

BE WELL

Cottage Cheese: The Comeback Kid

By Debbie DeAngelo

July 2023



Every few years there's a food that reinvents itself and soars in popularity. In recent years it has been kale and cauliflower. Right now, cottage cheese is taking its place in the dietary limelight. Cooks have gotten creative with it and come up with some innovative ways of using cottage cheese to elevate the health quotient of their meals.

Commonly thought of as a food for dieters and senior citizens, this dairy staple is believed to be one of the first types of cheese to debut in America after immigrants brought the tradition of fresh cheese making to this country. Cottage cheese is made by acidifying milk, which results in those characteristic curds. When the whey is separated, the curds solidify before being cut into pieces. It's then rinsed to remove the acidity, and drained. We're now left with a nutritious food that possesses a slightly creamy texture.

The curd size can range from small to large. Depending on the type of cow's milk used, the fat content can span from full to reduced to none. Likewise, the amount of sodium varies too. One of the most notable traits of cottage cheese is its rich protein content. One cup contains approximately 25 grams, without being highly caloric. Also, it's a source of calcium, B-vitamins and selenium.

Right about now, you may be wondering why I'm dedicating an article to this unlikely subject. After all, nothing I've told you so far is new. Novelty enters in the way it's being used. Younger generations aren't satisfied with adding a dallop of this protein to their green salad or combining it with pineapple for a quick bite. They are taking cottage cheese to an entirely different level. Here are some inventive ways to harness the versatility of cottage cheese.

Ice Cream. I kid you not. This hack is trending on TikTok. Why? It's actually a nutritious way to enjoy a frozen treat without the sugar, fat, and calories of traditional ice cream. If you'd like to give it a shot, consult Chef Google for recipes. Basically, they consist of blending cottage cheese, fruit, and a small amount of sweetener until smooth, and then freezing for a few hours. Full disclosure ... I made the strawberry flavor and thought it tasted like, well, frozen cottage cheese with strawberries. It wasn't to my personal liking but as I said, it's a viral sensation, so it's a fun experiment that is certainly worth trying.

Dip. Health-conscious cooks typically use plain Greek yogurt as the base for dips instead of less beneficial ingredients like cream cheese or sour cream. If you're not a fan of the twang of tang that yogurt imparts, then blended cottage cheese may be a better option. Simply use a blender or food processor. The creamy consistency is perfect for most dips and the texture is similar to the original recipes.

Other Swaps. I love to cook. I also like to "healthify" my meals. Since my husband is aware of this habit, imagine his skepticism when I served up homemade macaroni and cheese. As he dug in, he eyed me warily, suspecting that it may not be the "normal" version. After eating a few bites, he exclaimed, "This is delicious. What's in it?" Because he dislikes cottage cheese, I was tempted to say, "Nothing unusual," but I 'fessed up.

For years, I have been pureeing cottage cheese and using it as a high protein, lower calorie substitute for ricotta in recipes, and now I'm using it as the base for many creamy sauces. Ricotta pancakes, lasagna, and pizza are some of my favorite foods for using this whipped cottage cheese swap.

Garlic Herb Whipped Cottage Cheese Dip (budgetbytes.com)

- 1 t. dried parsley
- 1/2 t. dried oregano
- 1/2 t. dried basil
- 1/4 t. garlic powder
- 1/4 t. onion powder
- Salt and freshly cracked pepper (to taste)
- 1 c. cottage cheese (small curd)
- 1 t. lemon juice

Add all ingredients to a blender and puree until smooth. Serve with raw vegetables.

Cottage Cheese Alfredo Pasta (40aprons.com)

- 1 c. milk
- 1/2 c. cottage cheese (small curd)
- 1 T. cornstarch

- ¼ t. garlic powder (or sauté chopped garlic)
 - Salt and pepper to taste
 - ½ c. grated parmesan or romano cheese
 - Dried basil and oregano to taste
 - 8 oz. cooked pasta of choice
1. Place all ingredients except basil and oregano in blender or food processor until smooth.
 2. Pour mixture into small saucepan and add basil and oregano. Cook over medium-low heat until warm and smooth. Add more seasonings to taste.
 3. Continue warming on low heat for five minutes, stirring occasionally.
 4. Add cooked pasta right before serving and let soak for a few minutes. Top with meat or cooked veggies as desired.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Debbie DeAngelo, RNC, BSN, is a holistic health coach, health correspondent for JET-TV and FOX 66 in Erie, Pennsylvania, and author of "Sudden Menopause." Debbie can be reached at debbie@healthonheels.com.



[Subscribe to JES Publications Emails!](#)

[Support JES | Donate](#)

In Case You Missed It

[The Wider World | Sub-Saharan Africa: Defining the Sahel and its Importance](#) written by President of DC Analytics **Diane Chido**

[Truth in Love | Generation Z and Their Attitudes Toward Death](#) written by Jefferson Scholar-in-Residence **Dr. Parris J. Baker and Dr. Phelecia Udoko**

[Probing Education | Cheyney University of Pennsylvania: the Oldest Black College in America](#) written by Director of the Brock Institute for Mega Issues Education **Rev. Charles Brock**

[Be Well | Chew on this ... Don't Ditch the Carbs!](#) written by health and wellness expert **Debbie DeAngelo**

[Book Notes #150 | 'Chatting' with ChatGPT4](#) written by Jefferson Scholar-in-Residence **Dr. Andrew Roth**

[Building a Shipwreck Exhibit: Author Spotted Leaving a Seedy Motel by 'Most of My Friends'](#) written by Jefferson Scholar-in-Residence **Dr. David Frew**

