

QUESO DIEGO

THE SAN DIEGO CHEESE CLUB

Where Cheese Education Meets Cheese Gastronomy

The June 2018 Newsletter



**Mark your calendar for the next meeting:
June 19, 6:30 p.m., Alesmith**

Contents in this issue:

A Word from our Queso Grande, aka the President

Brie Cheese Class – Larry Stein and Don Rutherford

Marci Richards - Fair Competition

Chris Banker – How to Build a Cheese Cave

Sabine Friedrich-Walter – Olive and Feta Marinated with Lemon and Ouzo

Our Cheesemaking Library

From the desk of Queso Grande, Curt Wittenberg:

Dear Queso Diegans,
Queso Diego has taken on cheesemaking and cheese education as its central cause. We have embarked upon a series of meetings and events associated with the art of making cheese. It is something that is simultaneously exceedingly simple and terrifyingly complex. However, one of our primary goals has been to make taking the first steps easy and then breaking down the barriers to taking the next step.

In that spirit, we had a fabulous presentation at our May meeting by Chris Banker on making your own cheese cave and we are hoping that many of you have set up that mini-fridge you had lying around as the prime aging environment for aging your cheeses or, if not, you are thinking about doing so. He has included instructions in this newsletter and the presentation is available on the website with detailed instructions so, even if you missed last month's meeting, you have the help you need.

And cheesemaking is at the forefront in June as well. The presentation for our June meeting is an introduction to cheesemaking by Larry Stein, our Vice President and resident cheesemaking educator. You will learn the basics of making curd, the fundamental process in making almost all styles of cheese. From there, it is just a matter of mastering variations and making the right additions to conquer the world of cheese. Be experimental, be bold, find the styles and the flavors that excite you and take on the challenge. The bottom line is that Queso Diego is providing you the tools to achieve your cheesemaking goals.

Finally, we are once again entering the cheesemaking competition season. The San Diego County Fair Cheese Competition is right around the corner and we are hoping to have a great turnout of Queso Diegans and others competing for 25 wonderful prizes. Get out those great recipes and make a fresh or short-aged cheese to enter in the competition of June 30th. Even if it isn't a prizewinner, you will already have won a ticket for a free day at the fair.

So, please join us. Put on your cheesemaker's hat and create.

**June is National Dairy Month and the last week of June is National Cheese Week.
How are you going to celebrate?**

BRIE Cheese Class – June 24th

Our acclaimed, Larry Stein of Queso Diego fame will again be teaching the BRIE Cheese Class on Sunday, June 24th. Everything will be provided to make the cheese and there will be commercial examples and NON - alcoholic beverages.

This class is a repeat of a "sellout" and we only have room for 12 so RSVP soon.

Place: Ascension Lutheran Church at 5106 Zion Ave. San Diego, CA 92120.

Time 12:00 - 3:00PM

Cost: \$35, you can pay at class or via Paypal to Don Rutherford

RSVP to: donaldrutherford@hotmail.com

If you sign up you are expected to attend.

Thanks.

Don Rutherford

Cheese Competition at the San Diego County Fair

By Marci Richards.

June 30th! Mark your calendars. This is the date of the cheese competition at the San Diego County Fair. Anyone can enter the competition; it is for all levels of cheese makers. So, how does it work?

First you choose which cheese to make.. will it be a cheddar, brie, chevre, ricotta, yogurt cheese or ???

Second, everyone brings their cheese to the fair on June 30th (note, the cheese gets you into the fair for free). Each cheese is evaluated (technical and aesthetics) and scored by the judges. We are honored to have Jenny Eastwood, an American Cheese Society Certified Cheese Professional, of Small Goods USA, judging and coordinating judges for the competition.

While the judging occurs, there will be presentations, time to mingle with other cheese makers and/or visit other fair exhibits. Then there is the award ceremony with 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners in each category, and a Best-of-Show. We have some generous sponsors that have contributed prizes for the winners in each category and Best-of-Show.

And the big plus this year, the score sheets with the judge's comments will be provided to the contestants. This is a great way to get feedback on your cheese. So, what cheese are you making? We want to see you and your cheese at the Fair!

Here are some pictures from last year's competition!



Cheese Trivia

People of Greece are the largest consumers of cheese worldwide. An average person from Greece consumes around 27.3 kg of cheese every year, about $\frac{3}{4}$ of which is feta cheese.

How to Build a Cheese Cave - By Chris Banker

Having somewhere to properly age cheeses is very important if you plan to get into making hard or aged cheeses. Fortunately, a great cheese cave can be made from a mini fridge with almost no effort and about \$200 in supplies, or even less in some cases. Many Queso Diego members have made setups similar to this.

