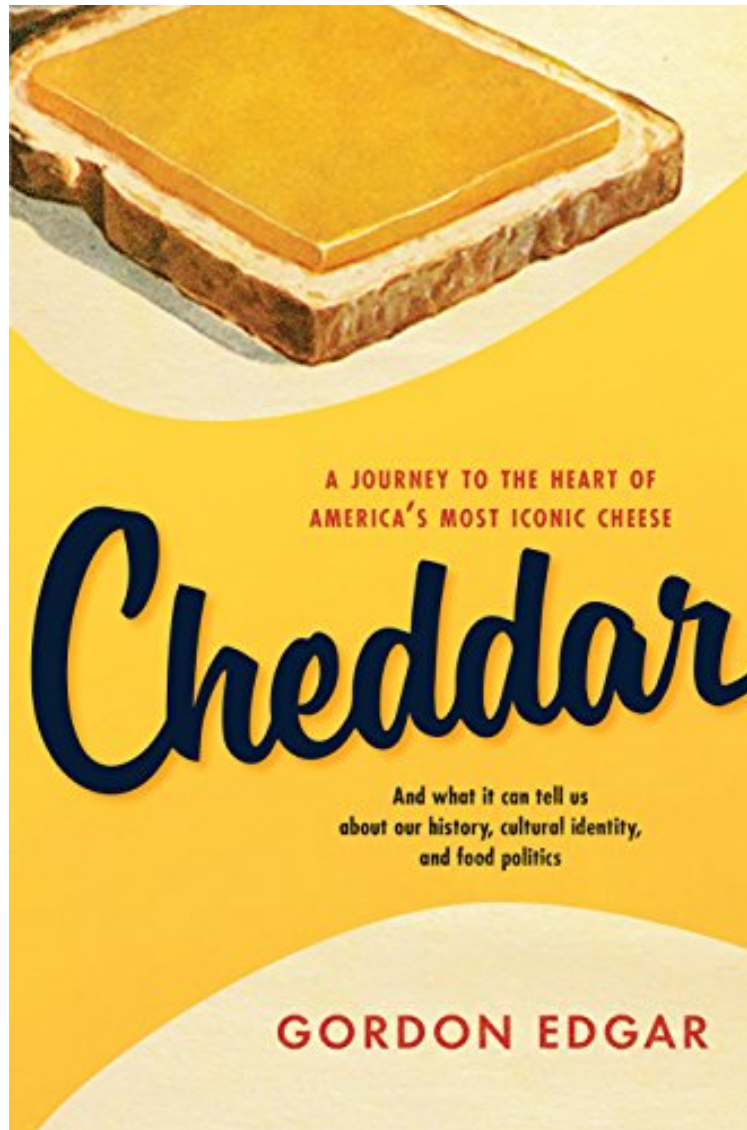


(Free read ebook) Cheddar: A Journey to the Heart of America's Most Iconic Cheese

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

Gordon Edgar

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Gordon Edgar : Cheddar: A Journey to the Heart of America's Most Iconic Cheese before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Cheddar: A Journey to the Heart of America's Most Iconic Cheese:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Our cheddar, our selves: A great read about a humble cheese By Thomas J. Breen Even though I loved Edgar's previous memoir about cheese and punk rock (seriously; it's great), I was a little skeptical when I saw this. Could someone really write an entire book about cheddar and make it interesting? I

don't know about "someone," but Gordon Edgar has done that and more. "Cheddar," of course is about a lot more than its namesake cheese. It's a history of how food in the United States went from small, local production to gigantic, factory-style organization and distribution and how it has - in some instances - started to reverse course. Edgar is no snob (he comes not to bury cheddar, but to praise it), so people fearing a finger-wagging polemic about unsophisticated American tastes can rest easy: the man even manages to be even-handed about Velveeta ("Nothing can really go wrong with a Velveeta, and come the Bad Times or the Zombie Apocalypse, you will be happy to find it when you are looting your dead neighbors' pantry for food," he writes). Instead, he's interested in the history of cheddar, embarking on a journey that takes him to pilgrimage sites on the Via Cheddarosa like Vermont and Wisconsin, as well as his own California. What he finds is a story much larger than this humblest of cheeses: to say it's a story about America would be ... cheesy, but it's definitely a story that illustrates the old adage "you are what you eat," in surprising ways. Written in a funny, friendly, engaging style, this is strongly recommended for anyone who loves finding out about the back stories behind the seemingly simplest things in our daily lives. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great cheese and social analysis By GEMA really great book for the turophile and for its social commentary on food. The history of the cheese and current state is of interest to the enthusiast. Equally important are the commentary on the food industry and customers. Most interesting is the take on the self-absorbed upscale food consumer vs. the small farm reality and the lives of those not so well off. The contrast of cheap food that is good vs. an expensive cloth-bound artisanal cheese is excellent. I appreciated the comments on how we get \$20 tacos displacing the poorer folks in city areas. I just read of a Dallas restaurant offering \$100 taco. Buy the book. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. as good as his first By science reader I enjoyed Edgar's new book as much as I did his first and I learned so much. When I finished the book, I walked to my local cheese store and bought two clothbound cheddars. The one from New England was a revelation and a profound pleasure. I've always liked cheddar. Now I love it and I will eat it for the rest of my life. Please write more books, Mr. Gordon Edgar.

