



# PARMIGIANO REGGIANO

THE ONLY  
PARMESAN







# PARMIGIANO REGGIANO

**Parmigiano Reggiano® is a cheese with a long history and famous today throughout the world.**

Parmigiano Reggiano is a true product of the land and of the traditions of the people who produce it.

Those who like good food and fine flavor, those who appreciate the importance of heritage and those who have a true respect for nature and origin will really enjoy this cheese.







# THE PEOPLE AND THEIR ART

## THE PEOPLE

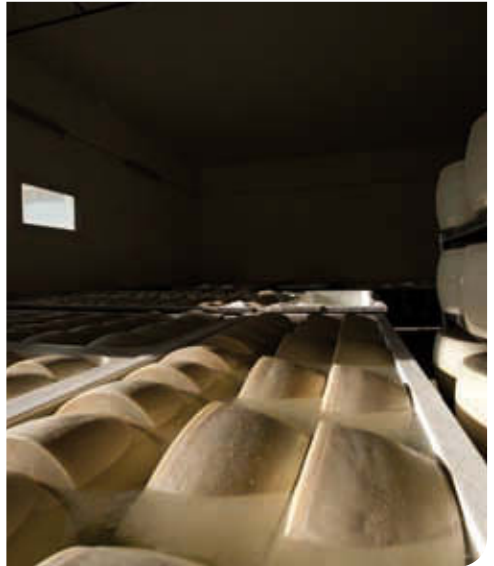
Parmigiano Reggiano is part of the history, tradition and hard work of the people who create it.

Essentially it depends on the knowledge of everyone involved in making it.

## PRODUCED SINCE 1200

Parmigiano Reggiano was first made several hundred years ago at the Benedictine monasteries in the area between the Po River and the Apennine mountains.

What makes Parmigiano Reggiano special is the all important human factor. This cheese owes its unique qualities to the co-operation between the milk producer and the cheese maker, who transforms the milk into the cheese and looks after the maturing process.





# THE TIES TO THE AREA OF ORIGIN

Parmigiano Reggiano is a PDO (Protected Designation of Origin) product. This means that its distinctive features and its link with the area of origin are guaranteed by a system of EU rules designed to protect both consumers and producers. Production is carried out according to the product specification of the PDO, and it's certified by the independent body "Dipartimento Controllo Qualità".

The trademark Parmigiano Reggiano can only be put on a cheese:

- produced and processed in the place of origin
- produced according to strict rules, which require precise production methods (Production Standard), controlled feeding of the cows (Feeding Regulation) and qualitative selection and marking (Marking Regulation)

Milk and cheese production takes place in the provinces of Parma, Reggio Emilia, Modena, Bologna to the west of the Reno River and Mantua to the east of the Po River.

The quality is dependent on the place of origin, the natural feed and the high quality milk with no additives. During the long aging process, natural fermenting agents in the milk give the cheese its particular flavor and texture, in other words, its typicality.









