

my  
FRIEND  
Grana Padano



# My Grana Padano activity book

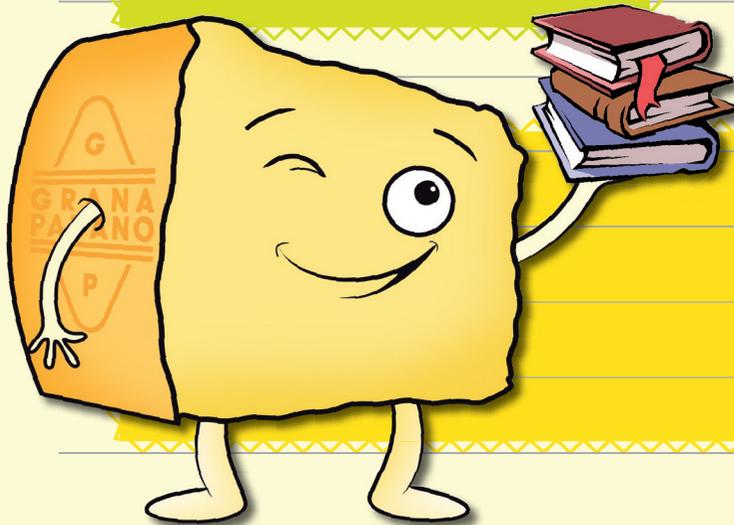
My name is.....

.....

I am.....years old

I am in the.....grade

at the.....school



Notes

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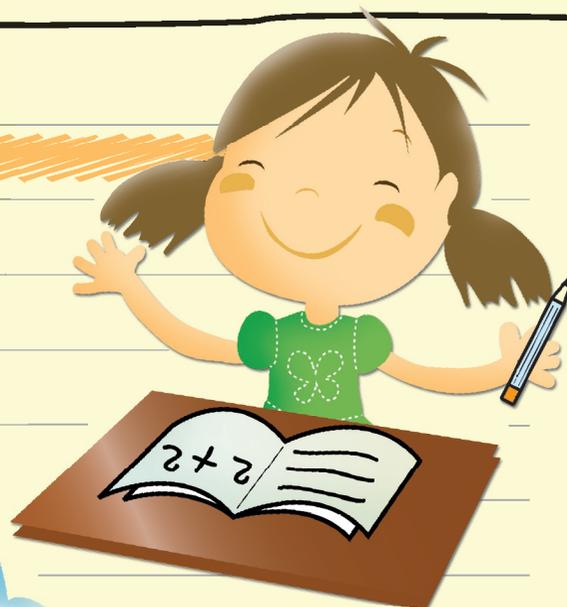
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# Food and Health

## For a healthy diet

The human body is like a car and must be constantly supplied with all of the main nutrients it needs, in the right amounts and combinations. Food is really important to make sure you're happy and healthy, and that you do your best at school.



## It's cool to eat correctly

Especially in the case of children and teenagers, food plays a key role in harmonious psycho-physical development and better school performance.

# Nutritional Requirements



## The Food Chain

In our world, plants and animals make up an ecosystem that includes all of the relationships between all living things and the air, water and the earth. Within these ecosystems, every plant and every animal is part of a food chain.

## What does our body need?

Correct nutrition supplies the body with 'fuel' (carbohydrates and fats), the 'bricks' needed to build the body's structure (proteins), mineral salts and vitamins and, finally, water, the element that serves as the foundation for all of our cells.

CARBOHYDRATES

FATS

WATER

PROTEINS





# Nutritional Properties

## GRANA PADANO (PDO) IS A WELL - BALANCED FOOD

Grana Padano is a complete food, rich in the key nutrients needed for a healthy, balanced diet in all phases of life.

### Proteins

Grana Padano contains important milk proteins with high biological value: 8 g of protein supplies about 59% of the daily requirement for 3-year-old boys and girls weighing around 16 kg. Proteins are very important for growth, since they are the bricks used to build most of the organs and systems of the human body; muscles are made of protein.

### Lactose free

During the long ageing process, the lactose contained in the milk ferments and is transformed into lactic acid. This means that Grana Padano cheese can be considered virtually lactose-free so can also be enjoyed by children who are lactose intolerant.

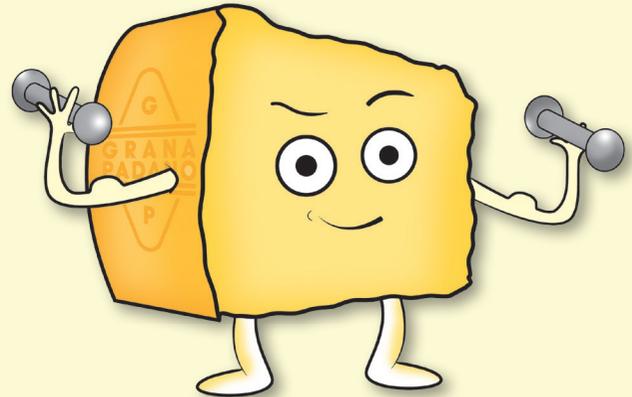
### Just a few grams, lots of nutrients

As part of a well-balanced diet, Grana Padano is an excellent food that provides lots of proteins, vitamins and minerals – which makes it easier to meet the daily allowance of nutrients recommended by nutritionists. For example, 25g of Grana Padano (just over 2 spoonfuls when grated, or a few shavings) contains 8g of protein, 4g of saturated fats, 2g of unsaturated fats (the good ones!), and plenty of B vitamins, vitamin A, and lots of minerals including calcium and zinc.

### Lots of essential minerals

25 g of Grana Padano have almost 300 mg of calcium.

The requirement for a 7-year-old child is 1,100 mg, so 25 g contains more than 26% of the calcium needed for the whole day. And this percentage goes up to 42% for a 3-year-old child. Calcium is an important mineral for the growth of the bones and the teeth, but that is not all: this mineral is also responsible for other very important functions in the body, and a lack of it can create problems when we get older, especially in the case of female teenagers. This cheese also contains minerals like zinc, selenium and phosphorus, which are important for children, helping them to grow healthy and strong.

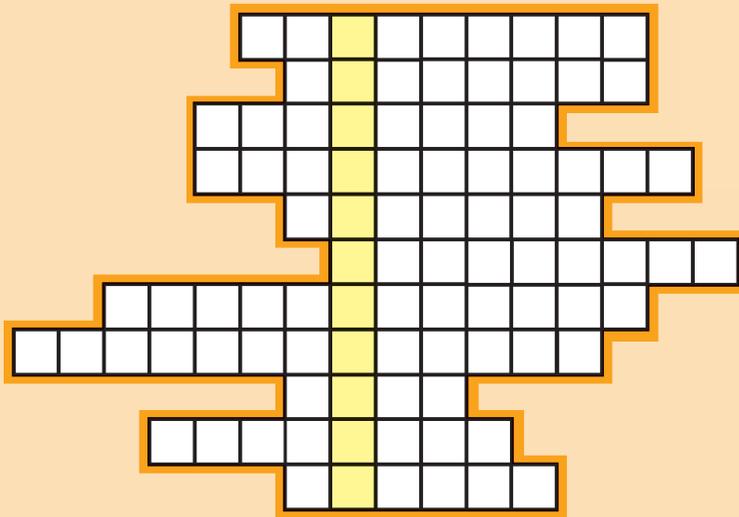
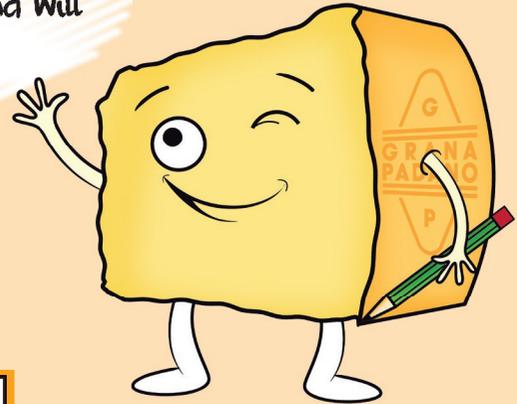


