

QUESO DIEGO

THE SAN DIEGO CHEESE CLUB

Message from Queso Grande president, Marci Richards

MARCH 2020

Hello Queso Diegans,

Nine years!! And, we celebrated it with six pairings, maybe it should have been nine pairings (?). It was a great turn out for the Queso Diego 9th Anniversary celebration. Thank you! There were favorite cheese pairings, favorite cheeses, and favorite bubbly among those that attended. For those that were not able to make the event, keep an eye out, the anniversary menu will be in a forthcoming email to club members.

It's the beginning of March and it almost seems like winter is behind us, as flowers are beginning to emerge and spring kidding season time is around the corner (for those not familiar with the term "kidding", it means "giving birth" in goat terms). So, how do you incorporate spring into your cheese? Lavender has become a popular infusion/flavor and can impart a new experience in your cheesemaking or tasting. Besides flowers, many herbs are thriving in our climate, right now (e.g., rosemary, mint ...). Whether a flower or an herb both can impart a new flavor for your palate. For example, Alp Blossom or Cabra al Romero, or you could create your own. If the consumption of flowers and/or herbs does not interest you, then adorn a cheese or cheese board with herbs or edible flowers.

Spring is also known as a time of new beginnings and would be a great time to venture out of your cheese comfort zone (CCZ). Reflect back to when you knew cheese to be the grocery store cheese that comes in bulk and has been cut and re-wrapped in plastic, there is no name, no creamery, just a black-and-white label with the cheese type (e.g., cheddar) and the price per pound. Or remember when you only made chevre, and more chevre and more chevre. Imagine if none of us had ventured beyond those cheeses, didn't try new cheeses. Well, for starters this club wouldn't exist. But fortunately, that isn't true and you have tried new cheeses. Well, don't stop there. Try unfamiliar cheeses and you'll make new discoveries, some will be great, some good and perhaps some not to your liking. Try making a new cheese and remember some of the biggest mistakes in cheesemaking have turned out to be great cheeses, even cheesemaking started by accident. Everyone has their own pace, as it should be, some take one step at a time and others leap. If you need something simple to push you out of the CCZ, start with our February/March challenge to find what cheese(s) pair with coffee (or tea). Send me your cheese and coffee (or tea) pairings by March 10, 2020 and I will include them in the opening slides at the March meeting (president@quesodiego.org) or you can tell us your pairing discovery at the meeting.

Marci



QUESO DIEGO CALENDAR

Learn more [about the Club](#). See [past meetings](#) and [newsletters](#).

MAR



March 17, 6:30 pm

General Meeting @ AleSmith

Irish Cheeses

March 27-29

California Artisan Cheese Festival @ Santa Rosa, CA

{ [EVENT LINK](#) }



A weekend long celebration brought together by a lively and friendly group of experts and presenters from the wonderful world of artisan cheese. The festival promotes broad awareness of the artisan cheesemaking community and enjoyment of its products.

APR



April 21, 6:30 pm

General Meeting @ AleSmith

Grilled Cheeses

MAY



May 3

San Diego Fermentation Festival @ Leichtag Commons, Encinitas, CA

{ [EVENT LINK](#) }

Entering its sixth year, the San Diego Fermentation Festival is an annual outdoor festival celebrating the revival of fermented foods and beverages in San Diego and all across southern California! This is a one-day, family-friendly outdoor festival celebrating fermented foods and beverages, local food and wellness.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: The club has a booth at this event and we need four or five volunteers for each of the following sessions: Afternoon Session (1pm-4pm), Evening Session (5pm-8pm). Please contact officers@quesodiego.org if you are interested.

MAY



May 19, 6:30 pm

General Meeting @ AleSmith

Triple Cream & Full Fat Cheeses

May 17, 1:00 pm - 8:00 pm

LIQUID CITY: Cheese Expo 2020 @ BRICK, SD

\$10 off registration for members. Use code QD20 at this link:
{ [EVENT LINK](#) }

Bringing together a curated list of top breweries, coffee roasters, distillers, kombucha and cider makers, this one day EXPO features unique collaborations, educational presentations, demonstrations, and explorations with CHEESEMAKERS from across AMERICA and local LIQUID talents. The club will have a booth at this event for the following sessions: Afternoon Session (1pm-4pm), Evening Session (5pm-8pm).

