

Ossau-Iraty



PDO since 1980

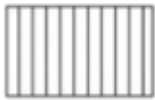


Production area

Technological family: uncooked pressed cheeses

Type: ewe's milk cheese

Cutting tips:



Description

This ancestral sheep's cheese, made under mixed farming systems, was recognised as a medium of exchange for numerous rental and sale contracts as far back as the 14th century, and it was the shepherds' main source of revenue. It takes its name from the Ossau Valley in Béarn and the Iraty Massif in the Basque Country. It is known for its keeping qualities and is traditionally eaten with black cherry jam, although some connoisseurs will advise you to taste it with quince paste.

What should I drink with it? A sweet Jurançon or a red Irouléguay

Format: available in two different formats: small (diameter 18 to 20cm and height 7 to 10cm) and large (diameter 25.5 to 26cm and height 9 to 12cm).

Weight: 2-3kg for the small size, and 4-5kg for the large size (and up to 7kg for farmhouse versions).

What's special about the production method?

- Zone: producers, processors and ripeners must be located in the Basque Country and the Béarn Valleys.
- Breeds: only milk from three local breeds of sheep may be used to make PDO Ossau-Iraty: red-headed Manech, black-headed Manech and Basco-béarnaise.
- Feed: the sheep are fed mainly on fodder and cereals from the Ossau-Iraty PDO area. No GM products are permitted.
- Production: the production process is tightly controlled. Only very limited additives and treatments are allowed.
- Ripening: ripening conditions are also strictly controlled. The cheese must be ripened for a minimum of 80 days for the small size and 120 days for the large size.
- Identification: as soon as they are produced, PDO Ossau-Iraty cheeses are identified with a mark on the rind, which must include the official name and the PDO logo.

Organoleptic characteristics:

Appearance: thin, dry orangey yellow to pale grey rind; cream-coloured body. Extremely homogeneous texture with few or no holes.

Texture: body is firm but feels greasy, becomes hard and slightly crumbly after ageing for several months. In the mouth, the texture remains delicate and melting, and not grainy.

Aroma: a fresh, light aroma, slightly milky when young (3 months). The toasted hazelnut, hay, butter and ewe notes strengthen over time.

Flavour: the delicate, melting texture and slightly sweet flavour with its milky, roasted notes come together to give a balanced, fine and lasting experience in the mouth.

Website: www.ossau-iraty.fr