

# XCentric Ideas



I spy with my big green-  
blue eye ... something  
starting with F ...

All photos my own  
Recipes from Internet &  
Cookbooks

9 March 2011  
Volume 6 — Issue 3  
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# Feta Trivia

To be called "**feta**," a cheese must be produced in Greece. A "Feta" is a legal designation, similar to Champagne or Roquefort.

Romania, Bulgaria, France and Denmark, among others, make similar cheeses, but they can't be called "feta."

Feta is traditionally made of sheep's or goat's milk, though today large commercial producers often make it with cow's milk.

The curdled milk (curdled with rennet) is separated and allowed to drain in a special mould or a cloth bag. It is cut into large slices (feta means 'slice') that are salted and then packed in barrels filled with whey or brine.

Most people that are **allergic to cow milk products** or who are lactose intolerant can use goat and sheep milk products. The lactose or protein in the milk is what usually causes the allergic reaction or intolerance. Goat & sheep milk both have lactose and protein but it is of a different make up that doesn't bother most people.

# Feta Trivia (2)

If the salt level of the cheese is a concern, steep it in milk or water for an hour to reduce the saltiness before using.

## **Storing Feta Cheese**

Once removed from its brine bath, feta cheese deteriorates quickly. Make sure to always keep it tightly covered and refrigerated and consume it while still fresh. Stored properly in its brine, the cheese can last for up to three months in the fridge.

Sit the cheese at room temperature for at least half an hour before serving so that you can fully appreciate the flavour. It is advisable not to freeze feta as it alters the taste of the cheese.

## **Nutritional Qualities of Feta Cheese**

The cheese contains 45 to 60 per cent milk fat with a 100g serving containing 264 calories.

Pregnant women should not consume feta made with unpasteurised milk as it could contain the bacteria called listeria.

Although varieties with a low salt level are now available and feta is a good source of riboflavin, protein and calcium, it still packs a high percentage of saturated fat and cholesterol so it should be consumed in moderate amounts.

# Feta cheese truffles



Photo – my own

# Feta cheese truffles

4 ounces (113 g) Cream cheese/smooth Cottage cheese

4 ounces (113 g) Feta cheese, crumbled

$\frac{1}{2}$  tsp Worcestershire sauce

2 tsp finely chopped Onions

$\frac{1}{4}$  tsp black Pepper

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup chopped fresh Parsley/dried parsley

Beat first five ingredients until well combined. Cover mixture tightly, and chill at least one hour or until firm (can chill up to 3 days).

Roll cheese mixture into small round balls. Roll each ball into parsley. Serve immediately, or chill until ready to serve. If chilled, let stand 30 minutes until serving.

Serve with cucumber slices, grape tomatoes, olives, whole almonds and crusty bread or crackers.

# Feta cheese baked with tomatoes



Photo – my own

# Feta cheese baked with tomatoes

3 tbsp Olive oil  
2 Garlic cloves, sliced  
Chilli flakes, big pinch  
2 x 400g tins tomatoes, drained  
Oregano leaves, small handful, chopped (or dried Oregano)  
2 x 200g blocks Feta cheese, broken up into large chunks  
Salt, pepper to taste

Crusty bread, to serve

Heat oil in a pan, add the garlic and cook for a minute. Add the chilli and tomatoes and simmer for 25 minutes until thickened. Season and stir in the oregano.

Heat the oven to 200 oC/fan 180C/gas 6. Put the feta in an ovenproof dish, cover with sauce and bake for 20 minutes before serving.

Serve with warm crusty bread.

# Feta cheese puffs



Photo – my own

# Feta cheese puffs

(Recipe yields 12 muffins)

2 cups Flour (*I used cake flour*)  
1 cup strong Cheddar cheese, grated  
1 cup Feta Cheese - crumbled  
20 ml Baking powder  
Salt and pepper  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp Dry mustard powder  
2 Eggs, beaten  
Milk

Mix all ingredients, except milk. Add enough milk to make a thick lumpy batter.

Spoon into muffin pans and bake for 12-15min at 180 C, till skewer inserted comes out clean.

Serve with coffee or with a meat/fish/chicken dish.

# Marinated Feta



Photo – my own

Feta cheese truffles

# Marinated Feta Cheese

Feta cheese, cubed

Fresh Rosemary (Feel free to use any herbs you may want; basil, bay leaves, thyme etc)

Crushed Red Chillies (Or Peppercorns)

Roasted Red Peppers, strips

Olive Oil (make sure you use a good one)

Slightly roasted Cumin & Coriander, or other spices

Black olives (optional)

Garlic cloves (optional)

Garlic chives, fresh (optional)

Photos – my own

In a clean, non-reactive bowl/jar, (glass work great) place the feta cubes.

Add the herbs, spices (if you are using them), crushed pepper and roasted red pepper. Try to stuff in the above ingredients in between the cheese layers. Fill with olive oil, cover the jar and leave it in the fridge for a few days, to allow the flavours to develop before you use it.

This would taste the best if used within a couple of weeks after making them.

Photos – my own

Recipe – [www.ecurry.com](http://www.ecurry.com)

Feta cheese truffles

Feta cheese puffs

# Feta uses:

Feta cheese is a lovely accompaniment to dishes:

As a topping for cooked beetroot

As a topping for spaghetti / pasta dish

Photos – my own.

Photos – my own.

As a topping on a baked jacket potato

Baked Feta cheese

Feta cheese uses

As part of a salad with watermelon, olives and fresh basil leaves

As a topping on any meat / fish / chicken dish

As a topping on any soup

Photos – my own.

Recipe ideas – my own

Photos – my own.

# Feta on beetroot



Photo – my own

# Feta on soup



Photo – my own

# Feta on pasta



Photo – my own

A close-up photograph of a watermelon salad on a white plate. The salad consists of several large, triangular slices of bright red watermelon. Scattered throughout the watermelon are small, irregular pieces of white, crumbly feta cheese. A single dark seed is visible on the plate near the bottom center. The background is a plain, light-colored surface.

Feta in salad with  
watermelon

Photo – my own

# Apple feta crumble cake



Photo – my own

# Apple & Feta crumble cake

250g Self-raising flour  
125g Raisins or sultanas  
500g cooking Apples, peeled, cored and diced  
2 tbsp Mixed spices  
2 tbsp Milk

100g Butter  
50g Feta cheese, crumbled finely  
50g Castor sugar  
1 egg  
1 tbsp brown sugar

Preheat oven to 180 oC, 350F, gas 4. Grease a deep, 20cm round cake tin, preferably with a removable base. *I used a normal square cake tin.*

Sift flour into a bowl & rub in butter until mixture looks like bread-crumbs. *Blitz it in a processor.* Stir in raisins, apples, feta cheese and caster sugar. Add egg and milk and mix into firm dough. Press the mixture into the base of the prepared cake tin. Sprinkle the top of the cake with brown sugar.

Put in the oven for 1 hour or until a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean. (Cover the top of the cake with foil if the top starts to go too brown).

Serve warm or cold with a dollop of good thick Greek yoghurt or ice cream on the side.