Gouda

Equipment:

One 10 quart or larger stockpot plus a larger stockpot in which it fits to construct a water bath.
Kitchen thermometer accurate to 1 degree in the 70-120F range.
2 pound cheese mold lined with cheesecloth
Cheese press

Ingredients

2 gallons of whole milk (goat or cow).
1 packet direct-set mesophilic culture or 4 ounces prepared mother culture
Optional: 1/8 tsp mild lipase powder
Optional: 1 tablespoon dry hot peppers or caraway seeds, boiled in 1/2 cup of water and cooled.
1/4 teaspoon calcium chloride (if using goat or homogenized milk)
1/2 teaspoon liquid rennet in 1/2 cup non-chlorinated water (do not dilute until ready to use)
Optional: 2 drops annatto extract cheese coloring
Saturated brine solution

Method

Heat milk to 90F (88F for goat milk) in a water bath, add mesophilic starter and stir well. Add spices, if using. If using lipase, sprinkle it on top of the milk surface at this point.

*Allow to ripen 10 minutes.*

Add annatto coloring, if using. Add calcium chloride, if using. Dilute rennet and add, stirring for 1 to 2 minutes. Brake the agitation with the spoon or ladle.

*Allow to set for 1 hour, or until a clean break is achieved.*

Cut to 1/2-inch cubes. Be gentle as curds will be very fragile.

*Let curds set for 15 minutes to let them heal.*

Increase heat to 100F (98F for goat milk) over 30 minutes, heating no more than 2F every 5 minutes. Stir while heating, using your hands at first since the curds will be very fragile. Every ten minutes (a total of 3 times over the 30 minutes), remove 8 cups of whey and replace with 8 cups of water at 100F (98F for goat milk). This is called washing the curds.

Pour off whey and allow curds to mat into a lump. Is is not necessary to drain curds into a colander.

Line a 2 pound mold with cheesecloth, and fill with curds.
Press at 20 pounds of pressures for 20 minutes.

Remove and redress cheese, and press at 40 pounds for 3 hours.

Create a saturated brine solution by mixing 1 1/4 pounds (approximately 3 cups) of salt into 1/2 gallon of cool water.

**Brine the cheese for 3 hours, turning it over after 1 1/2 hours. The cheese will float in the brine.**

Remove the cheese, place on a wooden board or a wooden mat and air-dry for 3 weeks in a cool location, ideally 50F. Turn the cheese daily and wipe with a cloth dampened with vinegar if any mold begins to appear. After 3 weeks the cheese should be dry to the touch.

Wrap the cheese in plastic, wax, or vacuum seal the cheese and age at 50F for 2-3 months.

*(Adapted from a recipe by Mary Rosenblum)*