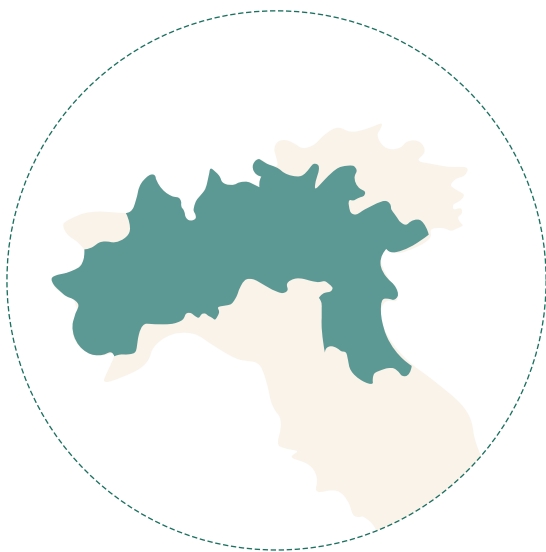
There is a fascinating story behind the origins of Grana Padano, which dates back to the year 1000 and the ingenuity of the Benedictine monks. The land reclamation work of the monks from the Chiaravalle Abbey favored the spread of cattle herding, which soon generated a ready supply of milk, greatly in excess of the needs of the population. It was then that the monks developed the “recipe” for Grana Padano, a brilliant solution to the conservation of the excess milk.

A hard cheese was created that, on aging, conserved the nutritional properties of milk and acquired an unmistakable mild yet savory flavor. A cheese that was attributed the name “grana” or “grain” thanks to its typical granular texture. Overtime, the fame of Grana Padano grew, soon becoming a fine cheese featured in the Renaissance banquets of princes and dukes, but also a principal source of sustenance for the people of the countryside during terrible famines. The practice of transforming milk into “Grana” had become one of the pillars of the agricultural economy.

A cheese with a dual spirit: on the one hand a key ingredient in the elaborate noble cuisine and on the other a mainstay of the popular gastronomic tradition.

The production traditions of Grana Padano have been handed down, unchanged, for centuries which ensures that today the product retains the sensorial characteristics and appearance that have made it famous throughout the world.

Territory



The production area for Grana Padano PDO extends throughout Northern Italy and generally coincides with the territories of the Po Valley region north of the Po river. It covers 5 regions from Piedmont to Veneto and down part of Emilia Romagna.



Production

Grana Padano PDO is produced exclusively with raw milk from the area of production, partially skimmed by natural separation.

The cows that produce this milk are never milked more than twice a day and are fed according to precise regulations.

The milk is processed exclusively in copper vats or vats with a copper lining in the shape of overturned bells, each producing two wheels of cheese.

The starter culture is added to the milk in the vat, which is then heated to a temperature of 88-91°F, with veal rennet added to aid coagulation.

The curd is then broken up with the stirrer, or spino, and scalded again while being agitated to a temperature of 127-133°F.

The curd precipitates to the bottom of the vat and is left to rest for a maximum of 70 minutes, to ensure that the culture is flushed out.

Lastly, the cheesemakers use a wooden paddle and a cloth known as a schiavino to lift the curd in the vat and cut it into two equal parts, the “twin wheels”.

Each of them is wrapped in a linen cloth, extracted from the vat and placed on the draining bench.



Identification marks

At this point, each new wheel is enclosed tightly in a mold, once made of wood and nowadays of a suitable plastic material, and lightly pressed with a disc of the same material. After around 12 hours in the mold, a plastic band, the branding mold with the identification marks, is inserted between the mold and the edge or scalzo of the cheese: the cloverleaf with the number of the cheese house, the provincial code and the month and year of production, along with the small, dotted lozenge shapes that alternate the words GRANA and PADANO.

Aging



**9-16
months**

Grana Padano aged for between 9 and 16 months

Aged for between 9 and 16 months, this is a table cheese par excellence, with a generally mild, delicate flavor that recalls milk, a compact texture and a very pale-yellow color that does not yet present the typical granular structure. Ideal as an accompaniment for an aperitif, flaked in a fresh salad or to complete a carpaccio. It is ideal to produce sauces and creams.



