



Smoked Cheeses

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QUESO DIEGO
THE SAN DIEGO CHEESE CLUB



Outline

- Reasons to smoke cheese
- History
- Smoked cheese styles
- Woods to smoke with
- How to smoke cheese
- Smokers and DIY options
- Pairings and Recipes
- Q&A



Why Smoke Cheese?

Why would you smoke a perfectly good cheese?

- Change flavor profile
 - New and exciting flavors
 - Turn ordinary cheese into something special
- Preserve
 - Antimicrobial, Antioxidant Properties

History of Smoked Cheeses



- Records of Roman smoked cheeses
 - Pliny the Elder - 77 AD
- Romans were known to have smokehouses for smoking cheese
- Gouda since 1100's, likely smoked early in its history

Types of Cheese to Smoke

- Needs to hold together - at least semi-firm
 - Soft cheeses are likely to fall apart
- Softer hard cheeses will tend to take on flavor more readily than very hard ones
 - E.g. Young Gouda
- Limitations are minimal, so there are lots of choices

Spotlight Cheese: Fiore Sardo DOP

- Sardegna, Italy
- Raw Sheep Milk
- Wheel is heated in water to thicken rind
- Lightly smoked over 10-15 days with local wood, including myrtle
- Aged 6 months



Traditional Smoked Styles

Smoked
Gouda
(Holland)

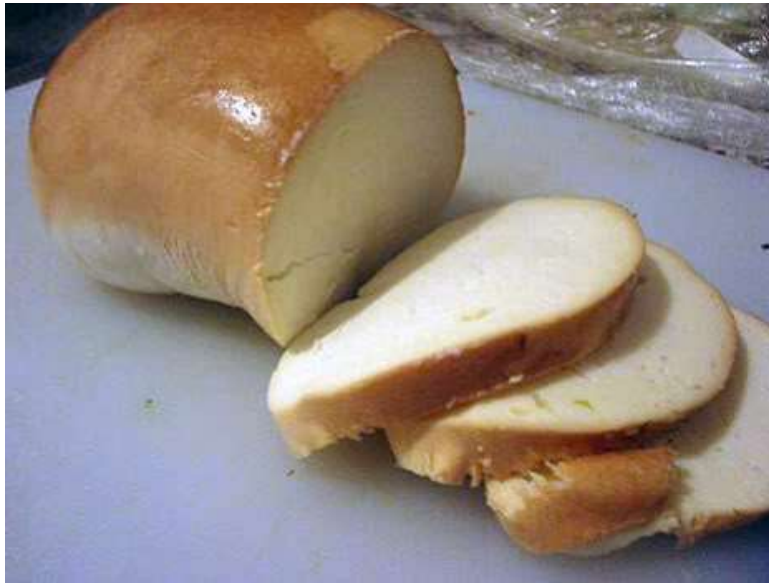


Smoked Cheddar
(USA, England)



Traditional Smoked Styles (2)

Smoked Mozzarella
(Italy)



Rauchkäse
(Germany)



Traditional Smoked Styles (3)

San Simon DOP
(Spain)



Fiore Sardo DOP
(Italy)



