

Polska



Wielkopolska Fried Cheese

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Entered on the EU list of Protected Geographical Indications in 2009, wielkopolski ser smażony (Wielkopolska fried cheese) comes in two varieties: natural and caraway. This cheese is most popular in Wielkopolska, the central-western region where it is made according to a local tradition from a recipe that is typical for this part of Poland.

Cheese most probably first started to be fried by settlers who arrived in western Wielkopolska. This was an area where settlement by people from western and southwestern Europe was common from the late 18th century (these people were referred to as "Olędrzy" or "Hollanders"-because the first settlers came from the Netherlands). The local know-how and tradition that developed over the centuries on Wielkopolska farms as a result of "Hollander" settlement and the activity of "Bamber" farmers (settlers from the German region of Brandenburg) resulted in a high standard of cattle breeding, agriculture and milk production in the region.

As cows' milk production increased, people sought ways of making the fresh curd cheese made from milk last longer. One way was to make fried cheese, where frying was preceded by the natural process of ripening (the natural decomposition of albumen, lasting two to three days). At first this practice of ripening and frying was followed in order to extend the time during which the cheese was edible. With time, the production of fried cheese in Wielkopolska became a daily process and the product became a popularly served food.

Many mentions of this product can be found in old documents, books and other sources from or about the region. Among them is a work published in the late 19th century in Poznań, *Przepisy utrzymywania porządku w domu i zaopatrzenia* (Recipes for Maintaining Order in the House and Supplies, 1899), which includes a recipe for fried cheese.

The unique flavor and smell of Wielkopolska fried cheese comes from the ripened curd cheese and its frying as well as caraway seeds in the case of the caraway variety. It is important to make Wielkopolska fried cheese from fresh ingredients, i.e. milk and the curd cheese made from it, and to complete the whole production process within six to seven days. This ensures that the final product is of the right quality. The ripening process itself is also important, as it influences the special character and uniqueness of Wielkopolska fried cheese, its flavor and aroma. Only milk fat (butter) can be used to fry the cheese, an equally important stage of production, and this, too, affects the flavor, smell, color and consistency of the end product.

Wielkopolska fried cheese made from a recipe passed on from generation to generation has acquired a lasting reputation across Poland and beyond. Today most of the fried cheese made in Wielkopolska is sold in the region's capital, Poznań.

Fried cheese made by different dairies in Wielkopolska has won many awards in recent years in a Wielkopolska food quality competition in which consumers choose the winners.

Source: [The Warsaw Voice](#)



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