**Over
16 Months**

Grana Padano aged for over 16 months

With a slightly more intense pale-yellow color, Grana Padano that has been aged for over 16 months features the typical granular texture, the beginning of the formation of “calcium lactate crystals” and the flaking fracture pattern. It has a full and pronounced but never piquant flavor. It is a versatile product, particularly suited to grating but also as a table cheese. Excellent in hot recipes such as flans, soufflés and quiches and for enhancing pasta, risottos and soups.



**Over
20 Months**

Grana Padano “Riserva” aged for over 20 months

A Grana Padano cheese may be identified as “RISERVA” when it has been aged for at least 20 months from its making in the area of production cheese and presents the following qualitative characteristics:

- First grade
- Evident granular texture with a clear radial, flaking structure
- A homogeneous white or pale-yellow color
- Absence of anomalous odors
- Fragrant and delicate flavor

This is therefore a fine cheese with highly prized specific characteristics, which is selected through a comprehensive process that takes into account the external appearance of the wheel, the structure of the cheese, its color and its sensorial characteristics.

The RISERVA cheese is a selection created for the most demanding consumers distinguished by their sophisticated gastronomic culture and their search for products of excellence.

Thanks to its remarkable sensorial qualities, Grana Padano RISERVA represents the finest expression of this cheese and will be a protagonist of any table, whether grated into dishes or eaten on its own. It can achieve particularly long periods of maturation – up to 24 months and beyond – acquiring an ever richer and fuller flavor, without ever becoming aggressive. It is the choice of connoisseurs and gourmets.

Parmigiano Reggiano PDO

About

Parmigiano Reggiano is a fine cheese known and appreciated throughout the world. It is produced in the provinces of Parma, Reggio Emilia, Modena and parts of Mantua and Bologna. Produced with raw cows' milk, it is a semi-fat cheese with a hard, finely granular texture, white or pale yellow in color with a natural pale-yellow rind. It is characterized by a fragrant and delicate, but full and never piquant flavor.



Characteristics

Average weight of a wheel: 77 lbs.

Diameter: 14-18 in.

Height: 7-10 in.



Aging

From 12 to 18 months

Over 18 months

Over 24 months

Over 30 months



PDO
since 1996



History

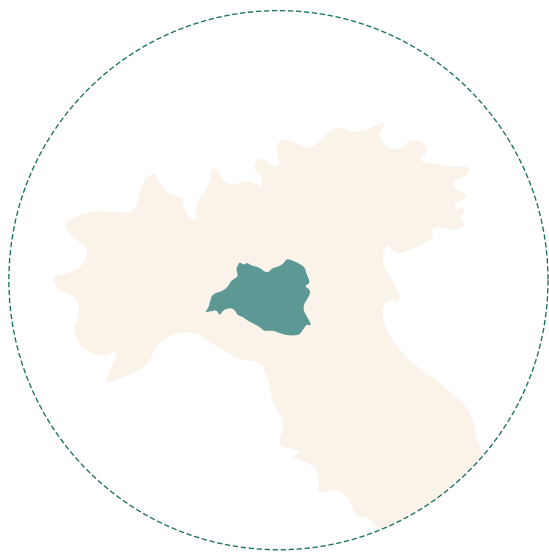
Parmigiano Reggiano boasts a unique and remarkable history dating back nine centuries and is still made in the same places and with the same techniques today.

Its origins lie in the Middle Ages, generally placed around the 12th Century. The first cheese houses appeared in the Benedictine and Cistercian monasteries of Parma and Reggio Emilia: thanks to the abundance of water sources and ample pastures, this circumscribed area of the Emilia region soon saw the spread of production of a hard cheese, obtained via the scalding of the milk in large vats.

Parmigiano Reggiano is still made today using the same ingredients as nine centuries ago, in the same places and in the same highly skilled manner. The master cheesemakers continue to produce this cheese with high quality milk, natural rennet, salt and no additives, by hand and with the same passion and integrity. The recent history of Parmigiano Reggiano is represented by about 350 small traditional cheesemaking firms and roughly 3,500 milk producers in this area who have obtained legal recognition of their dedication to traditional production methods and the extremely high quality of their cheese.

It is the story of how the guarantee of the genuine quality of Parmigiano Reggiano is today absolute, thanks to precise regulations, applied with strict self-discipline and rigorous controls.

Parmigiano Reggiano is a cheese that has been safeguarded for over 70 years by the Consortium for its protection and loved for over nine centuries for its ever-generous flavor.