# Play with Grana Padano



## FIND THE HIDDEN WORD

Reorder the syllables below and insert them in the table below. The name of your super friend will appear in the yellow column



MA-SIUM-TE-MINS-NO-AC-CAL-SIUM-MI-RAL-TS-CAR-TES-FA-BOH-YDRA-DI  
SE-NIUM-IO-NE-GNE-PRO-INS-VITA-AMIN-IDS-CI-UM-PO-TAS-NE-SAL-TS-LE

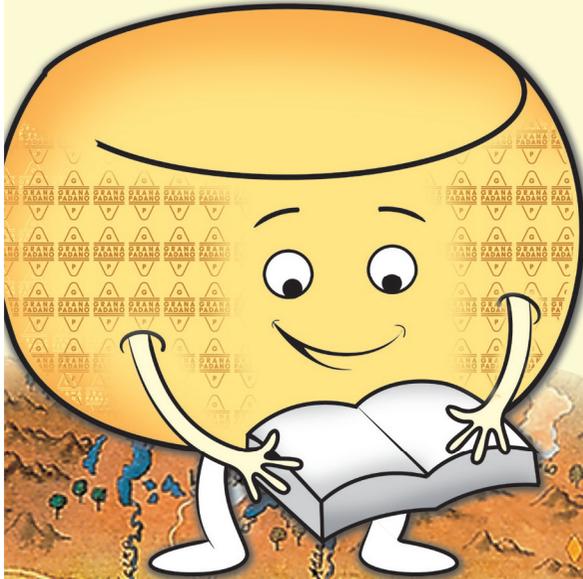


# It happened around the year 1.100 A.D.

*Grana Padano has a really long history!*

Many centuries ago, the Po River Valley (called the Pianura Padana in Italian), which is today so well cultivated, was covered by a vast, thick forest and a network of waterways that in the lowest parts formed marshes and bogs. During the Middle Ages, Northern Italy went through a long period of decline and poverty and people abandoned the countryside where they had lived for centuries ...

... This happened all after the arrival of the barbarians, who, with their invasions, ended the age of the wealth and domination of the Roman Empire.



# Monks and Monasteries

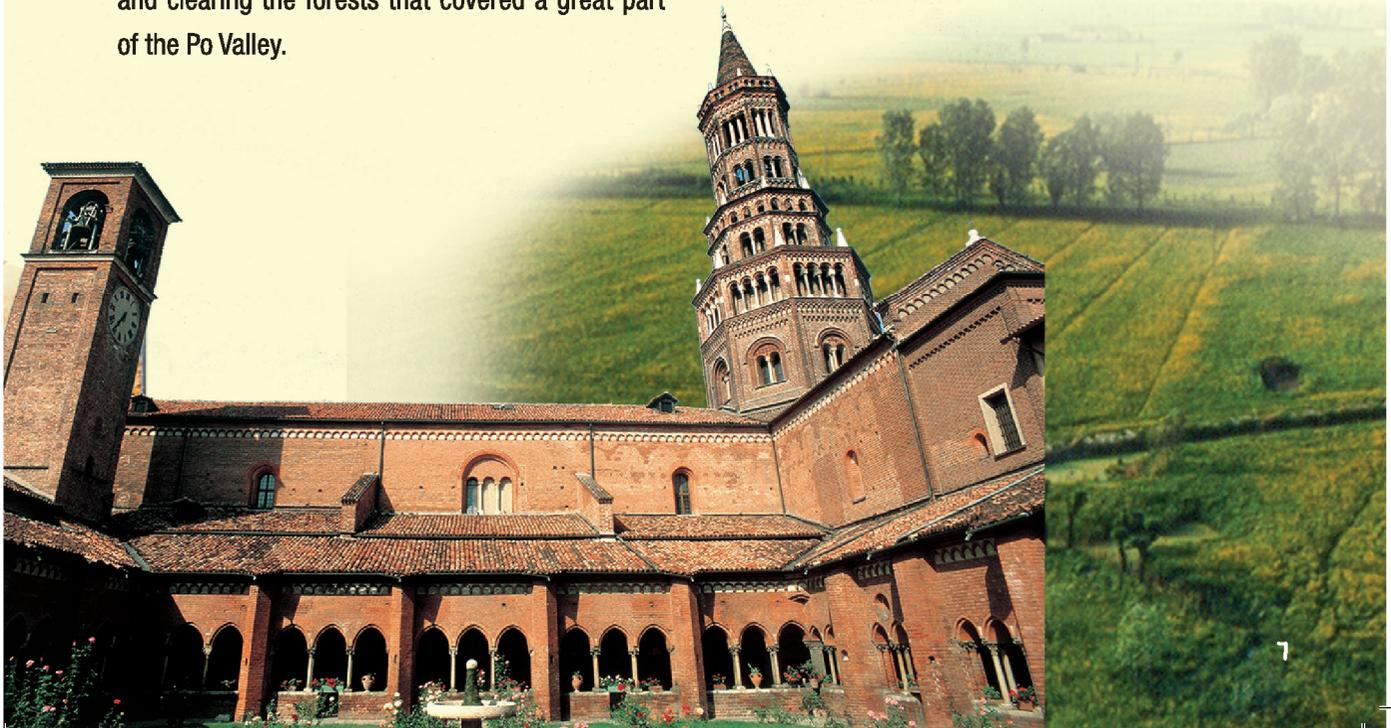


Around the twelfth century, a great number of monasteries were founded. One of them was the abbey of Chiaravalle, located in the area of the same name, near Milan.

The monks who settled there were the Cistercians, who followed the rule of St Benedict: 'ora et labora' (pray and work). They are the ones we have to thank for the huge feat of reclaiming the marshes and clearing the forests that covered a great part of the Po Valley.

Taking back the land in this way made the establishment of cattle farms possible, and as a result more milk was produced than the community needed every day.

For this reason, it became critical to find a way of preserving the milk that was not used immediately.

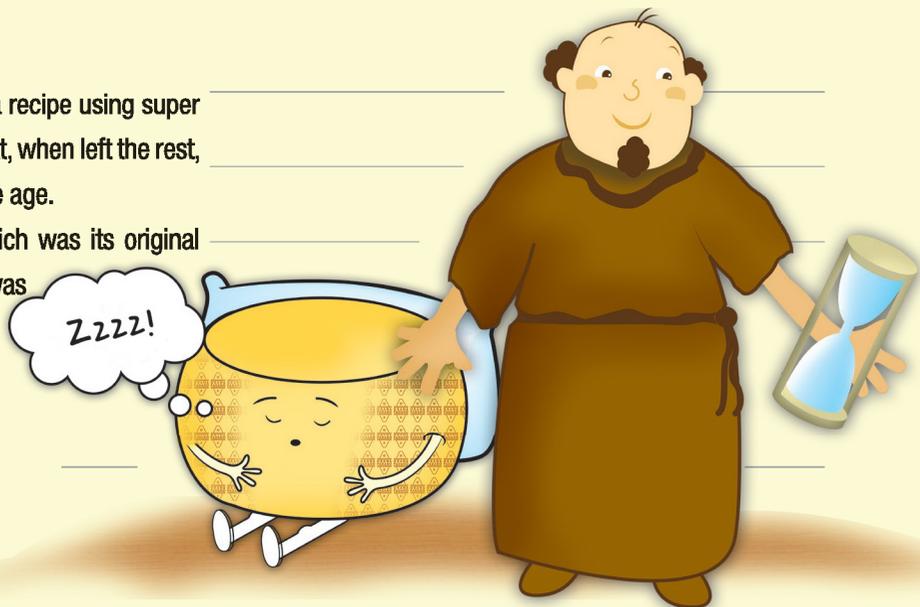




# The Grana Padano Recipe

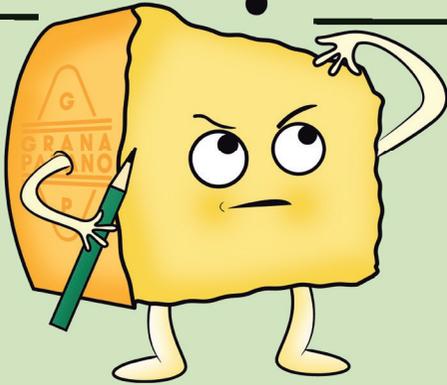
The monks therefore developed a recipe using super quality milk, to make a cheese that, when left the rest, became better and better with the age.

