

Brie



History

Origin: France

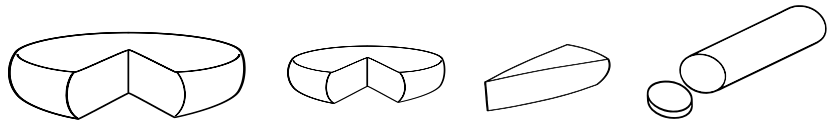
Brie is named after the French province of La Brie, east of Paris. Its exact origins are unknown, but Brie first appeared more than 1,000 years ago. It is very similar to another soft cheese—Camembert. Today, many fine Bries are made in the U.S. in addition to France.

Description

- Traditionally made from cow's milk. Some goat's milk varieties are available.
- Soft, creamy interior (sometimes called "paste") with snowy white, edible rind.
- The bloomy rind, or fleuri, on Brie results from *Penicillium candidum*, a white mold applied to the surface. Fleuri, from the French "flower," translates as "in bloom." The rind can be eaten and enjoyed.
- **TASTE:** Rich. Buttery. Slight hint of mushroom. Mild when young. Pungent with age.
- **TEXTURE:** Soft cheese. Ages from chalk-like texture to creamy (ideal). Paste is runny when very ripe.

Forms

- 3 kg (6.6 lbs) wheel
- 1 kg (2.2 lbs) wheel
- wedges
- slices
- 8 oz rounds
- 4 oz mini rounds
- 4 oz half rounds
- Slicing logs



Handling Tips (Always use safe food handling best practices on the job)

- Short shelf life. Once the mold rind is cut, shelf life is approximately 6–10 days.
- Several weeks to ripen. Turn cheeses every few days to distribute moisture and maintain an even fleuri.
- Cut only as much Brie as your department will sell in a day.
- Store Brie backstock in its original packaging.
- Display in a case with good cold air flow, ideally away from the glass.
- Avoid condensation under the Brie packaging; it will wash out the fleuri and affect ripening.
- Use dedicated knives, wires, and cutting boards to prevent cross-contamination.

Cross-Merchandising Concepts

- Use Brie in your sandwich program.
- Brie en croute: Display with puff pastry.
- Display with berries and condiments such as honey, chutney, and preserves.
- Pair with sparkling wine, champagnes, full-bodied Chardonnay, dessert wine, fruity beer.



Key Selling Points

- Offer samples to customers when appropriate.
- Some consumers are not familiar with the fleuri, or smooth white rind. Assure them it is safe to eat (and even enhances the flavor), but can be removed.
- Sell a size that fits consumer needs: 2-3 oz. per person.



Taste & Sell: Brie podcast available free at www.iddba.org/iddbacast.aspx