Territory

Parmigiano is born out of its territory and the skills of the people who make it. It is made today just as it was nine centuries ago in the same area of origin using the same ingredients (milk, salt, rennet), care and passion.

The production of the milk and its transformation into cheese take place in the provinces of:

Parma

Reggio Emilia

Modena

Bologna, to the left of the River Reno

Mantua, to the right of the River Po

Here, there is a concentration of over 3,500 agricultural firms producing quality milk and some 350 cheesemaking firms that transform it every day, before aging the cheese for a minimum of twelve months, but sometimes over two years or more.

Production

Registered livestock farms: The cattle farms of the territory, which provide the milk to make Parmigiano Reggiano, follow quality regulations.

The cattle is raised on locally produced fodder. The feeding of the animals is strictly regulated to prevent the use of ensiled or fermented fodder.

Milk processing: Parmigiano Reggiano is made with the partially skimmed milk from evening milkings combined with the whole milk from morning milkings. Poured into the typical copper vats, shaped like overturned bells, the milk is enriched with natural rennet and the starter culture, which allows for coagulation to take place. The curd is fragmented by the master cheesemaker into miniscule granules using a traditional stirrer known as a spino.

This operation is followed by a slow scalding phase that reaches 131°F, after which the curd granules precipitate to the bottom of the vat, forming a single mass that is extracted by the cheesemaker and molded to form the wheels of cheese. Around 600 liters of milk are required for each wheel.

Marks of origin: Each wheel is assigned a casein plaque with a unique number: this is the Parmigiano Reggiano PDO identity card. With a special branding mold, the wheels are incised with the month and year of production, the registration number of the cheese house and the unmistakable dotted script around the full circumference.

Salting: After a few days the wheels are immersed in a saturated solution of water and salt: this is salting by osmosis. This final phase concludes the production process for Parmigiano Reggiano and is followed by that of aging.



Aging

The wheels of Parmigiano Reggiano are arranged in long rows and left to rest on wooden tables. This way, the outer part of the cheese dries to form an untreated natural rind that is entirely edible.

Aging lasts for a minimum of 12 months and it is at this point that only those wheels that pass a certain criteria are selected to continue aging for 24 months or more. The experts from the consortium examine each wheel of Parmigiano Reggiano and only after they give their approval are the wheels PDO branded “Denominazione d’Origine Protetta (DOP)”. All marks and the dotted script are removed from those wheels that do not meet the PDO requirements.

Time transforms the cheese; during aging, Parmigiano Reggiano acquires its typical granular texture with its characteristic flaking fracture pattern and becomes friable and soluble. The aging process confers extraordinary characteristics upon Parmigiano Reggiano, which differ depending on the length of the maturation period. For this reason, a system of colored stamps has been introduced to assist consumers in the choice of products by identifying the various stages of aging of Parmigiano Reggiano.



Over 18 months

RED STAMP – Aged for over 18 months

Characteristics: Fairly accentuated lactic base, accompanied by vegetal notes such as grass, boiled vegetables and, at times, flowers and fruit.



Over 24 months

SILVER STAMP – Aged for over 24 months

Characteristics: The aromas are accentuated with notes of melted butter and fresh fruit, citrus notes appear along with hints of dried fruit. The cheese evolves with a balance of sweet and savory, is perfectly soluble, friable and granular.



Over 30 months

GOLD STAMP – Aged for over 30 months (stravecchio)

Characteristics: This cheese, the richest in nutritional elements, is drier, friable and granular. The flavor is sharper with more complex aromas. Spice and dried fruit notes are predominant.



Over 36 months

BRONZE STAMP – Aged for over 36 months

Piave PDO

About

Piave is the most famous of the cheeses from the Belluno area. Created by the local master cheesemakers, it is still today produced in the traditional manner. Its sweet, penetrating flavor intensifies as it matures.

It is available in Fresco (fresh), Mezzano (medium), Vecchio (mature), Vecchio Selezione Oro (extra mature) and Vecchio Riserva forms (reserve).

The rind is soft and light in color in the Fresco form, becomes thicker and harder as the cheese ages.

It is hard with a color tending towards ochre in the Vecchio Selezione Oro and Vecchio Riserva forms.

The cheese is compact and without eyes and very light in color in the Fresco form. It acquires an increasingly intense pale-yellow color as it ages and becomes more friable, a characteristic typical of grating cheeses.

Characteristics



Average weight of a wheel: 12-16 lbs.

Diameter: 12-13 in.