The recipe for caseus vetus, which was its original name and means 'old cheese', was written down on parchment: thus was born the recipe for the future Grana Padano.



?

Play with us!



THE PUZZLE  
Solve the rebus and  
find the hidden sentence

**GRANA PADANO,**



**OF**

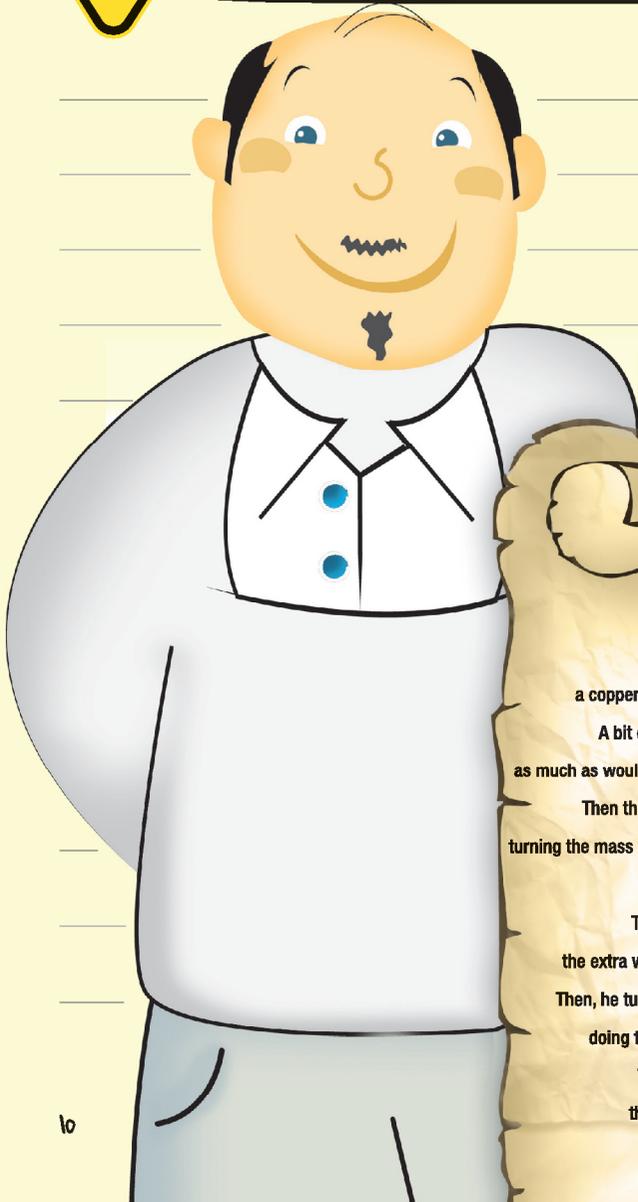


**NESS**

.....  
Write your answer



# Caseus Vetus



The cheesemaker was the one who knew all the secrets to making the very best cheese.

Here is the original manuscript, taken from a book published in 1550 by Agostino Gallo:

“Twenty days in agriculture and the pleasures of the villa”

## CASEUS VETUS

Pour 20 to 25 measures of skimmed milk into

a copper cauldron and heat until just before it starts to burn your bare skin.

A bit of good rennet broken up in water is added and enough saffron, as much as would fit on top of a coin. When the milk curdles, it is broken with a round stick.

Then the cheesemaker, with hands and arms bare, mixes it with his hands, turning the mass over at the bottom of the copper cauldron to make sure that it cooks evenly.

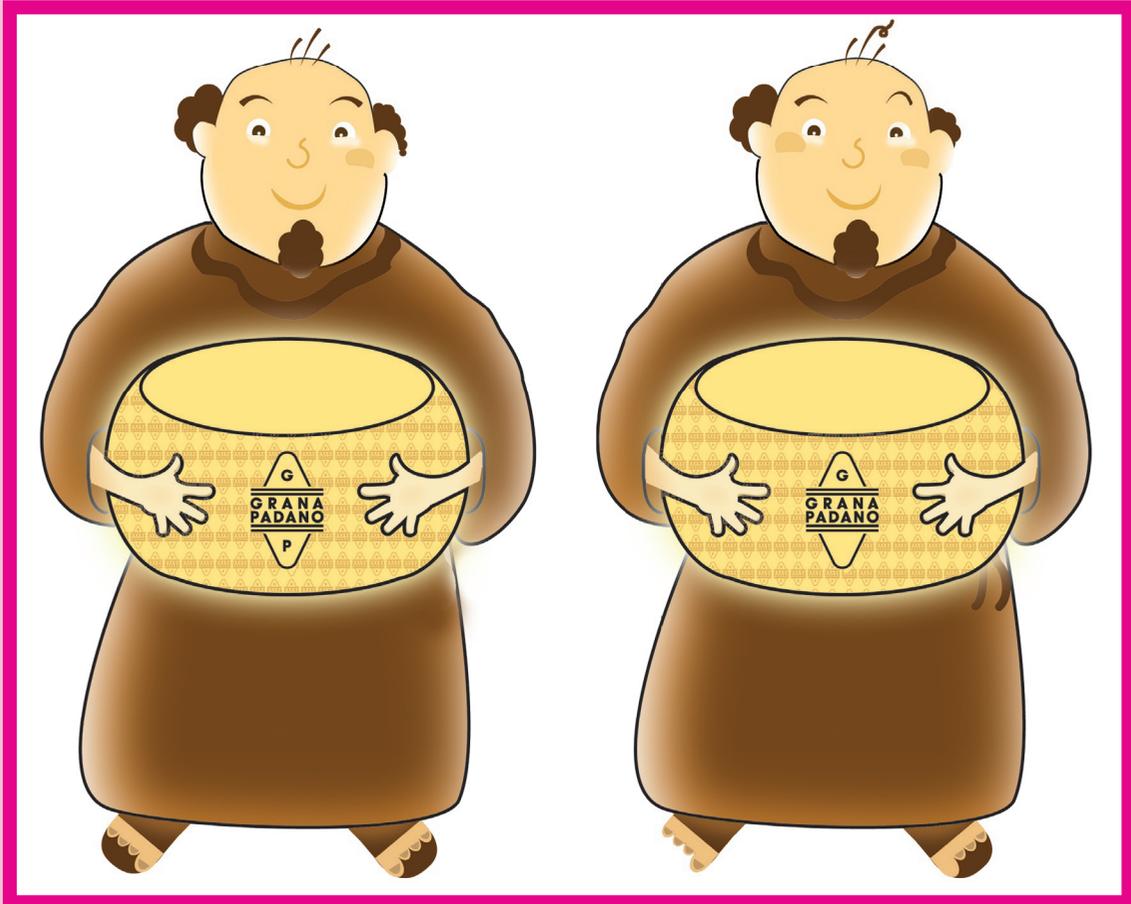
He pulls it out, placing it on a very clean cloth.

