



This cheese has been the victim of becoming known by its imposters. Danish "Fontina", Fontinella, Fontal and Fontella all aspire to the richness and quality of the real thing but really come nowhere close. Real Fontina is marked with a Consorzio stamp of a mountain and FONTINA inside a circle. It's extremely flexible with other foods. Serve it with salami and hams, dense dark bread, or fruits of all sorts. It's also a great cooking cheese, as it melts very well. In Val d'Aosta, they make a delicious melted concoction out of it, called fonduta valdoastana. It's like a Swiss fondue, but in addition to cheese and wine, it includes butter and eggs, as well as truffles on occasion. Try this version of fondue. It is adapted from an Emeril Lagasse recipe.



Fontina Fondue

2 tablespoons unsalted butter
4 ounces fresh mushrooms, finely chopped
2 tablespoons minced shallots

1 cup dry white wine
3/4 to 1 pound Fontina d'Aosta, rind removed and cut into small cubes (about 3 cups)
1 tablespoon cornstarch
2 ounces Pecorino Romano, grated
1 teaspoon truffle cream or oil
Freshly ground black pepper

Possible Dipping Items:

Crusty French or Italian bread, cut into cubes
Focaccia cubes
Cooked shrimp, peeled and deveined
Cooked baby artichokes
Blanched asparagus spears or steamed broccoli
Raw fennel
Belgium endive
Whole button mushrooms
Boiled or roasted new potatoes

In a medium, heavy-bottomed saucepan melt the butter over medium heat. Add the mushrooms and cook, stirring often, until golden brown and most of their liquid has evaporated, about 5 minutes. Add the shallots and cook until softened, about 1 minute. Add the wine and bring to a simmer.

Reduce the heat to medium-low. In a medium bowl, combine the cubed fontina with the cornstarch and toss to mix well. Add the cheese-cornstarch mixture to the saucepan in 3 additions, stirring constantly and adding more cheese only as the previous batch has completely melted. Stir in the grated Pecorino Romano and allow the fondue to come to a bare simmer but do not allow to boil. Season with pepper and add truffle cream or oil. Transfer to a fondue pot for serving.

Serve, with dipping items of choice, attractively arranged in separate bowls.