# NATURAL FEEDING

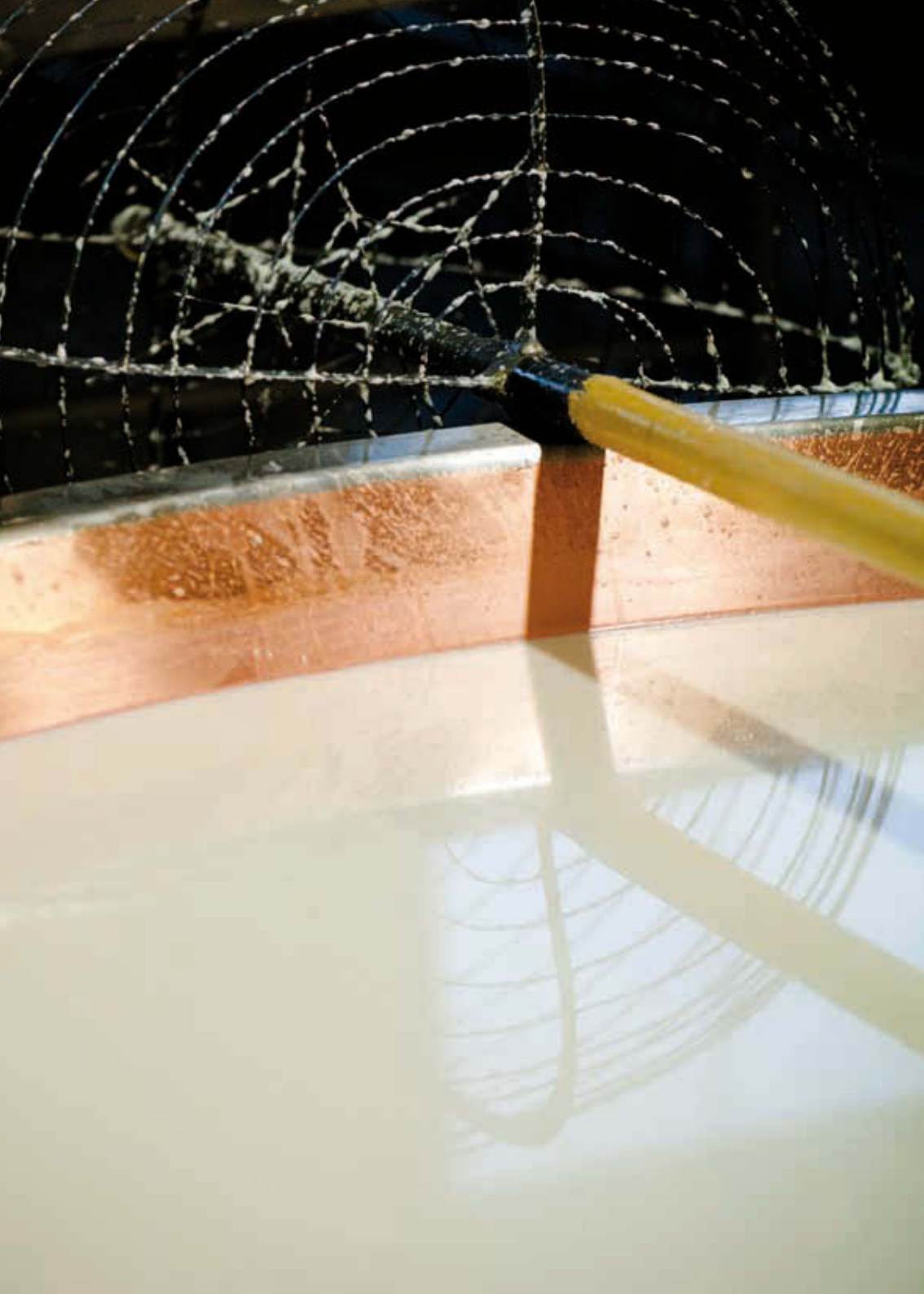
The milk is produced by cows fed according to strict regulations that allow the use of grass grown only in the place of origin, together with natural animal feed.

**Certain foodstuffs are strictly forbidden:**

- any kind of silage (e.g. corn silage) or fermented food
- animal origin feed or any by-product of the food industry

The cows are milked twice a day and the milk is taken to the cheese house within two hours of each milking.





# THE MILK

## FRESH MILK

The milk is used straight from the cows – fresh and without additives or treatment of any kind.

## The Cheese Maker

The transformation of milk into Parmigiano Reggiano depends on the skill of the cheese maker.

This knowledge and these techniques are the result of generations of experience, handed down through the centuries and always produced in the same area.

3,7 gallons of milk are used to make 2lb of Parmigiano Reggiano.  
It takes about 145 gallons of milk to make one wheel of Parmigiano Reggiano.







# MADE BY HAND

Milk from the evening milking is poured into the holding basins, where separation of the cream takes place naturally overnight. This partly skimmed milk is then poured into the copper cauldrons where it is mixed with the whole milk from the morning milking.

After warming the milk in the copper cauldron, natural whey starter is added. This whey is a culture of natural lactic ferments obtained from the cheese making process of the day before.

## NATURAL RENNET

The natural enzyme rennet is then added which allows the milk to curdle.

The curdled milk is broken down into small granules with a huge balloon whisk called a “spino”.

This is followed by the cooking process – a very delicate phase in the cheese making. The heat is skillfully controlled by the master cheese maker to expel water from the granules. Once the heat is shut off, the granules sink to the bottom of the cauldron, forming a compact mass.

The cheese mass is lifted from the bottom of the cauldron and divided into two parts.

Each part is placed in a special mould called a “fascera” where it rests for two to three days.