Then he puts it in a wooden mould on the shelf so that all of the extra whey is drained. The next morning, he places it in the cheese shelves

Then, he turns it over every day and every three days wipes it clean with a cloth, doing this for 25 to 30 days until the cheese has become nice and hard.

The cheese wheels are then put in a dry, airy place so that the cheese can age in a way that lets it last a very long time.

# Play With GRANA Padano



SPOT THE DIFFERENCES

Find the 7 differences in these two ... almost identical ... images!



# The area of production



The Po River Valley, the biggest plain in Italy, is where Grana Padano is made. In this area of northern Italy, favourable social and economic conditions made it possible to raise livestock and develop the dairy industry.

Throughout the Po Valley, farms were established that managed very large numbers of animals.

The climate is cold and rainy in the winter; hot and humid in the summer. The soil is fertile and perfect for growing lots of grassy plants, which are perfect for feeding milk cows.

# The Po River Valley



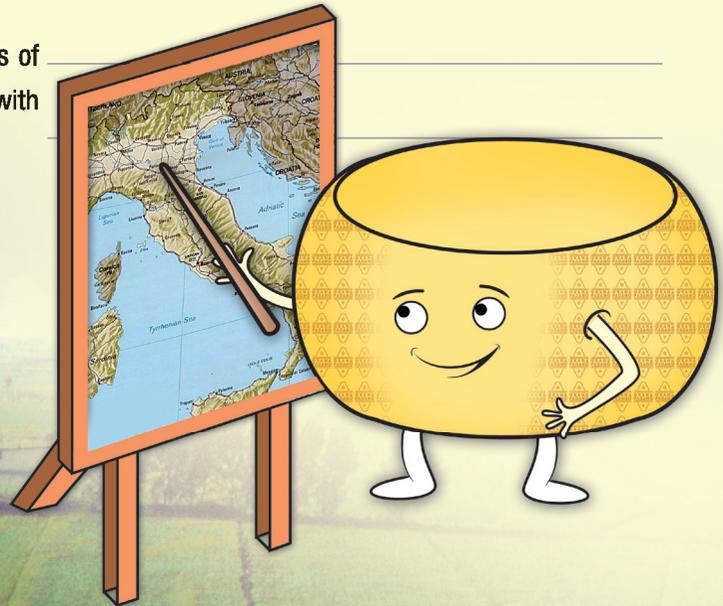
The Po River Valley is rich in water and covered by an intricate network of rivers and canals.

Over the centuries, humans learned how to use this water to irrigate the land and this made it possible to grow large fields and raise lots of livestock.

The countless roads criss-crossing the regions of Northern Italy made trade easier, including with other European countries.

The Alps frame the Po Valley, blocking the path of the cold winds that come down from the north.

The lakes and the rivers that run through it make it possible to water the fields even during the driest periods.





# Feeding the cows

## ALFALFA AND CORN

The fertile plains where the Po River flows are perfect for cultivating vast fields of alfalfa and large crops of corn.

Both alfalfa and corn are foods with high nutritional value for milk cows.

Alfalfa is dried to create high-protein fodder, while corn, which has become a crop typical of the Po Valley area, is used for high-energy fodder and is ideal for cows' daily diet, who then produce milk that is perfect for making Grana Padano cheese.



# Play With Grana Padano



## THE LABYRINTH

Will the knife find its way to cut the wheel of Grana Padano cheese?  
Mark the route it needs to follow with a line.





# From field to milk

Today, milk cows are well-fed and raised in conditions that keep them healthy and happy.

The quality and quantity of the milk produced depend heavily on what the cows eat.

The Grana Padano Production Specifications list the strict requirements that need to be respected by breeders and Grana Padano producers. The Specifications list the foods that can be part of the cows' diet and those which absolutely must not be fed to the animals, as they would be harmful to their health and would affect the production of good milk.



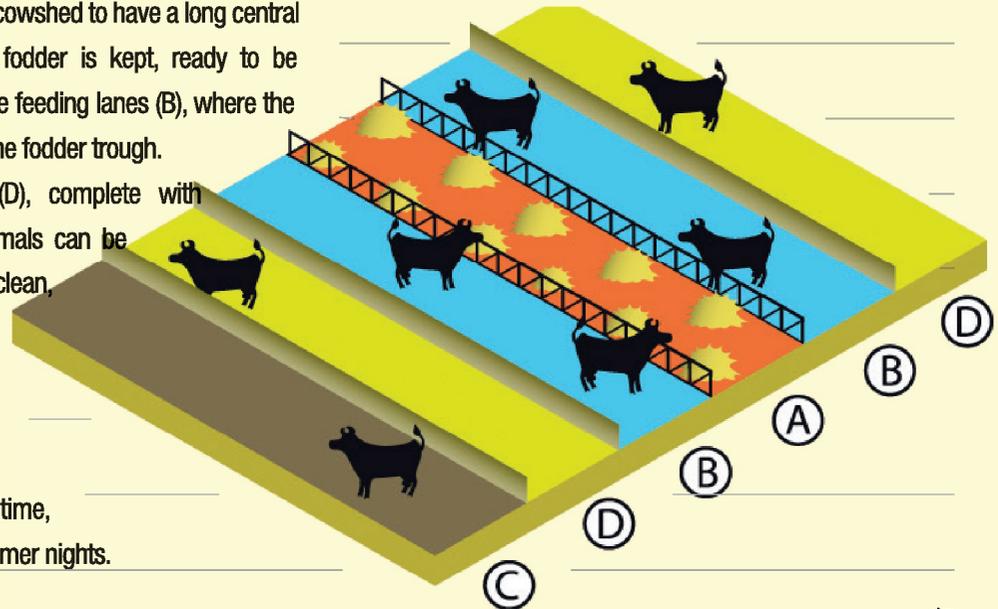
# What a cowshed should be like



The cowsheds where the milk for Grana Padano cheese is produced were designed so that the animals can move around as they like and decide when to eat and when to rest, move about and go outside.

It is important for the cowshed to have a long central lane (A), where the fodder is kept, ready to be enjoyed, parallel to the feeding lanes (B), where the animals go to reach the fodder trough.

The resting areas (D), complete with spots where the animals can be at peace and stay clean, communicate with the outside enclosures, where the animals are quite happy to spend their time, especially on hot summer nights.