For those looking for a larger aging space, the same procedure would apply for making one out of a full-size fridge or chest freezer. Wine fridges are also a good choice and can generally be set to appropriate temperatures without the need for an external controller.

Materials:

- Mini-fridge - all-refrigerator models offer the best use of space and more even cooling. Ideal is a model that is at least 4 cubic feet and all-refrigerator. Often available at Costco or Walmart for \$105-130. You may also be able to find one on craigslist for even less. A model with a freezer section will also work, but will have some wasted space.
- Temperature controller - Inkbird makes a great temperature controller that is available on Amazon for about \$30. Look for model ITC-308.
- Humidity controller - Inkbird also makes a great humidity controller that is available on Amazon for about \$30. Look for model IHC-200S
- Humidifier - ultrasound "cool mist" style, should not be too large and MUST have a mechanical power switch or be always-on - about \$20-30

Assembly:

1. Put the humidifier inside the fridge and turn it all the way up, plug it into the output of the humidity controller
2. Plug the fridge into the output of the temperature controller.
3. Run the probes for the controllers into the middle of the mini-fridge in a representative area where cheese will be aging
4. Plug both of the controllers into outlets
5. Adjust controllers to desired settings. 55 degrees F and 85% humidity are good starting points and your settings may depend on the types of cheeses you are aging.
6. If you have space for additional shelves, you can make more out of light louver material from the hardware store.

Tips:

- Ask your friends and family if they have extra fridges around. Mini fridges are especially common at the end of the college year when students move.
- Wine fridges are very common wedding gifts and often go unused, so you may find good deals on Craigslist or OfferUp.
- If your fridge has more slots for shelves than actual shelves, you might be able to add more useful cheese aging space by making additional shelves out of light louver material from the hardware store.
- For more details, see [my presentation slides](#) on the Queso Diego Website.



Take Recipe By Sabine Friedrich-Walter

OLIVE AND FETA MARINATED WITH LEMON AND OUZO

Makes 10 -12 servings:

Serve with toothpick, Keeps fresh refrigerated for a week.

- 1/2 pound pitted kalamata olives
- 1/4 pound feta cheese, preferred homemade or Greek style feta , cut in 1/2 inch cubes
- 1/2 Lemon fine diced , seeds removed.
- 1-2 Garlic, minced
- 1/4 cup cold pressed fruity olive oil
- 1/4 cup Ouzo Greek liqueur
- 1/4 bunch flat leaf parsley, rough chopped

Mix all ingredients gently together and let it stand at room temperature for an hour, before serving. Serve with pita bread or flatbread.

Bon Appetit

Take Advantage of Our Library of Cheesemaking

Your membership in Queso Diego comes with an opportunity to make wonderful cheeses without a big financial investment. With the help of several of our members, Jack Ford and the Berry Good Food Foundation, we have made available a large collection of reusable cheesemaking tools and expendable cheesemaking supplies to members of the club.

- The tools include more than 100 cheese forms, several cheese presses, and numerous others.
- The supplies include more than 20 cheesemaking cultures, sufficient for all of the major styles of cheese, several forms of rennet and lipase, calcium chloride solution, cheese mat, fine weave cheesecloth, and more. These are available for \$1 per item (1 tube of culture sufficient for 2-4 gallons of milk; 1 cheese mat; 1 tube of annatto or of calcium chloride).
- A library of cheesemaking books is being developed and should be available soon. Books can be checked out free of charge for a limited period.

To use the library, access the spreadsheet with list of items here:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/19fLvqk26dKyUlf1Ay5E_IFhULYZ1rt8nk0SXiR2R720/edit#gid=333222537

When you do so, you will need to request access, which will be granted only if you are a member. After getting access, read the directions, examine the spreadsheet and select the items you need for your next cheese. To request those items send an e-mail to: qd-library-request@googlegroups.com Provide your contact information, the name and number of the item(s) you would like and when you need them (generally the next meeting, unless you make special arrangements). You will receive a message informing you of the availability, the delivery arrangements and the cost to you. Remember to request items from the Library of Cheesemaking at least 5 days before the meeting so we have time to arrange to get them to you.

Once you receive the items you will be ready to make those wonderful cheeses you have been dreaming about. Remember, all tools and books must be returned to the library or passed on to another user once you are finished with it. The success of the library depends upon your responsible use. Happy cheesemaking!

May the cheese be with you!!