

# The goodness of **butter**

**Butter is a dairy product that is made from fresh or fermented cream or milk. It can be used as a spread on bread, and it can also be used for baking, to make sauces and for frying food. Butter consists of butterfat, water and milk protein.**

The butter that we know best, is usually made from cows' milk. However, butter can also be manufactured from sheep's, goat's and buffalo milk. Butter is made through a process called "churning". Butter stays solid and fresh when refrigerated. It generally has a pale yellow colour, although some types of butter are almost white.

## **Butter and health**

Butter protects us against many diseases. Butter contains vitamin A, which plays an important role in helping the heart to function properly. Butter contains anti-oxidants that protect against damage to arteries. Vitamins A and D in butter also helps the body to absorb calcium, protecting against osteoporosis.

## **Make your own butter**

Making butter is very easy. You will need only fresh cream and a little bit of salt (if you choose). You do not need much equipment – a bowl and large jar with a lid is all that is needed. A food processor or an electric whisk will make the work less.

- Let the cream reach room temperature (around 20°C is ideal).
- If you are going to use a jar to do the churning, you have to fill the jar halfway. Put the lid on and shake it for between half-an-hour and an hour. This is hard work.
- With a food processor or electric whisk, beat the cream as if you are making whipped cream.
- The cream will start to form firm peaks and become quite stiff.
- The cream will go yellow and bits of butter will appear, followed by a thin liquid (buttermilk).
- Seconds later the butter will seem to "clump" and separate from the buttermilk.
- Stop whisking and drain the buttermilk off. You can use it in baking or cooking.
- Add clean, cold water to the butter and whisk on low speed or shake the jar lightly.
- Throw the water off and repeat the washing process (up to seven times) until the water is clear.
- Use your hands or the back of a spoon to press the rest of the water out.
- To salt the butter, add a teaspoon of salt for every half a kilogram (500 g) of butter.
- You can also add crushed garlic or dried herbs to make flavoured butter.
- If you are going to freeze the butter, don't salt or flavour it.
- Homemade butter can be stored in a freezer for at least three months. 