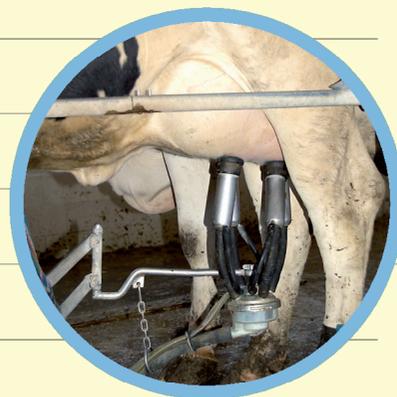




# Milking and milk

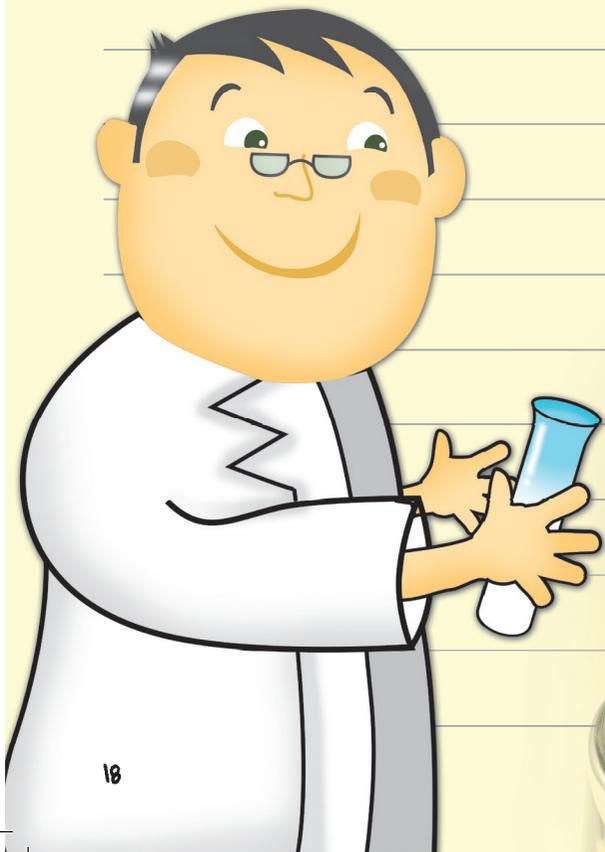
While in the past milking was done by hand, today it is all mechanised. This is to ensure the best hygienic conditions as well as save time and money.

The milk for producing Grana Padano cheese comes from cows that are milked twice a day: once in the early morning and once in the afternoon.



As soon as it is obtained, the fresh milk is collected in a container and its content is analysed.

Only the best is sent to dairy and used to produce Grana Padano.



# Play with Grana Padano



COLOUR IN THE SPACES  
Fill in the spaces with the colours indicated by the dots and  
a fun image will appear!



# Making the cheese: step 1

## From milk... to Grana Padano

Grana Padano is a PDO cheese which, as stipulated in the Production Specifications, must be made from raw cow's milk, originating from no more than two daily milkings and only produced in cheese dairies authorised by the CSQA (the only certification body for Grana Padano cheese).

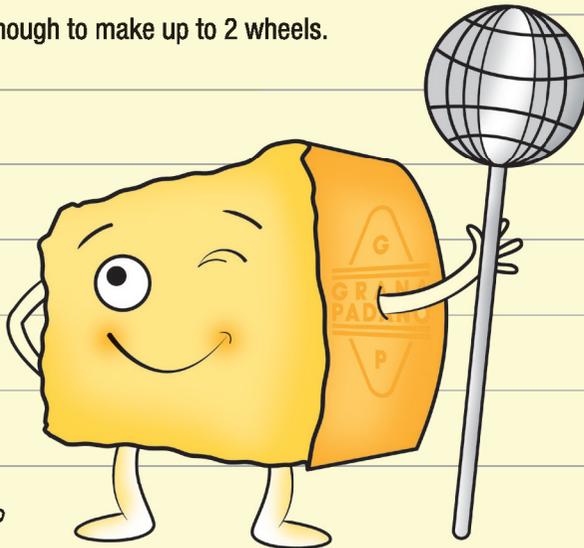
The milk, which has been partially skimmed through natural creaming, is placed in traditional double-bottom copper cauldrons that are big enough to make up to 2 wheels.

The natural whey is added to the milk.

The milk is heated to 31°C-33°C, with the calf's rennet added for coagulation.

The curd is broken and cooked at between 53°C and 56°C and stirred.

The cheese mass is left to settle for about an hour at the bottom of the cauldron.



# Making the cheese: step 2



## Moulding

When it is time to remove the cheese, the cheese-makers use a paddle and a cloth to lift up the wheel inside the cauldron in such a way that it can be divided into two equal parts (twin wheels), each of which is wrapped in a hemp or jute cloth.

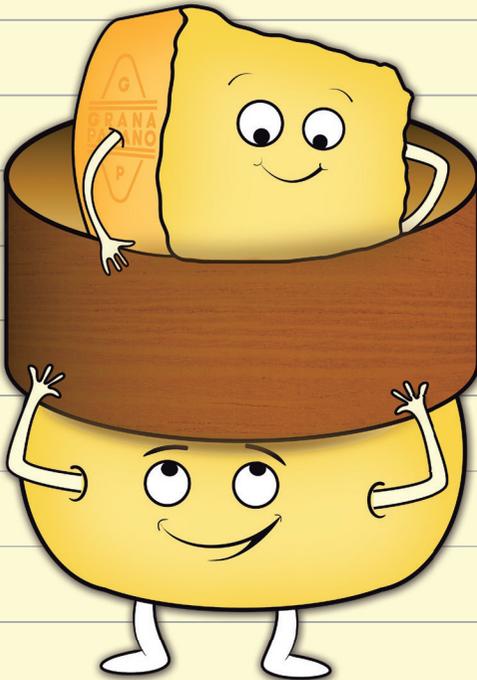
At this point each new wheel is placed in a circular

mould known as 'fascera', originally made of wood and now made of suitable plastic material. It fits the wheel tightly, and a disc made of the same material is then pressed down over it.

After about eight hours, a plastic band is inserted between the mould and the side of the cheese wheel.

This band has the marks of origin on it which will be stamped on the cheese wheel:

- the four-leaf clover with the dairy's registration number
- the Province's seal and the month of production
- small dotted lozenges, alternating the words "GRANA" and "PADANO" in them. They are the symbols of Grana Padano and are distributed all around the wheel. After about 24 hours, the mould is replaced with a steel mould, dotted with little holes and slightly rounded. In a couple of days, this mould gives the cheese its final shape.

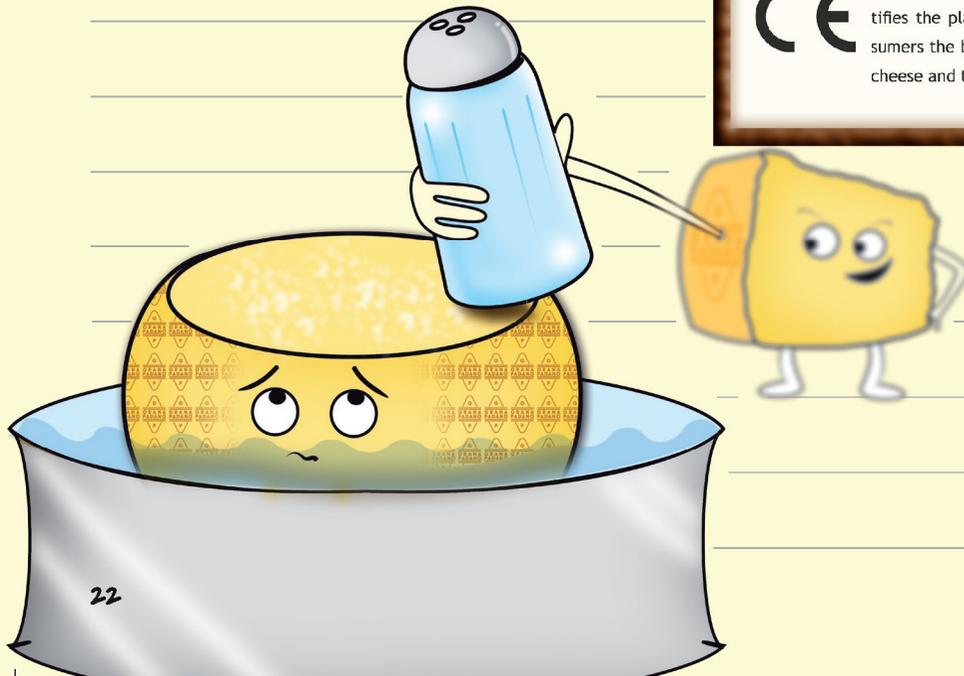




# Making the cheese: step 3

## Salting and ageing

At this point, the wheels are immersed in salted water for a period that varies from 14 to 30 days. After this they have to be dried in special rooms, and then aged for a minimum of 9 months in a thermally insulated environment equipped with modern temperature, humidity and air control systems.



