

# QUESO DIEGO

THE SAN DIEGO CHEESE CLUB

January, 2019/

## From the desk of Queso Grande, Larry Stein

Welcome to 2019! I hope everyone had a great holiday this year. The first thing I'd like to do is to extend a hardy thank you to Curt for his great stewardship of the club this past year. His dedication and efforts show in the growth of the club and the wonderful events we've had this past year. When you see him please tell him thank you.

We start the year with some changes to the board.

Vice-President	Marci Richards
Treasurer	Chuck West
Membership	Olaf Walter
Events	Sabine Friedrich-Walter
Secretary	Lisa Chamberlain
Education	Don Rutherford
Social Media	Livia Cournoyer
Logistics	Joanne West
IT	Chris Banker
Newsletter	Beth Surrell

Our board meetings are held on the second Tuesday of the odd months. We're always looking for more help. If you'd like to get more involved you're welcome to attend the board meetings.

This year we look forward to an exciting list of meetings and events. The topics will include education, process and our usual making meetings, like grilled cheese. There are several events planned and we'll have more about that later.

Our first meeting of the year is our Anniversary Party. It will be held on Tuesday, January 15th at Marina Village. We have a wonderful lineup of cheese and bubbly pairing for your enjoyment. You absolutely want to make sure you make this meeting. You'll be getting the email invite soon. Be sure to respond. We have limited seating.

Another great event is the Fermentation Festival, on Sunday, February 17th. Queso Diego has participated in this event for the last four years. We have an informative booth where we introduce people to the hobby of Cheesemaking and provide some of the session talks. This will be prior to our February meeting so look for more information to come soon.

It's been several years since our last trip to Baja. This year we're planning a two day trip that will include a visit to Cava de Marcelo, a cheese creamery outside of Ensenada. More on this later.

That's all for now. I look forward to another great year with Queso Diego.

Larry Stein  
President

## JANUARY EVENTS

**January 15, 6:30 p.m.**

Anniversary Party— Bubbly and Cheese Pairing Marina Village by Mission Bay (this is in place of our regular meeting at Ale Smith)

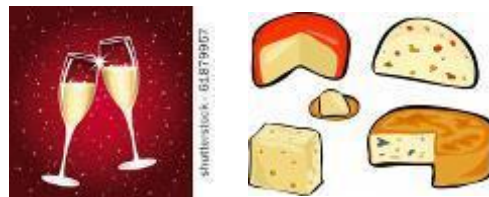
## Annual Anniversary Bubbly and Cheese Pairing— January 15 at 6:30 p.m. Marina Village

Please join us for our first event of 2019, the Queso Diego Anniversary Bubbly and Cheese Pairing. This event is for Members (dues paid for 2018 and/or 2019) and their Guests only. Tickets are available through Brown Paper Tickets via the link below for \$15 for members and \$20 for guests. One guest is permitted per paying member. Additional guests may be allowed at a later date if space permits, so members should sign up as soon as possible to ensure their space. Many more details are provided on the event page at Brown Paper Tickets.

<https://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/4031125>

This year our incoming President, Larry Stein, and our outgoing President, Curt Wittenberg, will present five cheese and bubbly pairings along with a bubbly and dessert pairing prepared by our own Sabine Friedrich-Walter. The main event will be preceded by a potluck of finger foods. Given that the pairings will be dominated by cheese, please bring vegetables, light savory appetizers, etc.

Don't miss this spectacular event. Our new venue is wonderful with plenty of free parking and provides a festive setting for our premier cheese event of the year. You and your friends will have a spectacular evening of food and libations



## FEBRAURY EVENTS

**February 17**

**Fermentation Festival—**  
Encinitas

**February 19, 6:30 p.m.**

General Meeting @ Ale Smith

## Fermentation Festival, February 17th

Queso Diego has participated in this event for the last four years. We have an informative booth where we introduce people to the hobby of Cheesemaking and provide some of the session talks.

