



Cheddar

A Journey to the Heart of America's Most
Iconic Cheese

Gordon Edgar

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“ **Edgar’s insights into this familiar food and what it can reveal to us about ourselves are as thought provoking as they are entertaining.** ”

Cheddar. It’s used in fast food, mousetraps, homemade mac and cheese, and yet still served in mansions. Any cheese that appeals to that many people has a story to tell.

In *Cheddar: A Journey to the Heart of America’s Most Iconic Cheese*, cheesemonger and author Gordon Edgar (*Cheesemonger: A Life on the Wedge*) has written a comprehensive book of cheddar’s long and proud history in America, with an eye toward its future. *Cheddar* spans regional and class differences, encompasses everything from traditionally made cheese crafted by hand and covered lovingly in lard to Kraft processed singles, which are extruded by machines absent the human touch beyond the push of a button.

Thanks to Edgar’s fascinating research, readers will be able to expand their cheddar knowledge with cheesy facts:

- United States per capita cheese consumption has more than tripled since 1960 .
- The average American eats 33.5 pounds of cheddar per year.
- Wisconsin produces 572 millions pounds of cheddar annually.
- Two of the best-known block cheddar makers—Cabot and Tillamook—are agricultural cooperatives.
- The first American cheddar factory, in upstate New York, revolutionized cheesemaking and farming, helping set the stage for the industrialization of food.

Cheddar traces the unexplored history of this ubiquitous and beloved cheese—a story that says something about ourselves, the big food issues we face as a society, and our cultural identity. They don’t call it “American Cheese” for nothing.



Gordon Edgar loves cheese and worker-owned co-ops, and has been combining both of these infatuations as the cheese buyer for San Francisco’s Rainbow Grocery Cooperative since 1994. Edgar has been a judge at numerous national cheese competitions, a board member for the California Artisan Cheese Guild, and has had a blog since 2002, which can be found at www.gordonzola.net. Edgar is the author of *Cheesemonger: A Life on the Wedge* (Chelsea Green 2010) and he enjoys mold in the right places, good cheese stink, and washing his hands upwards of one hundred times a day.

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