*Four - leaf clover:* this is impressed on the rind, and indicates the origin of the cheese. It includes the initials of the province, the dairy serial number and the acronym DOP (PDO - Protected Designation of Origin)



*Small diamonds:* these are impressed all over the side of the rind alternately stating the words "GRANA" and "PADANO", to identify the cheese even when portioned and sold in pieces.



*EC MARK:* this is impressed on the rind. It identifies the place of production and offers consumers the best guarantee of the origin of the cheese and the methods used in production.

# The three ageing times of quality



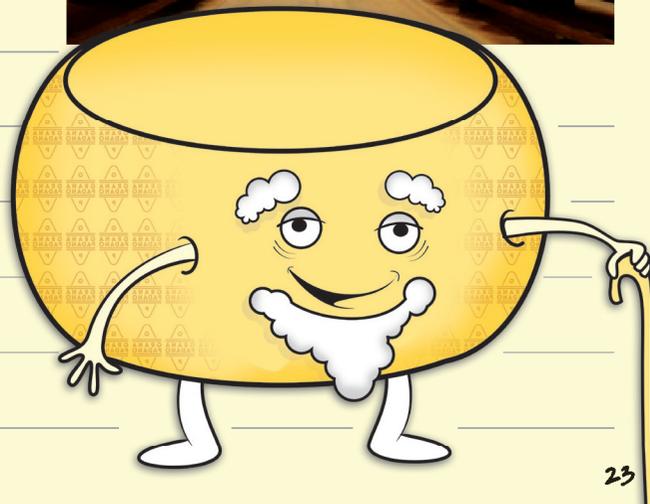
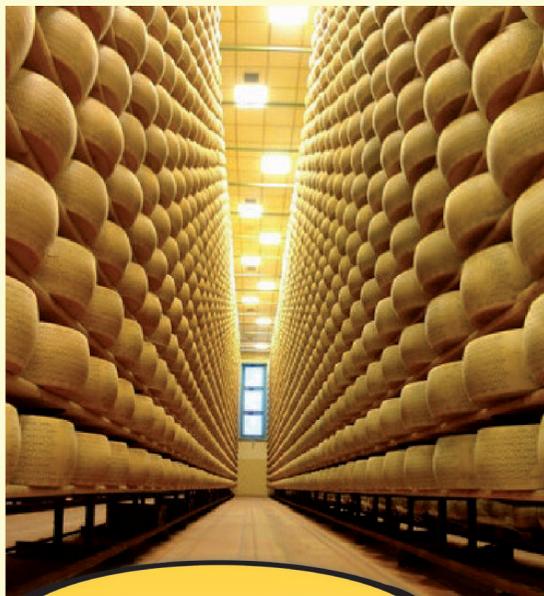
Ageing is the period during which the cheese matures, going through a series of physical, chemical and microbiological changes that improve its flavour and taste.

The longer Grana Padano is aged, the drier it becomes and the more refined and intense its flavour.

Grana Padano is sold after a minimum of 9 months of ageing, so it arrives on the world's tables having aged quite a bit longer.

The Production Specifications provide for three categories of ageing:

- Grana Padano (PDO) with a delicate flavour and aged no more than 16 months
- Grana Padano (PDO) 'Oltre 16 Mesi' ('Over 16 Months'), with a stronger flavour and more crumbly texture
- Grana Padano (PDO) Riserva 'Oltre 20 Mesi' ('Over 20 Months'), with a richer, more intense flavour and fire-branded with the Riserva mark.





# Making the cheese: step 4

## Tapping and fire-branding

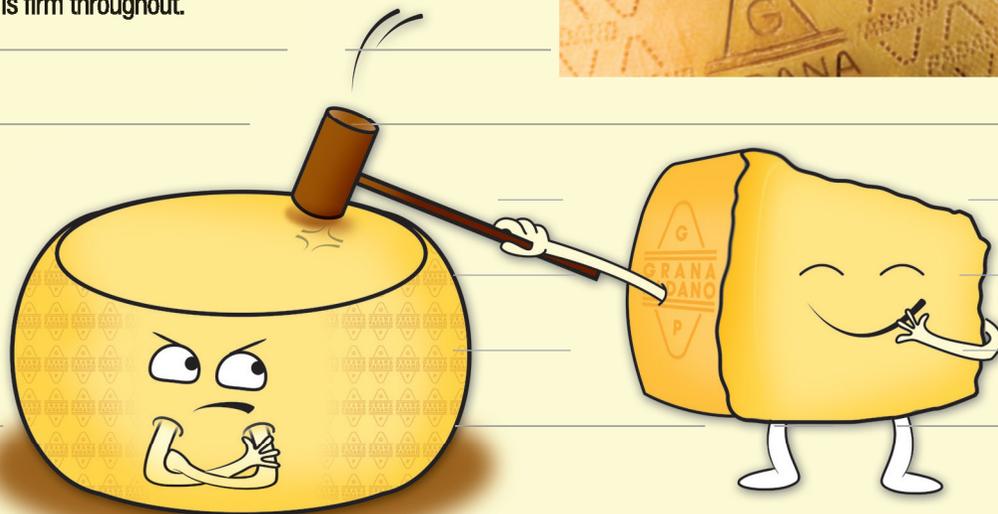
After 9 months of ageing, it is time to find out if the cheese has really become Grana Padano.

All Grana Padano wheels are examined with the traditional inspection tools: a small hammer, a needle and a probe. If further checks are needed, the wheels are actually cut.

But the most important and interesting check is the 'tapping of the wheels'.

Here, the expert uses a special little hammer to tap the wheel over its entire surface.

If the sound it makes is consistent, it means the cheese inside is firm throughout.





If the wheels pass all of the quality tests, they are fire-branded with the mark that guarantees the quality of Grana Padano (PDO). The brand is applied to the wheels by the Consortium's experts.

Without this brand, the cheese cannot be called or sold as Grana Padano (PDO).

The brand must also appear on all packages of grated or cut cheese.

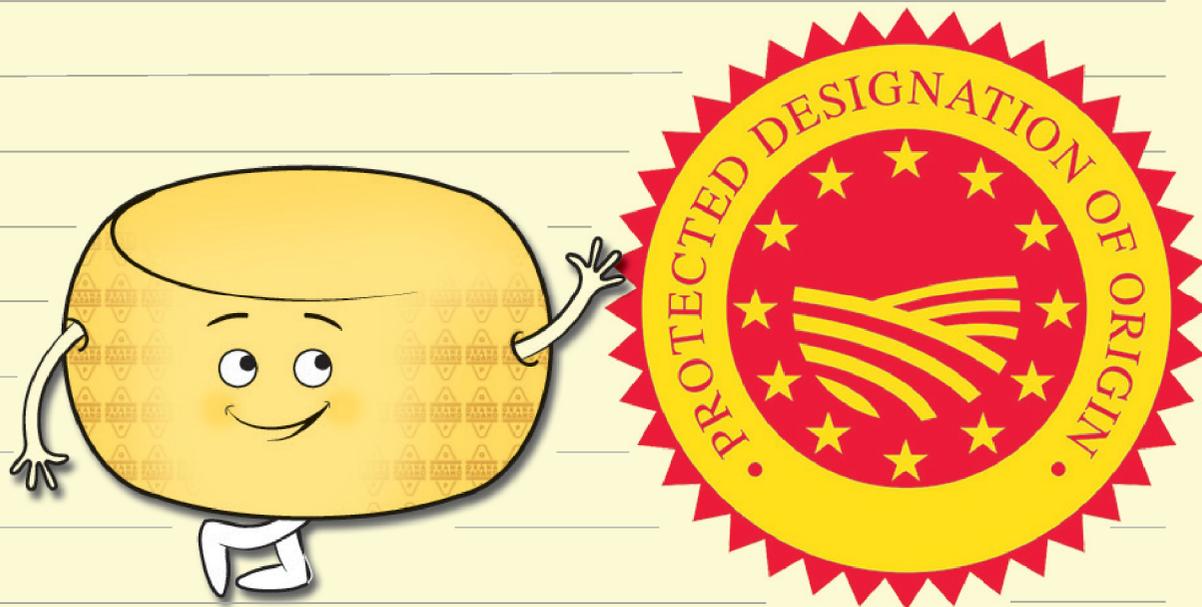
Wheels that don't pass these quality tests are covered with marks that mask the diamonds and four-leaf clover, so that it is clear that the cheese isn't good enough quality to be "Grana Padano".