Height: 2.5-3.5 in.

Aging



Fresco: from 20 to 60 days

Mezzano: from 61 to 180 days

Vecchio: over 180 days

Vecchio Selezione Oro: over 12 months

Vecchio Riserva: over 18 months



History

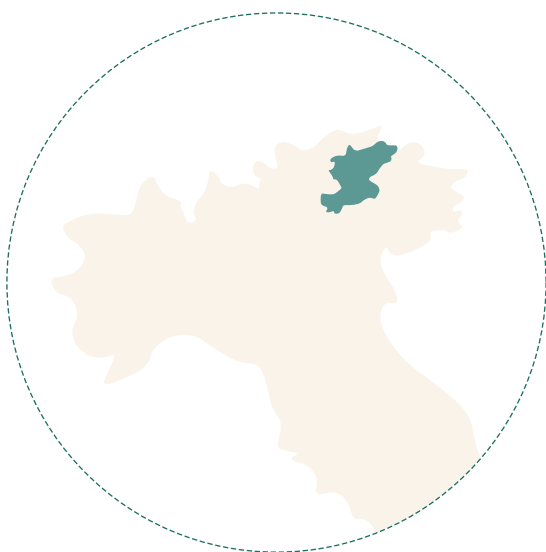
Taking its name from the Piave river, Piave cheese was first made at the foot of the Dolomitic peaks, amidst ancient forests and pastoral green valleys, a hard, rocky environment for centuries devoted to the raising of dairy cattle.

With the decline of the Serenissima Repubblica di Venezia, which once controlled much of the territory, the exploitation of the forests declined and the fragile economy of the Belluno province was severely tested. Small mountain landowners and the sharecroppers in the lower valleys turned to the raising of dairy cattle, in particular Bruna cows, as the clear alternative. This saved the population in the most critical periods of economic strife.

In 1872, in a valley of Belluno, the parish priest Antonio dalla Lucia promoted the establishment of the first cooperative dairy in the Kingdom of Italy. Called a Kasèl in the local dialect (a cheesehouse), the dairy allowed local farmers to take turns processing their milk to produce the precious cheeses. With many farmers raising dairy cattle, the cooperative served as a new form of ethical management of the limited resources and helped lay the foundations for the dairy industry of the Belluno province.

More cooperatives formed, ever larger and more organized, designed to transform the abundant milk produced in the area into butter and fresh and mature cheeses.

Alongside these cooperative dairies, the historic dairy farms known as malghe or maiolere continued to operate. They were the true sources of the rich Belluno dairy traditions. It is thanks to these malghe that the art of producing the typical local cheese has been handed down over the centuries. However, it was not until 1960 that the definitive name “Piave” was adopted.



Territory

Piave cheese is produced exclusively in the province of Belluno, situated in the northernmost part of the Veneto region.

It is in this area, dominated by the evocative Dolomite mountains, that the legendary Piave river flows: from its source on Monte Peralba in the northernmost part of the province, via the Cadore and Feltrino areas to the plain at the foot of the Venetian Prealps.

Production

The production of Piave cheese begins with the filtering and pasteurization of the raw milk. This is followed by pouring the milk and lactic enzymes into vats and the curdling phase via the addition of rennet obtained from the stomachs of calves which, acting on the casein – the principal protein in milk – causes coagulation.

The curdling phase is followed by the division of the curd into circular molds where it is left to allow the excess whey to drain.

A transporter chain then engages with the container and conducts it to the pressing area where, via the use of hydraulic jacks the cheese is pressed for around 40 minutes, losing further liquid and taking on the correct density.

At the end of the pressing phase, the cheese is removed from the mold and placed in a branding mold around the internal edge of which is the name of the cheese.

During this branding phase, the outside edge of the cheese is marked with the characteristic product logo.

At this point, the cheese, enclosed in the fascera, or branding mold, and placed on supports, is stored in the "resting towers" for 12 hours for an initial, partial aging and compacting phase.

On leaving the "resting towers," the cheese has a more intense yellow color and a thin, permeable rind that makes it compact and allows for the last phase of the cycle, salting, when it is immersed in brine (a solution of salt and water) for a minimum of 48 hours.

Once the production cycle has been concluded, the cheese is ready to be sent to the aging store, placed on wooden shelves and periodically brushed, turned and maintained in the optimum temperature and humidity conditions for the required aging time.