CALIFORNIA
**CHEESE
TRAIL**

May 22-25

Cheese Trail @ Bay Area

Northern California Cheese Trail

Save the date and stay tuned!



START YOUR CHEESES!

QD will have a club cheese competition July 18th or 19th. Final details TBD. **START NOW** to get your 'soon-to-be-acclaimed-QD-cheese' game plan underway! For all you new, ambitious cheesers – we got you! QD has an awesome, educated board at your reference and a library of supplies at your fingertips. **See page 10** to submit questions and requests!

QUESO DIEGO
THE SAN DIEGO CHEESE CLUB

NOT A MEMBER? { [JOIN THE CLUB](#) }

We are a group of enthusiastic cheese lovers who want to learn more, taste more and appreciate small farmers and growers. We have monthly presentations taught by passionate members or experts that delve into a variety cheeses, pairings, and how-to demonstrations. Check out our [Meeting Schedule](#) online to see other members-only or fun events Queso Diego hosts or participates in every year.





Cheese Talk

Inspiring Information, Presentations, Recipes

Queso Diego 9th Annual Anniversary Party with Bubbly & Cheese Pairing @ Marina Village



It's Membership Renewal Time for 2020!

Queso Diego dues are \$20 per year for individuals or \$30 per household. These dues help us pay for meeting supplies, commercial examples, supplies for pairings and other club expenses. Take the opportunity to renew at our next general meeting, club event or visit our [membership](#) webpage.



Tillamook Cheese Factory Behind the Scenes

By Chris Banker

During a recent trip to Oregon, I took a trip out to Tillamook on the coast to visit [Tillamook Creamery](#) and Blue Heron French Cheese Company.

Last month, I wrote about a visit to a small farmstead cheese farm in Connecticut; Tillamook is the polar opposite - a large-scale production facility, cranking out hundreds of pounds a minute. Touring the factory provides a unique insight into the industrialized cheesemaking process and how cheesemaking can be scaled for efficiency and consistency.



Tillamook produces only a limited set of styles, primarily cheddar and Monterey jack. They are especially known for their cheddars and the vast majority of what they produce is a similar cheddar that is aged for different durations.

The factory has a self-guided tour that goes over the top of the factory, where there are signs with information about the various steps in the production process. You can see employees and machines actively working to produce cheese, through all steps of the process. On the cheesemaking side, automated vats produce the curds and they are then pressed and shaped into massive 40lb blocks. These blocks are vacuum sealed for aging and sent off to warehouses, where they are aged according to the type of cheese they are to be sold as.

On the packaging side of the factory, aged blocks are cut into retail-sized blocks, weighed, inspected, vacuum packed, and labeled. One of the more fascinating parts of the tour was watching the manual weighing, cutting, and patching process. The robotic conveyor belt rejects blocks that are too light or heavy, and employees manually cut off excess or patch on pieces to meet the weight standards. Remaining cheese bits are sold fresh as cheese curds.



After the tour, they have a sampling station, where a rotating selection of cheeses are available to try. The samples available on the day I was there were their medium orange cheddar, sharp white cheddar, smoked black pepper cheddar, and white cheddar cheese curds.

Tillamook has a large store with everything from standard cheese offerings to cheeses aged up to 8 years, along with other food products and Tillamook memorabilia and souvenirs. I purchased some cheeses that are not commonly available, including a block of 2013 Maker's Reserve cheddar, which many members tried at the February anniversary pairing.

Tillamook is also known for their ice cream products and they have a wide range of ice creams to try, many of which are not available in grocery stores. A visit can't be complete without enjoying a cone of their fresh ice cream.