# PDO: The quality guarantee

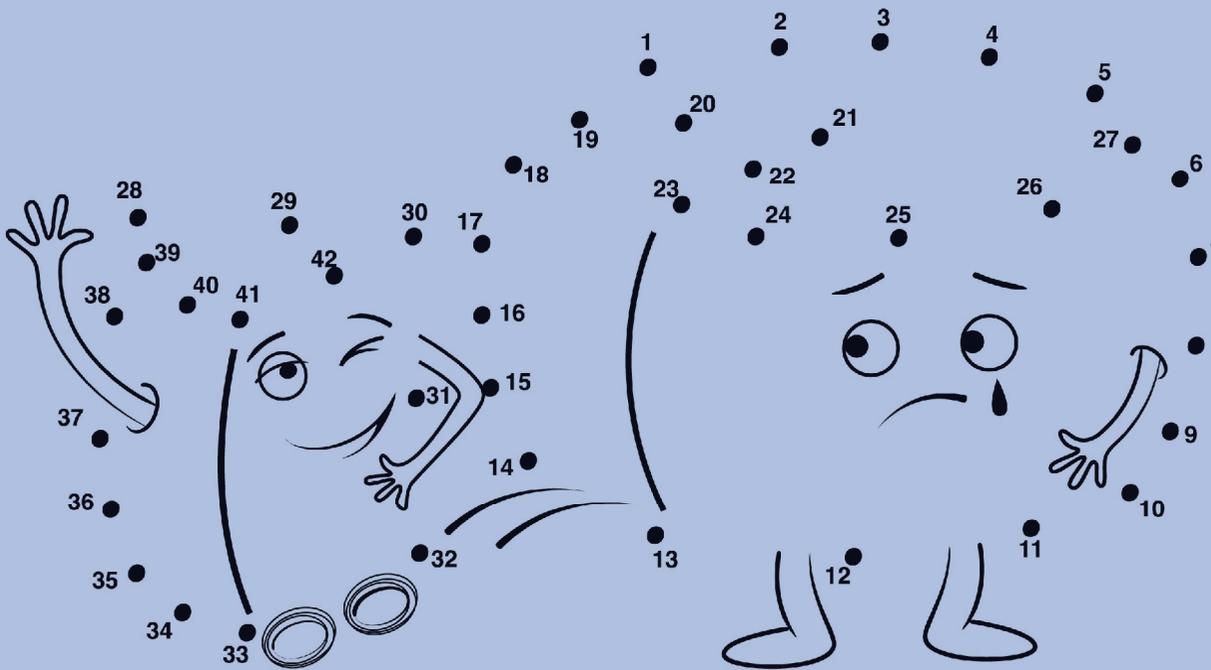
In 1996, the European Union granted Grana Padano Protected Designation of Origin status, which guarantees the cheese's origin, milk quality, production method and production area. This recognition made Grana Padano one of the best-loved Italian products in the world.



# Play With GRana Padano



JOIN THE DOTS  
from 1 to 42 and discover an image of Wedge and Wheel that  
will make you laugh!





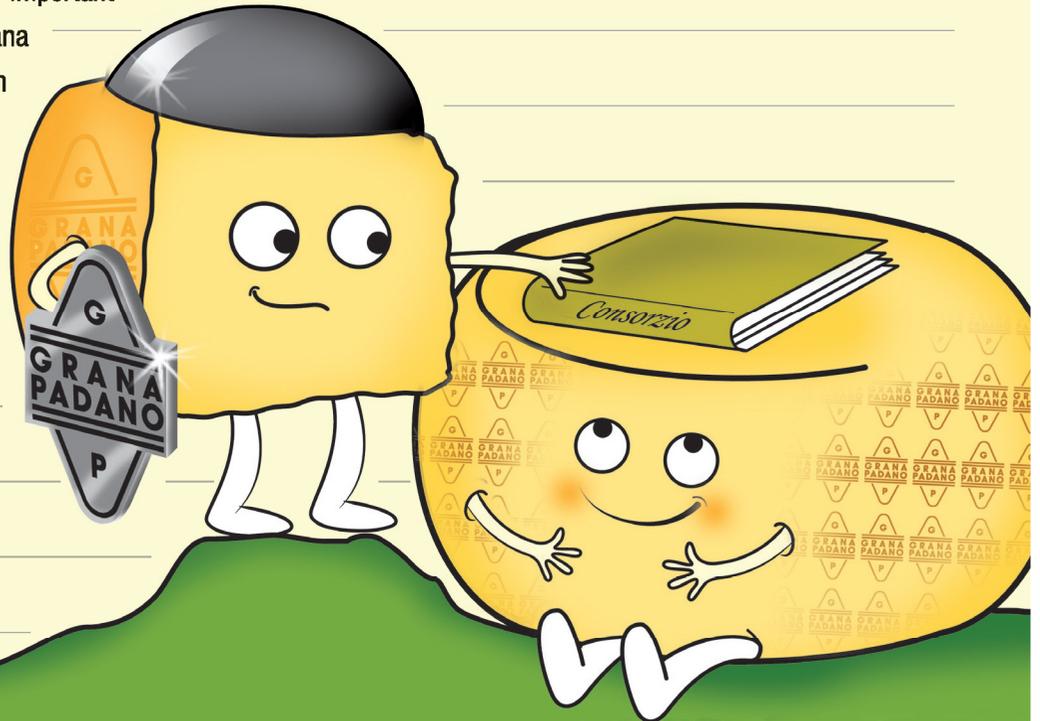
# The Grana Padano Protection Consortium

The Grana Padano Protection Consortium was established in 1954, when all of the producers of Grana Padano cheese decided to get together to defend and protect this cheese.

The Consortium makes sure that all producers and packagers respect the Production Specifications.

One of the most important functions of the Grana Padano Consortium is to defend and protect this cheese, making

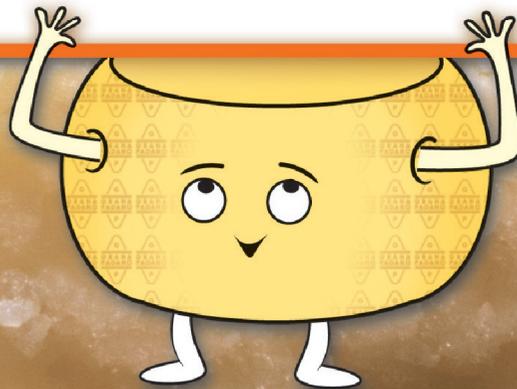
sure that similar cheeses, which haven't been produced with the strict rules described in the Production Specifications, are not called Grana Padano.