Aging

Piave is a cheese offered in five stages of aging:



20-60 Days

Piave Fresco P.D.O. (20 to 60 days):

A cooked curd cheese with a compact structure and a delicate, pleasant flavor. In Piave Fresco form the characteristics of this cheese have yet to emerge fully and it improves over time as its flavor becomes increasingly rich and complex. Its perfume recalls yogurt and milk while the flavor is prevalently sweet.



61/180 days

Piave Mezzano P.D.O. (61/180 days):

A cooked curd hard cheese without eyes; the flavor is sharp and pleasant, not salty; the perfume is strongly reminiscent of milk, but also yogurt; on the palate it proves to be a very soluble cheese.



Over 180 days

Piave Vecchio P.D.O. (over 180 days):

A compact cooked curd hard cheese with a friable and soluble structure; the sharp and markedly fruity flavor is never piquant and renders the cheese unique and unmistakable. In advanced stages of maturation, after at least six months, Piave cheese acquires specific aromas and flavors that differentiate it from all other cheeses.



Over 12 months

Piave Vecchio Selezione Oro P.D.O. (Over 12 months):

Piave cheese expresses its full maturity after aging for at least a year, with the structure becoming friable and the flavor full and absolutely unique. Its peculiar in that it always remains sweet, is never piquant and has a fruity, very intense flavor, characteristic of the most advanced stages of aging, with a strong persistence on the palate.



Over 18 months

Piave Vecchio Riserva P.D.O. (over 18 months):

Thanks to a production process handed down through generations of cheesemakers and an aging period of over 18 months, Piave Riserva boasts a special quality and flavor that makes it unmistakable. Only a restricted number of cheeses are aged for this length of time.

ASIAGO

Asiago PDO

About

Asiago Fresco

Asiago Fresco is a fresh table cheese originating from the Alpine plateau of the same name. A semi-hard cheese of semi-cooked curd with a white, slightly yellowish color, marked and irregular eyes and a thin, flexible rind. Rich in live lactic cultures, Asiago Fresco has a delicate, soft and pleasant flavor with an agreeable milky aroma.



Characteristics

Average weight of a wheel: 31 lbs.
Diameter: 12-16 in.



Aging

Minimum of 20 days

Asiago Stagionato

Asiago Stagionato is a semi-fat hard cheese with a semi-cooked curd and originates from the Alpine plateau of the same name. It has a smooth, regular rind, compact or granular texture and a pale yellowish color with sparse small or medium eyes.

According to the degree of aging it is characterized by a milder (Mezzano) or more characteristic, sharp and fragrant flavor (Vecchio).



PDO
since 1996



Characteristics

Average weight of a wheel: 20 lbs.
Diameter: 12-14 in.
Height: 3.5-5 in.



Aging

Stagionato: from 2 to 4 months
Mezzano: from 4 to 10 months
Vecchio: over 10 months
Stravecchio: over 15 months

History

This flavorsome cheese has been produced on the Asiago Plateau, from which it takes its name, since the year 1000. Initially sheep's milk was used, but since 1500, with the progressive expansion of cattle farming on the plateau, the primary ingredient has been exclusively cow's milk.

As cheesemaking techniques developed, production expanded in the early 17th Century to the areas adjacent to the Asiago Plateau: the area at the foot of the mountains, the neighboring plains and the close-by malghe or mountain pastures of the Trentino region.

The Asiago with the oldest roots, closest to the traditions of the cheesemakers of the plateau is the Stagionato version with its more intense, enveloping flavor. In the early 20th Century, the traditions of the PDO area combined with the most innovative cheesemaking technologies led to the birth of Asiago Fresco. The mild, soft flavor of this cheese has helped its international popularity.