Prior to visiting Tillamook Creamery, I started the day at Blue Heron French Cheese Company, known for their Bries. Their house cheeses were a standard brie, a garlic-herb brie, a smoked brie, and a black pepper brie. All of the cheeses were good, but not much different from the grocery store bries you can usually find on shelves. When I asked about whether they were made on site, they admitted that they were made by a large producer in Wisconsin and labeled on site. They do, however, modify the base cheese on site by smoking it or adding herbs or pepper. The shop also had a wide range of jellies, mustards, salad dressings, and other artisanal products available for sampling and purchase. Many were local, however there were also a lot of non-local products. It's worth a stop if you're in the area, but it also felt a bit like a tourist trap capitalizing on Tillamook's reputation for great cheese.

While in Tillamook, there are also some beer stops that are worth considering. If you appreciate sour beers, De Garde brewing is a must-visit stop. They are producing spontaneously fermented sours, expertly blended, and often using copious amounts of local fruit. I would consider De Garde to be one of the top sour beer producers in the country. Pelican Brewpub, with a location about a block from De Garde, has won numerous awards and has a solid lineup of beers. They sometimes have some special barrel aged releases, like their Mother of All Storms barleywine and their Father of All Tsunamis Stout

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This Is Your Brain On Cheese: The earth-bending pull of cheese is hard to break free from

Excerpts taken from article by Michael Pellman Rowland, Forbes

What keeps most vegetarians from going whole-hog vegan? Not eggs. It's the cheese. The salty, fatty goodness that makes you salivate should you get even a tiny whiff. It's just so good, many will say. Well, there's more to the story. You may, in fact, be hooked ... so to speak.

"It turns out there's a reason behind our cravings. Cheese contains casein. It also contains casein fragments called casomorphins, a casein-derived morphine-like compound. Basically, dairy protein has opiate molecules built in.

Dr. Neal Barnard, author of *The Cheese Trap*, says when eaten, "these opiates attach to the same brain receptors that heroin and morphine attach to. They are not strong enough to get you arrested, but they are just strong enough to keep you coming back for more, even while your thighs are expanding before your very eyes."

Some researchers believe this occurs as a way to ensure babies (humans, cows, etc.) continue to nurse during infancy, which helps the survival of the species. That helps explain why we look so happy when nursing and also why it feels so good to eat cheese. For perspective, a cup of milk contains 7.7 grams of protein, 80% of which is casein. When converted to cheddar, for example, the protein content multiplies 7-fold, to 56 grams. It's the most concentrated form of casein in any food in the grocery store. Basically, if milk is cocaine, then cheese is crack.

Our brain's 'reward center' releases dopamine when we eat salty foods like cheese in order to encourage us to eat more of it (many addictive drugs increase dopamine activity). Dopamine makes our bodies become attracted to whatever produced it, including cheese. Which is why so many people crave it, talk about it, and why even animal-loving vegetarians have a hard time giving it up."

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Quiz: Test your knowledge with the ultimate French cheese quiz

Linked Shared Via The Local



We know that many Francophiles indulge in the French passion for cheese - but do you know your raclette from your reblochon, your roquefort from your rocamadour?

French cheese is undoubtedly delicious and world famous, but it comes with some odd rules and little-known quirks. Test your knowledge of France's second best product (after wine, naturally).

{ THE ULTIMATE FRENCH CHEESE QUIZ }

Click on the button to take the quiz.

FOR THE BEST EXPERIENCE, PLEASE USE A DESKTOP COMPUTER.
MOBILE DEVICES MAY DISPLAY A SUBSCRIPTION WALL.



Lunchbreak: Asiago Black Pepper Cheese Puffs

*Recipe by Tim Graham, Executive Chef, Nico Osteria.
Presented on Lunchbreak, WGN 9 Chicago.*

These cheesy puffs are very similar to a pate a choux. For a quick start, watch the video on how to make them { [VIDEO LINK](#) }. This recipe makes approximately 80 puffs.

