

InLac spotlights cheese production with Iberian character

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Europe is well known for its extensive cheese heritage, and among them are blended cheeses, InLac explains.

The EU is a world cheese power and Spain plays a prominent role, occupying the seventh position among the largest cheese producers in Europe. In 2023, Spain exported more than 8,700 tons of cheese -worth more than 105 million euros- to the US, a country that is consolidating its position as one of the world's leading markets for the dairy sector, opening up new opportunities for new references with great personality.

InLac spotlights cheese production with Iberian character. These cheeses are made with a combination of different types of milk: cow's, sheep's and goat's, which allows a wide variety of flavours, textures and aromas to be obtained, depending on the proportions of each milk and the maturation process. Cow 's milk provides softness and a creamy texture; sheep's milk provides a more intense flavor and a fatty touch while goat's milk contributes with a more acidic nuance and a characteristic aroma. Depending on the time they spend maturing, they can be soft cheeses when they mature for 7 days; semi-cured if they mature for 20 to 35 days; cured for between 45 and 105 days; or old, which are the ones that mature the longest, specifically from 100 to 180 days, InLac explains.

Among these cheeses, the Iberian blend cheese stands out, which is produced in Spain, mainly in traditionally livestock regions, such as Castilla y León, Extremadura and Castilla-La Mancha, where they have extensive experience in the production of quality cheeses, using both traditional methods and the most sophisticated technology.

Regarding the production process, Nuria María Arribas, managing director of the [Interprofessional Dairy Organization \(InLac\)](#) explains that everything starts with the collection and mixing of milk: cow's, sheep's and goat's milk is collected, which is mixed in specific proportions (cow's milk, maximum 50%; goat's milk, minimum 15% and sheep's milk, minimum 15%).

The mixture is then heated and rennet is added to coagulate the milk, forming a solid mass known as curd. Later comes the cutting and draining, InLac explains. "That is, the curd is cut into small grains and part of the whey is removed, achieving the desired texture; It is then placed in moulds and pressed to shape it and remove more whey and then immersed in brine to enhance flavour and improve shelf life. The cheeses mature in controlled chambers, where they develop their flavor and texture", adds InLac.

All this gives them a tasty and aromatic flavour, with notes that vary according to the maturation time and the proportion of each type of milk. As for the pairing, Iberian cheese can be consumed alone or accompanied. It is ideal for cheese boards, tapas, salads, or even as an ingredient in hot dishes, while pairing well with young red or white wines.

"Although it shares certain characteristics with Manchego cheese, Iberian cheese is distinguished by its mixture of three types of milk, which gives it a unique flavor and texture profile," concludes InLac, an organization that is developing with financial support from the European Union, an ambitious three-year campaign to promote and disseminate European cheeses of Spanish origin: "[Discover the European Cheestories with cheeses from Spain](#)".