## APPLICATION OF THE MARKS OF ORIGIN

The marks of origin applied to each wheel of cheese consist of:

- The stamp marks on the rind which include the words "Parmigiano Reggiano" in a repeating pin dot pattern, the identifying number of the cheese house, and the month and year of production.
- Traceability is guaranteed by a mark applied to the top surface with a unique and progressive alphanumeric code which can be scanned by computer to identify each cheese wheel individually.
- The cheese is then immersed in a solution of water and natural salt for about 20 days to allow the necessary absorption of salt for flavor and aging.







At the end of the salting process, the cheese wheel is ready to be aged. The aging can continue for 24 months or more, during which time the cheese develops its flavor, texture and digestibility.

At the end of the minimum period of ageing (12 months) each wheel is inspected. An expert evaluates the appearance, structure and characteristics of the cheese.

## APPLICATION OF THE CERTIFICATION MARK

The certification mark is only applied to the wheels that pass inspection. This is an oval mark which reads “Parmigiano Reggiano Consorzio Tutela” and includes the year of production.

During the certification branding, the wheels are divided into two categories:

### **Parmigiano Reggiano**

These wheels are suitable for longer aging (24 months or more) as they perfectly match the appearance, texture and flavor of a true Parmigiano Reggiano cheese.

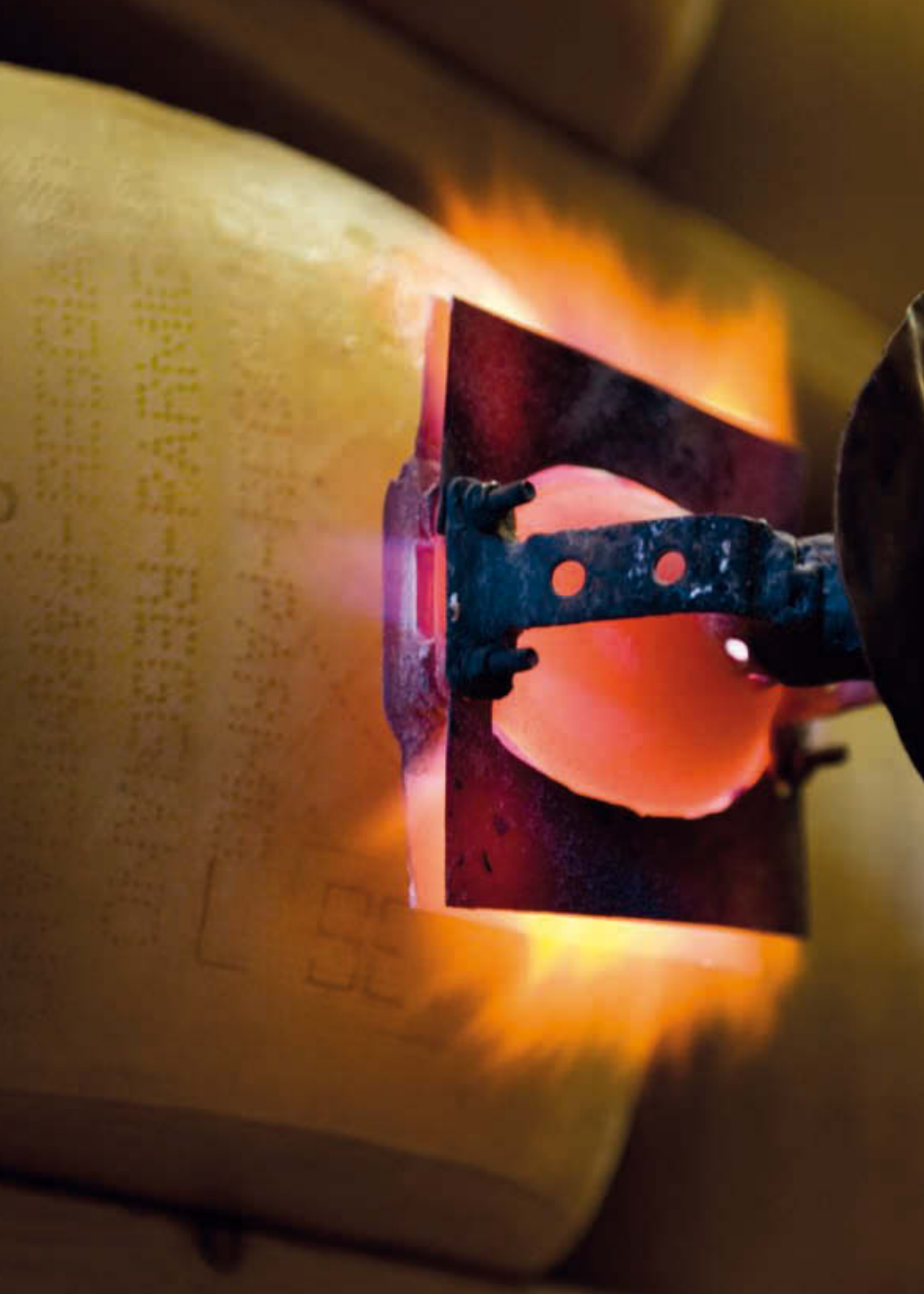
Sometimes, at the request of the producer, 18 month wheels can be inspected again for an additional certification.