Ingredients:

2 cups Water
1 ¼ cup Butter
2 tsp. Sugar
2 ⅛ cups Flour
8 Eggs
1 ½ cups Asiago, grated
4 tsp. Black Pepper, ground
4 Egg Yolks
1 ¾ tsp. Salt
Asiago for Garnish
Black Pepper (ground) for garnish

Directions:

Bring the water and butter to a boil.

Add the flour and reduce heat to low. Stir constantly for 4-6 minutes at low heat, until a film forms on the bottom of the pan. Add the Asiago and stir until melted and incorporated.

Remove from heat and let rest 5 minutes.

Add the eggs 2 at a time, and mix until dough is smooth and the eggs are fully incorporated after each addition. Once all eggs are in add the black pepper.

Place into a piping bag with 1/2" tip (#808). Pipe appropriate sized puffs onto a sheet tray lined with greased parchment paper.

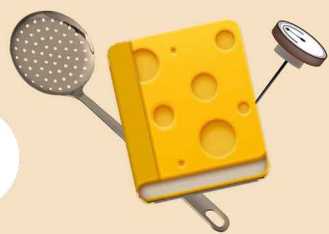
Smooth peak with wet finger.

Bake at 400F for 10 minutes.

Reduce heat to 350F and bake for 8 minutes. Add a sprinkle of Asiago to each puff, and a pinch of black pepper. Bake at 350F for 8 more minutes.

Cool on wire racks.

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Cheese Library

Resources For Cheesemaking

Make Cheese In Your Own Kitchen

If you want to try your hand at cheese, borrow a book from the library or look on the internet for a recipe (<http://www.cheesemaking.org> is a good resource), request the items you need from our library (a week in advance, please), pick them up at the next meeting, purchase the appropriate amount of milk, and you are on your way. You will also need a good thermometer, a pot big enough to hold the appropriate amount of milk and some simple kitchen utensils. E-mail qd-library-request@googlegroups.com with your request and the item(s) will be delivered to the next meeting. Don't wait - take your first step toward cheesemaking today!

ONLINE RESOURCES

[Cheese Forum](#)

[Cheesemaking.com](http://www.cheesemaking.com)

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

{ LIBRARY SPREADSHEET }

Requests are generally filled at the monthly meetings.
Simply request the items you'd like by sending us an email one week before the meeting to:
qd-library-request@googlegroups.com.

{ MAKE A REQUEST }

MORE CHEESE, PLEASE

Member submissions skimmed just for you:

Sharpen Your Vocabulary With This Definitive Cheese Dictionary

Feel confident in your cheese vocabulary and to be able to flex a few cheese terms.

VinePair article by Christine Clark

Read the full article online [{ ARTICLE }](#)

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Senators ask FDA to Crack Down on Non-Dairy Milks, Cheeses

Senators are calling on the FDA to end the labeling of plant-based products as milk, cheese or yogurt.

The Hill Article by Sylvan Lane

Read the full article online [{ ARTICLE }](#)

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We Asked 10 Cheesemongers: What Will Be the Cheese Trends of 2020?

What new sorts of cheesy trends do we have to look forward to at the beginning of this new decade.

VinePair article by Christine Clark

Read the full article online [{ ARTICLE }](#)

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Fromaggio Counter Top Home Cheese Maker

Make artisanal cheese at home in a few clicks.

Geeky Gadgets article by Julian Horsey

Read the full article online [{ ARTICLE }](#)

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Learn How to Freeze Cheese the Right Way

Your success, however, will depend on a variety of factors.

Mashed Artical by Tracy Morin

Read the full article online [{ ARTICLE }](#)

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Make Cheese & Tour Specialty Produce Warehouse

Learn how to make mozzarella, ricotta, fresh cheeses in their state-of-the-art Studio Kitchen.

Sat Mar 21 2020 @ Specialty Produce, 1929 Hancock St, San Diego, CA 92110 [{ EVENT LINK }](#)

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Below are organizations who support Queso Diego

We hope you will support them as well! Click on the logos to visit their websites.

