Take And Make Kits

Mozzarella Cheese

Supplies
The supplies included in this kit are:

- Citric acid
- Vegetable rennet tablet
- Cheesecloth
- Cooking thermometer

The supplies you need to provide are:

- 1 gallon of milk (not ultra-pasteurized)
- Salt (optional)
- Large knife
- Large spoon or ladle
- Slotted spoon
- Colander
- Large microwave-safe bowl
- Small bowl or cup
- Large pot (must be a non-reactive material)
- 1/4 cup non-chlorinated water

Notes about supplies:
The milk must not be ultra-pasteurized, since that kills the bacteria involved in making cheese. You can get raw milk (which is not pasteurized at all) at the store Edge of the Woods. If you prefer pasteurized milk, there's a local dairy called Arethusa Farm that sells milk which is not ultra-pasteurized, and has a shop on Chapel Street.
https://www.arethusafarm.com/new-haven

The water mixed with the rennet must not have chlorine in it, since that will kill the bacteria used to make cheese. To remove chlorine from tap water, you can either boil it for a few minutes then let it cool to room temperature, or just let it sit in an open container overnight so the chlorine can evaporate.

The pot must be a non-reactive material, such as stainless steel, ceramic, or an enameled pot, otherwise the curds will not form correctly.

Instructions
These instructions are from the following website: https://cheesemaking.com/products/30-minute-mozzarella-recipe

1. Make sure that you wash your hands and disinfect all your tools and countertops before you start working. Cleaning everything with soap and water should be enough.
2. Prepare the rennet. Cut the rennet tablet into quarters, then in a small bowl or cup, dissolve 1/4 of the tablet in 1/4 cup of cool, non-chlorinated water.
3. Mix 1 1/2 tsp. of citric acid with 1 cup cool water (it can be tap water.) Pour the citric acid mixture in your pot.
4. Pour the cold milk into your pot and mix it with the citric acid.

5. Heat the milk slowly to 90°F. Use your cooking thermometer to check the temperature. As you approach 90°F, you may notice your milk beginning to curdle slightly due to acidity and temp. (If you're having problems with milk forming a proper curd, you may need to increase this temp to 95°F or even 100°F.)
6. When the milk reaches 90°F, remove the pot from the heat and slowly add your rennet to the milk. Stir in a top to bottom motion for approx. 30 seconds, then stop.
7. Cover the pot and leave undisturbed for 5 minutes.
8. Check the curd after 5 minutes, it should look like custard, with a clear separation between the curds and whey. If the curd is too soft or the whey is milky, let it set longer, up to 30 more minutes.
9. Cut the curds into 1" squares.
10. Place the pot back on the stove and heat to 105°F while slowly stirring the curds with your ladle.
11. Take the pot off the burner and continue stirring slowly for 2-5 minutes. (More time will make a firmer cheese)

12. With a slotted spoon, scoop curds into a colander (if the curd is too soft, let it sit for another minute). If the holes in your colander are too large and the curds are leaking through, line the colander with cheesecloth first.
13. When all the curds are in the colander, press them gently with your hand, pouring off as much whey as possible. If desired, you can reserve the whey to use later in baking, as a soup stock, or to try making ricotta cheese.

1. Transfer the curds into a microwave-safe bowl. If you want, you can add 1 tsp of salt to the curds for flavor.
2. Microwave the curds for 1 minute. You will notice more whey separation from the curd. Drain off all whey as you did before. Quickly work the cheese with a spoon or your hands until it is cool enough to touch (rubber gloves will help since the cheese is almost too hot to touch at this point).
3. Microwave two more times for 30 seconds each, and repeat the kneading as in the last step to aid in more whey drain off and ensure even heating of the curds. Drain off all of the whey as you go.
4. Quickly knead the cheese as you would bread dough. Remove curd from bowl and continue kneading until it is smooth and shiny. Return it to the microwave if needed (if it begins to cool before it's ready to stretch). At this point, if hot enough, the cheese should be soft and pliable enough to stretch, and stretch, and stretch some more (like taffy). This is what makes it Mozzarella.
5. Knead your cheese back into a big ball until it is smooth and shiny. Your Mozzarella is ready as soon as it's cool enough to eat. To cool quickly place it in a bowl of ice water and refrigerate. When cold you can wrap in plastic wrap and it will last for several days, but is best when eaten fresh.

What next?

If you would like to learn more about making cheese, try reading one of these ebooks, available through Hoopla:

- Home Cheese Making https://www.hoopladigital.com/title/12224094
- 101 Recipes For Making Cheese https://www.hoopladigital.com/title/11386077
- Making Artisan Cheese https://www.hoopladigital.com/title/11703131

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