

April, 2019

From the desk of Queso Grande, Larry Stein

Hello Queso Diegans.

I hope you enjoyed Chris' presentation last month on making hard cheeses. Chris is a great resource and I'm sure he'd be willing to lend any additional pointers for your pressed cheese making. Shane brought a great example of the aged Parmesan he made. Get making now and we'll try it next March.

Marci will be updating us soon on the San Diego Fair Cheese Competition. It's on June 1st and a bit earlier this year. There's still plenty of time to make a variety of cheeses.

I want to thank everyone who really stepped up and brought some terrific foods and beverages to share at the March meeting. It was quite a spread. But April is going to be a bit different.

As we mentioned before, April is Grilled Cheese Month. Queso Diego celebrates by hosting the most amazing grilled cheese creations you've ever tried. And it's all because of you. If you were at the March meeting you got some idea from the introduction. If not, or if you just want to gaze at more cheese porn, be sure to go to the QuesoDieog.org website, under Meeting Notes, and view the Grilled Cheese presentation put together by Brian Trout.

For the April meeting we'll do things a little different. Here's a breakdown of the meeting: We won't be having the traditional potluck. If you want to bring something to share with your grilled cheese then please do so. If you're not making grilled cheese and you want to bring something, I'd think the vegetable family is not a bad place to go this month. At 6:30 all the makers can start setting up their stations. Here's what you need to bring:

- A small table
- Gas, not electric stoves. If you don't have one I'm sure you can share. I'll be bringing three.
- · A pan or griddle
- All the utensils you need to cook your creations.
- A knife and cutting board
- A plate to pass around and share
- · And your cheese stuff
- DO NOT start cooking until the meeting starts.

It's a great idea to do as much prep as possible before hand. Pre-make whatever you can at home.

At 7:00 we'll have a very short meeting with announcements and then it's "Fire up the grills".

Don't bring enough to feed 30 people. Figure 5 sandwiches or so, unless yours involves chocolate. We generally cut the sandwiches into quarters and pass them around. We also like to feed the bartenders out front. They really appreciate it.

It's not a competition, its creative cheese expression. It's a fun night, so enjoy!

That's about it. See you all on April 16th.

Stay cheesy my friends.

-Larry



APRIL EVENTS

April 16, 6:30 pm

General Meeting @ Ale Smith

Grilled Cheese!

April 28, 11:30-3:30 pm

Making Curds Class

MAY EVENTS

May 21 6:30 p.m.

General Meeting @ Ale Smith



April is Grilled Cheese Month!

Our April meeting is not one to be missed. Queso Diego celebrates by hosting the most amazing grilled cheese creations you've ever tried.

April 28th: Making Curd's Class

There will be a 'Making Curd's' class on April 28th, 11:.30 - 3:30 PM taught by Larry Stein and coordinated by Don Rutherford. This is a great learning opportunity, especially for those new to cheese making.

Samples of cheese made with curds will be available.

E-Mail Don Rutherford to reserve spot:

donaldrutherford@hotmail.com.The cost is \$40 payable through Paypal, or at the class. Don will provide details for those who enroll.

Location: Ascension Lutheran Church 5106 Zion Ave. (at 51st Street) San Diego, CA 92120.

Save the Dates:

June 1 - Cheese Competition at San Diego County Fair!

Check upcoming newsletters for more information on the classes of cheese that will be judged and how to enter. Start planning now and enter your best cheese. Many club members have won awards and can give advise on how to plan for this fun event.

June 8 & 9 - Baja Tour

Tour starting at the Cave de Marcelo cheese cave and creamery outside of Ensenada. Then Saturday night and Sunday we'll tour and enjoy some the wineries, breweries, food and cheese shops from Ensenada through the Valle Guadalupe and back up to San Diego. Don't forget to check your passports while there's still time.

Check upcoming newsletters for more information.



It's Membership Renewal Time for 2019!

Queso Diego dues are \$20 per year for individuals or \$30 per household. These dues help us pay for meeting supplies and commercial examples, as well as supplies for pairings and other club expenses. If you haven't already renewed for this year, your membership expired on March 31st and your email will be dropped from all our club communication. However, we will allow for a last grace-period, you can pay your dues at our next meeting on April 16th, or online from our membership page of the QuesoDiego website.

The Human Hand in Cheesemaking: From Curd to the Cave—Part 2

Cheesemaking is as much an art as a skill. We start out by following recipes, but we rapidly learn, recipes only get us so far. Sometimes the milk behaves a little differently or we change the particular culture or source of rennet and the prescribed times and behaviors go right out the window. Some days the whey forms more slowly and the pH drops more rapidly and we are left wondering what we did wrong and how to correct it. This is precisely where the cheesemaking art meets cheesemaking skill.

Much of the art of cheesemaking is found in the manipulation of the curd. When we start making cheese, we are thrilled by the very fact of coagulation and the "clean break". We revel in emergence of those beautiful white columns of curd surrounded by the accumulating yellow-green whey. This all works well, and we end up with cheese by simply adhering to the instructions laid out in the recipe.

Inevitably, with time, we notice that the cheese we are making isn't like the one made by our favorite creamery or might not even resemble the lesser versions of that style that we have sampled. We may also find that our cheese varies from day to day or month to month. Very often, this has to do the process of curd formation and its treatment. Many consider this to be one of the primary sources of problems and, as a consequence, one of the opportunities for artfulness in intervention. Remember, the various methods of cutting, cooking and washing curd developed empirically, over years of trial and error and, undoubtedly, through happy accidents and unhappy failures.

Cheesemakers harnessed the variability in milk resulting from changes in the season or from different animals or different varieties of the same animal, to create the many different cheese styles we know today. That evolution continues with artisan cheesemakers around the globe. But the ability to make a great cheese and then to harness that method to make it repeatedly results from careful observation, understanding of the process and harnessing these methods and their variations for your benefit.

So, as you venture into semi-soft and hard cheeses, observe the formation of your curd, how it behaves when cut, washed and/or cooked, how it varies from batch to batch and how that impacts the final product. Record your process and its variables (milk source, cultures, temperatures, pH, etc.), returning when you have the resulting cheese to record and critique what your process has wrought. Through careful record keeping and varying responses to unexpected situations or simply through trial and error, and, in time, you will develop your craft and make cheeses that please you as well as others.



Library of Cheesemaking—A unique benefit!

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	Gianaclis Caldwell
Mastering Artisan Cheesemaking	Gianaclis 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.

 $\underline{https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/19fLvqk26dKyUlf1Ay5E_IFhULYZ1rt8nk0SXiR2R720/edit\#gid=1491603828}\ .$

Requests are generally filled at the monthly meetings. Simply request the items you'd like by sending and e-mail a week before the meeting to: 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.