From their [website](#):

A one-day, family-friendly outdoor festival celebrating fermented foods and beverages, local food and wellness featuring:

- Workshops and demos from experts on how to make and enjoy fermented foods and beverages
- DIY Sauerkraut stations
- Ambrosia Garden (21+) with tasters of local beer, wine, mead, cider and more (and keeper souvenir glass!)
- Keynote Panel by Dr. Rob Knight, UC San Diego about latest research on human microbiome (healthy gut!)
- Makers Marketplace with over 35 local and regional makers
- Wellness Pavilion with yoga classes, sound healing, acupuncture, and massage



## The Human Hand in Cheesemaking

by Curt Wittenberg

Cheese arises from controlled fermentation of milk. By promoting the growth of lactic acid bacteria and cajoling them to the appropriate end, the cheesemaker achieves the desired product. However, that is just one of many challenges facing the amateur cheesemaker. We also encourage the growth of other organisms to perform distinct transformations of milk constituents, leading to the desired flavor profile. We also manage the formation of curd by the addition of rennet and manipulate that curd to the appropriate moisture level and texture via cutting, draining, cooking, salting, and pressing. From there, we proceed to affinage, or aging, during which all those processes coalesce to develop depth and diversity in the flavor profile and facilitate the expression of the uniqueness of the specific cheese style. I hope to explore some of these processes through a series of columns and, hopefully, unveil some of the mystery that surrounds them.

Many of our favorite foods arise via the same processes that lead to food spoilage. Preeminent among those is fermentation. Just consider the origins of beer, chocolate, wine, pickles, sourdough and, of course, cheese. Each arose from subtle changes in conditions that prevented its demise and instead encouraged the growth of the organisms that promoted transformation into the new and more desirable state. Often that entailed finding conditions that encouraged the growth of organisms that promote the transformation of sugar to a desired product, be it alcohol, carbon dioxide, lactic acid, or a combination thereof. Wine and beer are produced via alcoholic fermentation by yeast. However, while the desired product for producing wine is alcohol alone, making beer also involved the harnessing of carbon dioxide to achieve carbonation. Similarly, whereas pickling depends upon bacterial fermentation of sugars to lactic acid, sourdough is produced through mixed fermentation to produce both the sour lactic acid and the gaseous carbon dioxide that prompts the bread to rise.

Of course, cheese also relies upon bacterial fermentation to produce lactic acid from lactose. The production of lactic acid by any of a variety of lactic acid bacteria has several important roles in cheesemaking. First, it produces the conditions that encourage the coagulation of the milk proteins, a process that is facilitated by the enzymatic activity in rennet. The acidity also discourages the proliferation of many microorganisms that have a negative impact on shelf life and flavor, including some that are pathogenic. At the same time, the acidity encourages the growth of other organisms that have a desirable impact on the flavor of the final product. Finally, the lactic acid itself is a flavor compound that gives cheese that bright sourness that characterizes many fresh and aged cheeses.

Although lactic acid production by bacteria is a central element of the genesis of milk into cheese, the variety of lactic acid-producing bacteria contributes to the diversity of cheeses. Although many amateur cheesemakers use generic packets of “mesophilic” and “thermophilic” cultures, there is much to be gained by exploring the diversity of starter cultures available to cheesemakers. Each type of lactic acid-producing bacteria brings different characteristics along with it that influence the final product in distinct ways. These include growth rate or optimal growth temperature but can also include the production of fermentation-associated byproducts that influence flavor (diacetyl - buttery flavor; carbon dioxide – creation of “eyes” or bubbles; etc.). By exploiting these specific characteristics, the cheesemaker can enhance their creativity and craft.

