

Tips For Making Yogurt

Making Yogurt

- It is quite a simple process
- It can be made within a few hours with the right steps and equipment
- The key is to use a good starter and understand a few basic rules and you can be making your own yogurt the way you like anytime you wish.

Starters

- The easiest starter is to use already made yogurt
- Purchase natural yogurt (milk, bacteria culture) or (skim milk, cream, bacteria culture)
- The other option is to buy a starter
- Once you have your own yogurt, reserve some for a new batch

The Ingredients

- Yogurt needs just two ingredients – milk and starter culture plus a mason jar with lid
- 1 quart or litre jar can make 2 or 3 cups yogurt – leave space at the top
- The best yogurt uses whole milk.
- Removing the fat from milk removes valuable fat-soluble vitamins, essential fatty acids and beneficial substances such as CLA
- There is only a 40 calorie difference between a cup of whole milk and a cup of skim

Making The Yogurt With Yogurt

- For every cup of milk, use 1 tbsp yogurt
- Heat whole milk in a saucepan to 200 degrees F or 93 degrees C over medium-high heat – do not let it boil
- Remove from the heat and let cool to 112 -120 degrees F (44-48 C)
- This can be done by leaving it the pot or transfer to a jar and place jar in a cold water bath

Making Yogurt

- Take some of the warm milk (1/4 cup for every 2 tbsp yogurt) and mix with the yogurt starter
- Add this mixture back into the rest of the milk and stir.
- Put the lid on the jar and screw it on tightly
- Place it in a yogurt maker with a temperature between 85-112 degrees F (29-44 C)
- I prefer the 85-90 degree F (29-32 C) temperature range
- Let it ferment for 4-7 hours. Refrigerate. Keeps for 2-3 weeks

Using A Starter Yogurt

- Each starter will have its own instructions so follow those
- These starters also require the heating and cooling of the milk
- If using a yogurt maker – follow the machines instructions
- Most yogurt makers have their own containers and lids for making and storing the finished yogurt in the refrigerator

Tips

- Longer fermentation such as 7 hours adds more beneficial bacteria to the mixture
- Also more of the lactose will be broken down
- If the temperature is too high it will be quite sour if fermented for a longer time
- You will need to experiment with temperature and time to get it the way you like

Coconut Milk Yogurt

- Coconut yogurt is a nice option
- Use full fat coconut milk and add some date paste (cooked dates mixed with water) to feed the bacteria
- Use about 2-3 tsp per cup of milk
- Regular yogurt or a commercial starter can be used or buy coconut yogurt for your first batch
- Follow the instructions the same as cows milk
- Goat milk is another option

Tips

- The hotter the temperature for making the yogurt, the more sour the taste
- Can also make it more prone to separating
- If it is lumpy, it is usually fermented too long or was fermented at too high a temperature
- Strain out the liquid whey and stir or whisk it thoroughly
- Not sour enough? – Ferment it longer

Tips

- Gritty or grainy yogurt may mean that the milk was heated too fast
- Yeasty or beer smelling yogurt means it has been contaminated by wild yeast strains – a tight fitting lid on the jar while making the yogurt prevents this
- Yeast can also make it stringy or foamy

Tips

Mold (assuming this is not old yogurt) means one of three things:

1. Old or compromised starter
2. Old milk that was not heated and cooled properly
3. Poorly cleaned jars and utensils – they do not need to be sterilized but should be newly cleaned and dried (with fresh paper towel)

Tips

- Straining out the whey makes it thicker and richer
- Draining the whey through a closed mesh cloth in a jar for 6 hours, makes a yogurt cream cheese
- The excess whey can be stored in the refrigerator and used as starter for cultured vegetables and other fermented foods

Tips

- Most flavouring can be done after the yogurt is made
- Some spices and flavours like mustard seeds could be added while making but it is not necessary (and future starter will always have that taste)
- Fruits and vegetables can also be added after
- The sky is the limit for options

Tips

- Sweetening yogurt: Sucanat, organic sugar (evaporated cane juice), raw honey, maple syrup, coconut sweetener are all low-glycemic options
- Vanilla is best if using the seeds from the pod and the extract can leave an alcohol taste (use very little)
- Glycerol based vanilla is also an option

Tips

- Once you master making yogurt, develop a routine that allows for you to consistently make your own
- You will not have to buy yogurt again as long you make sure that the starter does not get too old – which will not happen if you make it and consume it regularly
- Homemade yogurt tastes amazing and you can make it just the way you like it