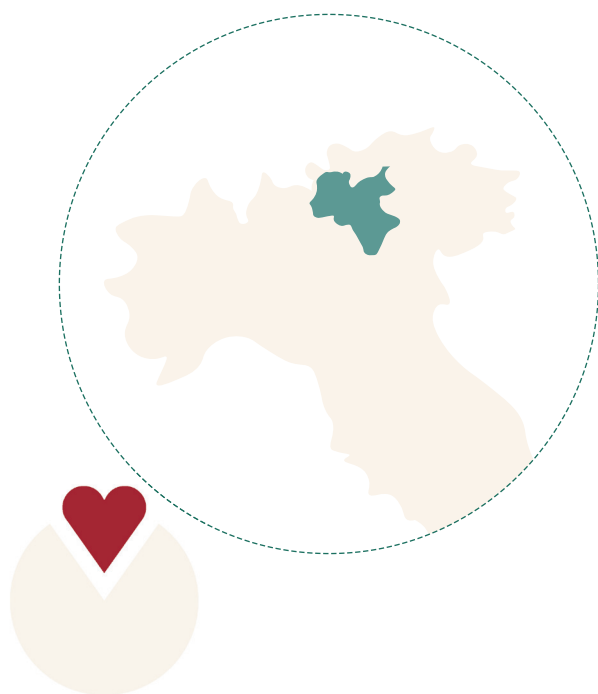
Territory

Both Asiago Fresco and Asiago Stagionato are produced in an area that ranges from the irrigated flatlands of the Padana plain to the mountain pastures of the Asiago Plateau and the Trentino region.

The milk production and Asiago PDO cheesemaking area comprises four provinces: Vicenza, Trento and parts of Padua and Treviso.

This represents the area in which Asiago cheese was originally made, the Asiago Plateau and surrounding districts in which production of the cheese is widespread. Asiago cheese, produced only with farmhouse milk and processed exclusively at an altitude of over 1900 feet, may also be promoted as a "Mountain Product."

Only Asiago cheese produced in this area is authentic Asiago PDO cheese.



Production

Asiago Fresco

Milk processing: Asiago Fresco PDO cheese is obtained via the processing of whole cow's milk.

The milk heated in the vat coagulates thanks to rennet at a temperature between 95 and 113° F, giving rise to the curd.

Cutting of the curd: The lira or stirrer is the instrument used to cut the curd, a process that continues until granules, each similar in size to a walnut, are obtained.

Scalding: In the scalding phase, the curd is heated to a temperature of around 111° F.

At the end of this phase, the curd is extracted from the vat and transferred to the work bench.

Salting: On the work bench, the curd is repeatedly cut, dried, salted and turned.

In some cases, these operations are automated with the use of continuous production lines.

Molding and shaping: The next phases involve the molding and shaping of the cheese and the application of numbered casein plaques identifying each cheese to the still warm wheel.

Pressing and binding: The wheels are pressed by hand or with a pneumatic presses for several hours.

PDO labelling: The wheels are then placed in branding molds which impress the Asiago PDO mark on their edges.

Cooling and salting: The cheese is kept for at least two days under controlled temperature (50-59°F) and humidity (80-85%) conditions before dry or brine salting is completed.

Aging: The final phase in the process is the aging of the Asiago Fresco cheese, which must last at least 20 days at a temperature of around 50-59°F.



Asiago stagionato

Milk processing: Partially skimmed cow's milk obtained by separation is used to produce Asiago Stagionato cheese. Coagulation is achieved with the addition of rennet at a temperature of around 95° F.

Cutting of the curd: A spino or curd knife is used to cut the curd. The process continues until the curd is reduced to grains of a size similar to a hazelnut.

Scalding: In the scalding phase, the curd is heated to a temperature of around 117° F.

Extraction of the curd: The curd is transferred to a work bench.

Molding and binding: The next stage in the process involves the molding and binding of the wheels and the application of casein plaques identifying each wheel with a unique number.

PDO labelling: After a number of hours, the wheels are turned over and branding molds are used to impress the Asiago PDO mark on the sides.

Cooling and salting: The cheese is kept for at least two days under controlled temperature (50-59°F) and humidity (80-85%) conditions before dry or brine salting is completed.

Aging: Aging is the final phase in the process and requires at least two months and must take place in the area of origin in conditions of controlled temperature and relative humidity.



Based on the degree of aging the cheese is called:

Asiago Stagionato mezzano aged for between 4 and 6 months: a full but still mild flavor

Asiago Stagionato vecchio aged for 10-15 months: a sharper, slightly piquant flavor

Asiago Stagionato stravecchio, aged for over 15 months: intense, rich flavors

Aging



Over 20 days

Asiago Fresco

Asiago Fresco must be aged for at least 20 days at a temperature of around 50-59° F with a humidity level of 80-85%. This must of course take place within the area of origin.