# Did you know that ...



- To make 1 kg of Grana Padano you need 15 litres of milk.
- Each copper cauldron contains 1,000 litres of milk (one tonne); from this amount of milk you get only two wheels of cheese.
- 30 g of Grana Padano is nutritionally equivalent to around half-litre of milk.
- On average, 50 g of Grana Padano contains 54 mg of cholesterol





# Mamma mia, I'm hungry!

## Grana Padano Aubergine timbale

### TO SERVE 4:

- 650 g aubergines, halved and thinly sliced
- 500 ml oil
- 20 g butter
- 40 g dry breadcrumbs
- 200 g bucatini
- 250 g homemade tomato sauce
- 120 g mozzarella, chopped
- a handful of basil leaves + extra for garnish
- 120 g Grana Padano over 16 months, grated
- salt and freshly ground black pepper

Preparation time: 15 min.

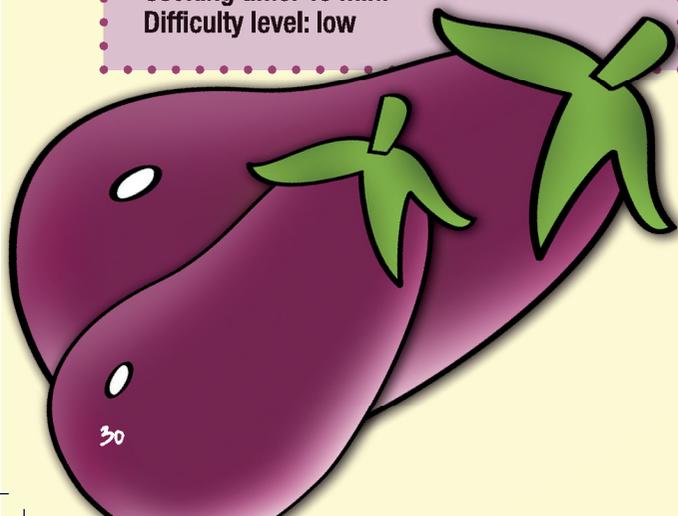
Cooking time: 40 min.

Difficulty level: low

### Directions



Preheat the oven to 190°C. Fry the aubergines in hot oil for a couple of minutes on each side. They should not colour. Lay them on kitchen paper to absorb the excess oil and leave to cool. Butter a 19cm x 27cm x 6cm oval tin and coat with breadcrumbs. Bring a pan of water to a boil, add salt then the bucatini and cook for half the time suggested on the packet. Drain and mix with the tomato sauce, mozzarella, Grana Padano and basil. Adjust seasoning and set aside. Line the side of the tin with the aubergine slices, overlapping them slightly and letting them hang over the top, then cover the gap left in the centre with more overlapping slices. Loosely fill the tin with the bucatini mixture (do not compact the pasta or the dish will lose its lightness), fold the overlapping aubergine slices over the pasta and cover the centre with the rest of the aubergine slices. Bake for 30 to 40 minutes. Leave to cool then flip the timbale on a serving platter. Slice and serve, garnished with fresh basil leaves.



# Mamma mia, I'm hungry!



## Fish fillets with thyme and Grana Padano

TO SERVE 4:

- 4 fish fillets - about 100 g each (for example: cod or turbot)
- 60 g grated Grana Padano
- 100 g melted clarified butter
- 100 g breadcrumbs
- 4 thyme twigs
- salt

Preparation time: 20 min.

Cooking time: 10 - 15 min.

Difficulty level: low

### Directions

• • • •

Clean and chop the thyme.

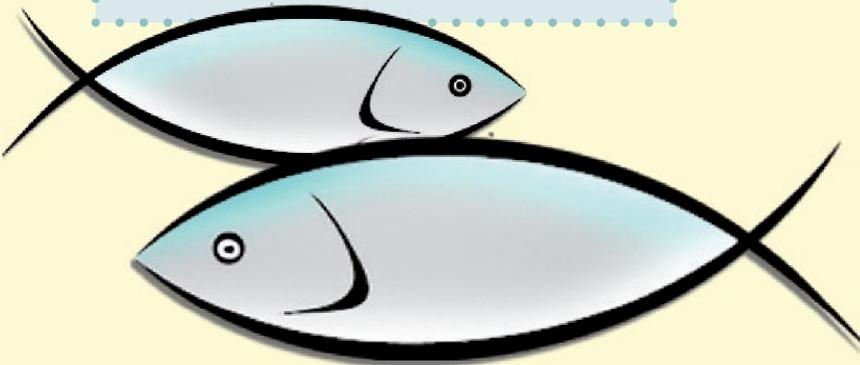
Mix the bread, thyme and Grana Padano cheese.

Pass the fillets in the melted butter then in the breadcrumb mixture.

Fry the fillets in the remaining hot butter until they are golden on both sides.

Dry them slightly on kitchen paper and sprinkle with salt.

Serve with seasonal steamed vegetables or a salad.





# Mamma mia, I'm hungry!

## Oven-baked cherry tomatoes au gratin

TO SERVE 4:

- 24 cherry tomatoes
- 20 g breadcrumbs
- 20 g Grana Padano
- 1 bunch parsley
- 1 clove of garlic
- 1 pinch oregano
- 1 egg
- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- salt

Preparation time: 25 min.

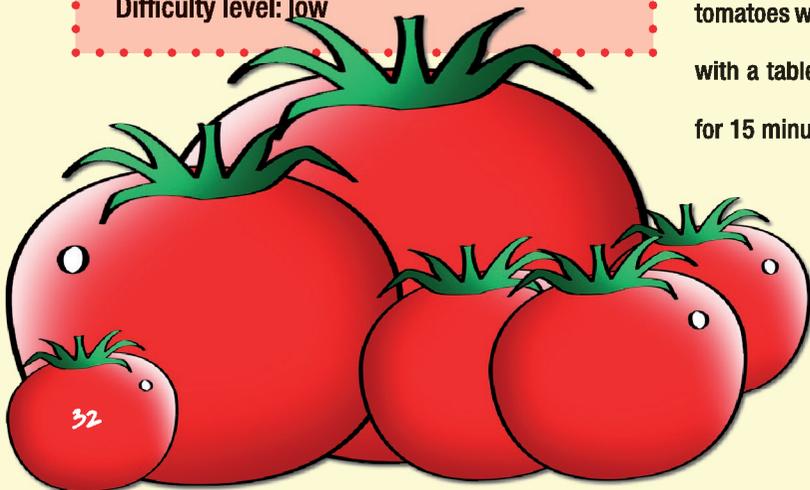
Cooking time: 15 min.

Difficulty level: low

## Directions

• • • •

Cut the cherry tomatoes in half once they have been washed and remove the seeds. Place them upside down in a colander to drain off the juice. Chop the garlic together with the parsley. Put the breadcrumbs, Grana Padano and the chopped mixture into a bowl, add 2 tablespoons of oil, a pinch of salt and the egg. Mix everything together well and stuff the cherry tomatoes with the mixture; place them in a baking dish with a tablespoon of oil and bake them in a hot oven for 15 minutes. Can also be served lukewarm.



# Play With GRana Padano



## 'Grana Padano my way'

Draw a picture of your friend Grana Padano and send it in a sealed envelope to:  
Consorzio Tutela Grana Padano Via XXIV Giugno, 8 - S.M. Della Battaglia - 25015 Desenzano del Garda (BS)  
We will send you a cool prize in return!

NAME AND SURNAME .....

ADDRESS .....







*Consorzio Tutela Grana Padano*

Via XXIV Giugno, 8 - S.M. Della Battaglia

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