Modern Smoked Cheeses

Rogue Smokey
Blue



Applewood
Smoked Swiss

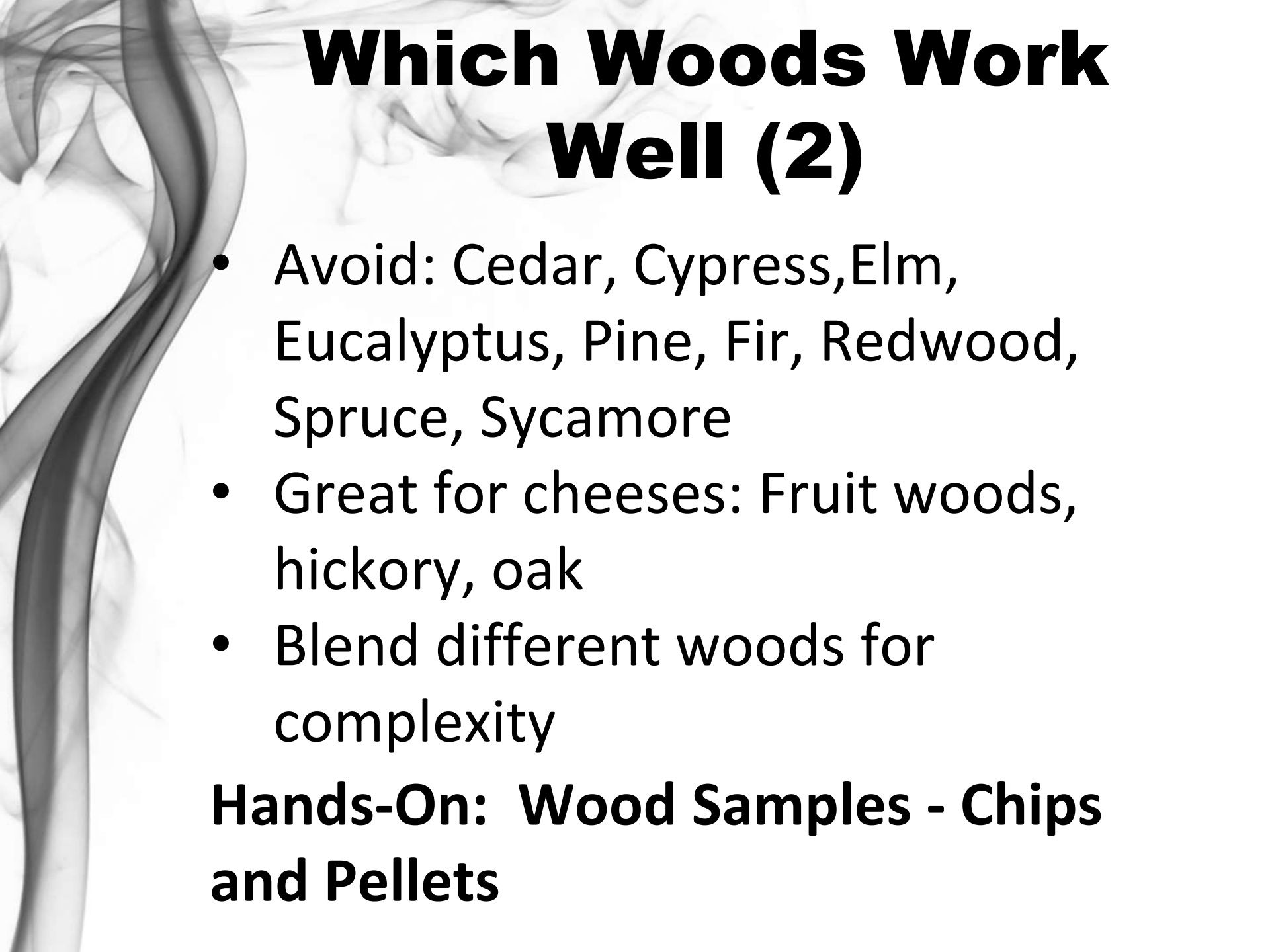




Which Woods Work Well

Common Smoking Woods:

- Alder - Light, slightly sweet
- Hickory - strong, pungent
- Mesquite - strong, can overpower
- Cherry, Apple - mild, fruity, slightly sweet
- Oak - moderate - between fruit woods and hickory
- Maple - mild
- Pecan - spicy, nutty



Which Woods Work Well (2)

- Avoid: Cedar, Cypress, Elm, Eucalyptus, Pine, Fir, Redwood, Spruce, Sycamore
- Great for cheeses: Fruit woods, hickory, oak
- Blend different woods for complexity

Hands-On: Wood Samples - Chips and Pellets

Spotlight Cheese: Quicke's Smoked Cheddar

QUICKE'S
EST. 1540

- Quicke's
- Devon, England
- Pasteurized Cow Milk
- Clothbound, aged 9-12 months
- Smoked over estate-grown oak chips





How to Smoke Cheeses

- (Optional) - Put cheese in freezer briefly to help prevent melting during smoking
- Put cheese in smoker and start cold smoking
- Smoke to desired flavor - 1 hour to 12 or more hours

A decorative graphic of smoke or steam rising from the left side of the page, rendered in shades of gray and white, creating a soft, ethereal background for the text.