If the wheels meet certain higher standards, the mark **EXTRA** or **EXPORT** is branded on the side of the wheel to provide an additional guarantee of the superior quality of that particular wheel of Parmigiano Reggiano.

### **Parmigiano Reggiano Mezzano**

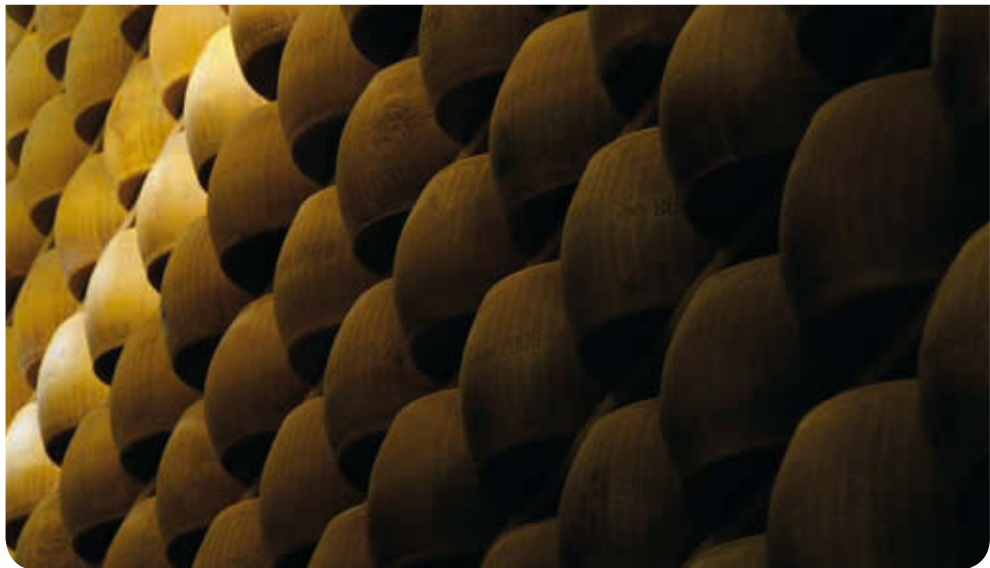
Cheese wheels meant to be eaten young, (soon after the certification branding at 12 months) are marked with parallel grooves around the circumference of the wheel.





When Parmigiano Reggiano is sold in portions, (wedges, grated, shavings), the packaging must show the right certification marks.

**Guarantee marks on pre-portioned cheese:**







# NUTRITIONAL QUALITIES

Doctors and nutritionists agree that Parmigiano Reggiano can play an important role in a balanced diet and, because of its nutritional values, they recommend that it's included in everyone's diet. Pediatricians recommend it in the diet of children of all ages for its many proteins, easy digestibility and concentrations of calcium and vitamins so necessary for growth. It is also very good for athletes, whether professional or amateur, because it is easily digested. It's also very beneficial for the elderly because of its high content of calcium, phosphorous and all the most important vitamins.

## A SOURCE OF ENERGY

Parmigiano Reggiano is a complete food with remarkable qualities, formed during the long, natural ageing process.

Besides being rich in calcium, phosphorous, trace elements and vitamins, it is highly digestible. It has one of the lowest cholesterol levels of any cheese.