**Pictures are from Scott and Beth Surrell's trip to Spain....Madrid cheese shop**



## Review of *The Noma Guide to Fermentation*

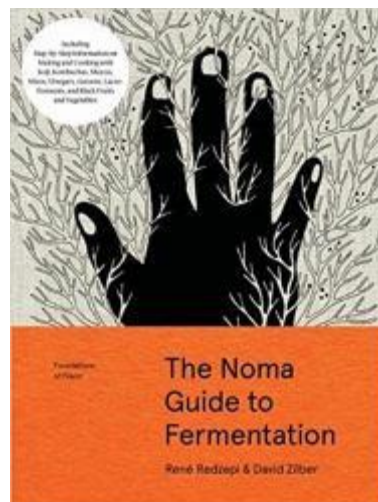
By Lesley Stern

A story of accidents: any book that begins thus is sure to appeal to cheese makers. *The Noma Guide to Fermentation* grabbed me immediately – not only because of the opening account of how the famous Noma restaurant began experimenting with lacto fermentation but because the book as a material object, like a gorgeous plump cheese, invites you to touch and gaze in wonder, to breath in and imagine the smells, to caress it. The book is beautifully produced and lucidly written. It is by no means a comprehensive guide to fermentation (we have that already, in various forms, but especially *The Art of Fermentation* by Sandor Katz). But it is fascinating to read and the recipes and instructions for building fermentation devices will surely appeal to any DIYer who aims to produce delicious and unusual ferments. The book does not extend to cheese, but it does include recipes for lactic acid fermentation, kombucha, vinegar, koji, miso shoyu, and garum. It also covers “black” fruits and vegetables, which aren’t technically products of fermentation but share a lot in common as far as how they’re made and used in the Noma kitchen.

The methods of fermentation described in this book are sometimes quite complicated, but often remarkably simple. There are instructions (detailed in drawings, photographs, and text) for building a fermentation chamber that I know many of the hacksters in QuesoDiego will love. Yet many of the ferments can be done in a vacuum sealed bag with salt added to a fruit or vegetable, or through the more familiar means of a jar with an airlock. Particularly exciting for me was the revelation of how to use an electric rice cooker or slow cooker to make, for example, an item as exotic as black garlic.

Some of the items you can make from this book are: rose and shrimp garum, grasshopper garum, lacto mango-scented honey, black garlic balsamic vinegar, hazelnut miso. And then for each item in the book there is a section on “Suggested Use.” This is where your taste buds really start tingling, where you experience a sense of the Noma reputation for experimentation: using simple ingredients, producing extraordinary transformations. For instance, black garlic ice cream, and celery-herb vinegar with fresh cheese.

Intriguing though the instructions are for building a fermentation chamber out of a speed rack, I’m heading out to buy a rice cooker. See you all in eight weeks’ time with a batch of black garlic



## Library of Cheesemaking—A unique benefit of this club!

The Club's Library is a great benefit, especially for those of us just starting out. It gives members an opportunity to get going without having to invest a lot of cash up front. You can borrow equipment (draining baskets, forms, presses, spoons, thermometers, etc.) and books on Cheese making. Or order cheese cultures (Flora Danica, feta culture, rennet, etc.) for just \$1.00 a sample good for 2 – 4 gallons of milk. And the books listed below also give you a chance to see what you like.

So if you've joined to start making your own cheese the library can really be a way to kick off a project!

Mastering Basic Cheesemaking	Gianacis Caldwell
Mastering Artisan Cheesemaking	Gianacis Caldwell
Artisan Cheesemaking at Home	Mary Karlin
Home Cheesemaking	Ricki Carroll
The Cheesemaker's Manual	Margaret Peters-Morris
The Science of Cheese	Michael H. Tunick
Cheesemonger: A life on the wedge	Gordon Edgar
The Complete Encyclopedia of Cheese	Christian Callec

Here is a link to the Library spreadsheet. The tabs at the bottom get you to what you need.

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/19fLvqk26dKyUlf1Ay5E\\_IFhULYZ1rt8nk0SXir2R720/edit#gid=1491603828](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/19fLvqk26dKyUlf1Ay5E_IFhULYZ1rt8nk0SXir2R720/edit#gid=1491603828) .

Requests are generally filled at the monthly meetings. Simply request the items you'd like by sending an e-mail a week before the meeting to: [qd-library-request@quesodiego.org](mailto:qd-library-request@quesodiego.org).



Below are organizations who support Queso Diego. We hope you will support them as well! Click on the logos to get to their websites.