4-6 months

10-15 months

Over 15 months

Asiago Stagionato

The aging of Asiago Stagionato requires at least two months and must take place in the area of origin under conditions of controlled storage temperature and relative humidity. Based on the degree of aging the cheese is called:

Asiago Stagionato mezzano

aged for between 4 and 6 months: a full but still mild flavor;

Asiago Stagionato vecchio

aged for 10-15 months: a shaper, slightly piquant flavor;

Asiago Stagionato stravecchio

aged for over 15 months: intense, rich flavors.



Montasio PDO

About

Montasio is a table cheese typical of the Friuli Venezia Giulia region and the north-east of the Veneto region. This semi-hard cheese is characterized by a compact texture with a white or pale-yellow color and regular eyes. The initially smooth, flexible and compact light brown rind progressively dries as aging proceeds, with the cheese becoming granular and friable as it ripens.

Characteristics



Average weight of a wheel: 13-18 lbs
Diameter: 12-14 in.
Height: 3 in.

Aging



Fresco: over 2 months
Mezzano: over 4 months
Stagionato: over 10 months
Stravecchio: over 18 months



History

Montasio belongs to the extended family of Alpine cheeses. First made early in the second millennium, these cheeses represented a way of storing a perishable product such as milk for periods in which production was low.

Montasio was first made around the year 1200 in the Alpi Giulie and Carniche valleys thanks to the determination and intelligence of the Benedictine monks. The convent is located at Moggio Udinese (on the northern side of Montasio plateau), and it is used by the Clarissa nuns today. It was here that the various production techniques of local cheesemakers were brought together and refined.

This production technology soon spread to the valleys of the Carnia area and the Friuliano-Veneta plain.

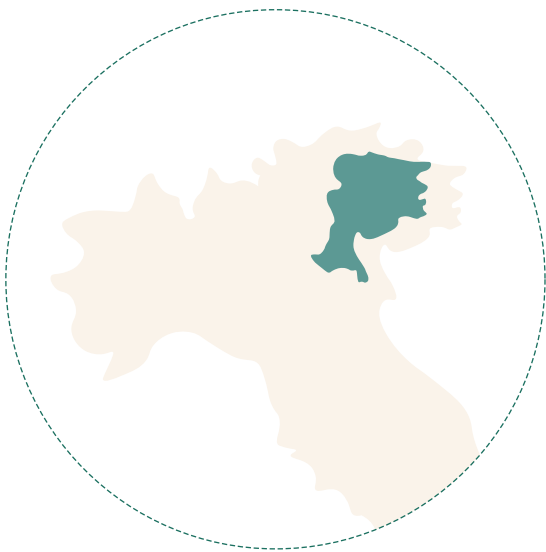
The first documents mentioning “Montasio cheese” are price lists from the city of San Daniele dating from 1775, which record the prices for Montasio as much higher than the average price of the other cheeses.

Territory

The area of production of Montasio cheese is defined as follows:

The Friuli Venezia Giulia region: the entire provinces of Udine, Pordenone, Gorizia and Trieste

The Veneto region: the entire provinces of Treviso and Belluno and parts of the provinces of Venice and Padua.





A circular image showcasing a diverse selection of snacks. In the upper left, there are slices of dried orange and lemon. Below them are several slices of yellow cheese. To the right of the cheese are round, buttered crackers. In the center, there is a mix of nuts, including almonds, cashews, and pecans. To the right of the nuts are several slices of white bread. In the upper right, there are several figs, some whole and some sliced. In the lower right, there is a small white bowl filled with blackberries. The entire image is set against a dark background and is framed by a circular border.



A circular inset image showing a white bowl filled with macaroni and cheese. A fresh green parsley sprig is placed on top of the pasta. In the background, a piece of bread with the words 'OSTIA SINGOLO' is visible.

Aging

Montasio is characterized by four aging stages:

Fresco – aged for over 60 days

Mezzano – aged for over four months

Stagionato – aged for over 10 months

Stravecchio – aged for over 18 months

The sensorial characteristics of Montasio cheese differ according to the aging. The Fresco version has a soft, delicate flavor that recalls the milk from which it is made; with Mezzano the flavors are more defined with a particular fullness; the Stagionato takes on particularly aromatic flavors with a mild piquancy that makes it ideal for consumers who enjoy strong, decisive flavors.

Montasio cheese is characterized by small, regular and polished eyes. In the younger Montasio cheeses, the light brown rind is smooth, elastic and compact, which the compact paste is white or pale yellow.

As the period of aging increases, the rind becomes drier and the cheese more granular and friable.



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