Nutrition facts serving size 1 oz (28g):

Amount per serving Cheese aged 24 months	
Calories	110
Calories from Fat	70
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 8 g	12%
Saturated fat 6 g	30%
Total Carbohydrate 0 g	0%
Protein 9 g	20%
Vitamin A	4%
Vitamin D	2%
Vitamin B6	2%
Vitamin B12	20%
Phosphorus	20%
Calcium	30%
Vitamin B2	6%
Folate	2%
Zinc	8%
Copper	10%





# PARMIGIANO REGGIANO

## THE IDEAL INGREDIENT

With its special texture, aroma and exceptional taste, Parmigiano Reggiano is a great product. It's at its best served in chunks with fresh or dried fruit or balsamic vinegar and can be used to enhance the flavor of soups, salads and main dishes.

Parmigiano Reggiano is a complete and essential food. It's the tasty way to a balanced diet – great for a modern lifestyle that requires physical energy and vitality.

### **Parmigiano Reggiano IN APPETISERS**

Parmigiano Reggiano (minimum 12 months) can be enjoyed with fresh raw vegetables like celery or plum tomatoes.

As a contrast to its delicate flavor, it can be eaten with a slightly spicy chutney like kiwi, apricot or cantaloupe.

Serve with dry white wine.

### **PARMIGIANO REGGIANO WITH STARTERS**

24 month old Parmigiano Reggiano goes very well with most traditional Italian pasta dishes, grated or shaved. Melting the rind in soups like Minestrone is a special touch.







## **PARMIGIANO REGGIANO WITH MEAT AND FISH**

The more mature Parmigiano Reggiano (24 – 28 months) is especially tasty in main dishes. Serve it shaved on beef or fish carpaccio or on roast beef with a drop of extra virgin olive oil. Long aged Parmigiano Reggiano can be served with lighter and more structured red wines.

## **PARMIGIANO REGGIANO WITH VEGETABLES**

Parmigiano Reggiano goes well with fresh salads drizzled with extra virgin olive oil.

It's a delicious ingredient in all kinds of vegetable dishes as well as the more traditional dishes like eggplant "alla parmigiana".

## **PARMIGIANO REGGIANO WITH FRUIT**

Enjoy 18 month Parmigiano Reggiano with fresh fruits like apples and pears.

A more aged Parmigiano Reggiano is a perfect accompaniment to dried fruit and nuts like figs, hazelnuts and walnuts and is great with dried prunes.

## **PARMIGIANO REGGIANO WITH ACETO BALSAMICO TRADIZIONALE**

A chunk of aged Parmigiano Reggiano is fantastic with a few drops of traditional balsamic vinegar from Modena or Reggio Emilia.



# STORING PARMIGIANO REGGIANO

Vacuum-packed wedges of Parmigiano Reggiano can be kept in the fridge for a few months.

If it's not bought vacuum packed, or once the packaging has been opened, it must be kept in the fridge, ideally at 39°F.

Parmigiano Reggiano's sensory qualities don't change when stored or wrapped in plastic wrap but it should be checked regularly.



# THE CONSORTIUM

The Consorzio del Formaggio Parmigiano Reggiano is the consortium which includes all the cheese houses that produce Parmigiano Reggiano.

The responsibilities of the Consortium include:

- regulating use of the certification marks and protecting Parmigiano Reggiano from imitations
- distributing information about Parmigiano Reggiano and promoting purchase and use
- improving and perfecting Parmigiano Reggiano's qualities to safeguard its uniqueness and special characteristics

The Consortium is also officially charged with the important duty of applying the certification and identifying marks of Parmigiano Reggiano cheese – the distinctive signs of conformity to the Regulations of the Protected Designation of Origin (PDO), granted by the regulatory body of the EU.

The Consortium is entrusted by law to regulate the production and trade of Parmigiano Reggiano and employs monitoring agents with the same qualifications as public safety officers.

The Consortium is a non-profit organization.





---

Consorzio del Formaggio Parmigiano Reggiano

**[www.parmigianoreggiano.com](http://www.parmigianoreggiano.com)**

**[facebook.com/parmigianoreggiano](https://facebook.com/parmigianoreggiano)**

All rights in Italy and abroad are the property of the Consorzio del Formaggio Parmigiano Reggiano

**©Copyright 2011 Consorzio del Formaggio Parmigiano Reggiano**

Photography: Carlo Guttadauro and Steve Lee

Printed by: Grafiche SAGI