



Paneer

makes about 1 pound

- 1/3 cup fresh lemon juice
- 1 gallon (16 cups) best quality whole milk

Pour the milk into a large heavy-bottomed saucepan. Bring to a boil over high heat, stirring to keep the bottom from scorching. When it starts boiling in earnest, remove from the heat and promptly strain the lemon or lime juice into the milk, stirring it gently. The milk should rapidly separate into clouds of white curd in a greenish-yellow whey. (If this doesn't happen, add another spritz of juice.) Let stand for 8-10 minutes.

Place a large colander in the sink and line it with a double layer of cheesecloth or a large, clean gauzy dish towel (like a flour sacking towel). With a skimmer or ladle, transfer the large curds into the colander. Very gently pour in the remaining curds and whey, letting the whey drain into a bowl so you can use it for something else.

Briefly rinse the curds with cold water to remove the taste of lemon. Let it rest in the sink for a few minutes to drain out liquid, then gather the edges of the cheesecloth and create a compact bundle, pressing the curds into a ball. I like to tie a piece of kitchen twine around the neck of this and hang it over the sink to drain out as much liquid as possible (see above). Place a bowl underneath so you can save the whey. If this sink arrangement isn't convenient for you, you can suspend it anywhere over a bowl.

After 4-5 hours of hanging/drainage, take the curds out and divide them into two balls. Flatten and mold these into rectangles with your hands; the paneer should hold together easily. If it's still quite loose, wrap in cheesecloth, stack on a plate and weight with something heavy like a can of tomatoes. Allow to drain for another hour or two. At this point, the paneer should be a firm, dry cake that is ready to eat. You

can also wrap it in saran and refrigerate it for up to a week.