Smoking Temperature

- Must be “cold smoked”
- As low as possible to avoid melting / sweating
- Below 90F - fat melting point
- Avoid creating excess heat
- Smoke at night during cool weather
- Put a pan of ice below cheese

A Note on Liquid Smoke

- Many less expensive cheeses use liquid smoke
- Can be easily used if desired
- May not be a good option for artisanal cheese



Spotlight Cheese: Rogue Smokey Blue



- Rogue Creamery
- Central Point, OR
- Organic Cow Milk
- Roquefort-style Blue
- Cold smoked 16 hours with hazelnut shells
- First west-coast blue and first smoked blue





Inexpensive Smoker Designs

- Requirements
 - Must generate smoke without significant fire/heat (cold smoker)
 - Needs to be a relatively enclosed cooking space
- Lots of Options
 - Offset Firebox Smoker
 - Pellet Trays
 - DIY Options
- Many more expensive solutions

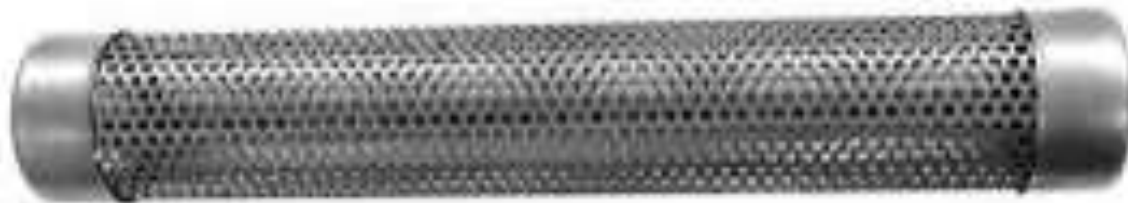
Smoker Designs - Offset Firebox

- Common design, inexpensive versions available starting around \$100
- Lots of uses
- Burns wood chips or chunks



Smoker Designs - Pellet Tray

- Wood pellet burning smoke generator
- Can be used to turn a grill or hot smoker into a cold smoker
- Separates temperature from smoke generation
- Tray or tube formats



Smoker Designs - Pellet Tray (2)

- AMNPS (A-Maze-N Pellet Smoker) is a very popular option
- Load up “maze” with wood pellets
- Can smoke for about 12 hours on a full tray
- About \$30



Hands On: AMNPS

Spotlight Cheeses: Home-Smoked Goudas

- Dutch Tradition Gouda
- Home smoked using AMNPS
- Two different woods: cherry and hickory
- Sample both to compare



Smoker Designs - DIY Pan and Bin

- DIY design from household materials
- Smoke pan, dryer hose, plastic bin



Smoker Designs - DIY Soldering Iron

- DIY design from soldering iron
- Electric smoke generator
- Soldering iron, tin can



Smoker Designs - Bix's Kamado



Smoker Designs - Bix's Kamado (2)





Smoked Cheese Pairings

- Powerful smoke flavors work well with powerful pairings
 - Make sure beverage can stand up
- Roasty stouts and porters
- Malty or smoky beers, crisp or smoked lagers
- Wines: bold reds, aggressive whites
- Scotch, Bourbon, Rye



Recipes Using Smoked Cheeses

- Smoked Mac 'n Cheese
- Chicken Stuffed with Smoked Cheese
- Smoked Cheese Lasagna
- Penne Primavera with Smoked Gouda
- Grilled Cheese and other sandwiches
- ... and many more ...
- Can replace regular cheese in any dishes where smoke will fit the flavor profile

Questions?