One of the oldest, most ubiquitous, and beloved cheeses in the world, the history of cheddar is a fascinating one. Over the years it has been transformed, from a painstakingly handmade wheel to a rindless, mass-produced block, to a liquefied and emulsified plastic mass untouched by human hands. The Henry Fordism of cheddar production in many ways anticipated the advent of industrial agriculture. They don't call it "American Cheese" for nothing. Cheddar is one man's picaresque journey to find out what a familiar food can tell us about ourselves. Cheddar may be appreciated in almost all American homes, but the advocates of the traditional wheel versus the processed slice often have very different ideas about food. Since cheddar—with its diversity of manufacturing processes and tastes—is such a large umbrella, it is the perfect food through which to discuss many big food issues that face our society. More than that, though, cheddar actually holds a key to understanding not only issues surrounding food politics, but also some of the ways we think of our cultural identity. Cheddar, and its offshoots, has something to tell us about this country: the way people rally to certain cheddars but not others; the way they extol or denounce the way others eat it; the role of the commodification of a once-artisan cheese and the effect that has on rural communities. The fact that cheddar is so common that it is often taken for granted means that examining it can lead us to the discovery of usually unspoken truths. Author Gordon Edgar (*Cheesemonger: A Life on the Wedge*) is well equipped to take readers on a tour through the world of cheddar. For more than fifteen years he has worked as an iconoclastic cheesemonger in San Francisco, but his sharp talent for observation and social critique were honed long before then, in the world of zines, punk rock, and progressive politics. His fresh perspectives on such a seemingly common topic are as thought provoking as they are entertaining.

"From the chief ingredient in Kraft's Mac & Cheese to the quintessential artisan creation, cheddar cheese represents the extremes of American food culture all delightfully deconstructed and savored in Gordon Edgar's eponymous book. Great reading for aficionados of food and cultural history." --Sally Fallon Morell, president, The Weston A. Price Foundation Library Journal - "Edgar (*Cheesemonger*) explores the U.S. production of cheddar cheese and how this popular food has affected American history and culture. The book focuses on the broad history of cheddar production from its origins in England to current methods used in the United States with emphasis on the cheese hubs of Wisconsin, Vermont, and California. The culture and politics surrounding cheesemaking and dairy farming in these states are compared and contrasted, and interspersed with amusing anecdotes from Edgar's many cheese-judging and research trips. Of course, the varying types and flavors of American cheddars and curds are discussed, using case studies of famous producers such as Cabot and Tillamook, and interviews with prominent cheesemakers. Edgar is especially interested in the ways that cheesemaking has changed over the years, and addresses changes in farming technology, scientific advances, roles of women, exports, and standardization of cheddar flavors, appearance, and processing. VERDICT: A wry look at the world of cheesemaking, this work will interest casual cheese aficionados, but its broad scope will likely not provide new information to fervent fans or industry professionals." "On the surface, it would be easy to dismiss a book about a cheese so integral to the gustatory fabric of the American experience that it's hardly noticed as much more than a standard

hamburgers' melted shroud. But this paean to America's cheese tells the journey of a food integrally linked to the rise of 'culture' in America (cheese and manufacturing, both) and, no less, to our value system. In Gordon's eminently capable hands, what could be a staid single-subject book is blithely entertaining, peppered with laugh-out-loud, respectful and occasionally irreverent anecdotes, and ultimately a story chock-full of historical and contextual references that come together to create a newfound understanding and respect for a cheese that, because of this essential book, will never be 'just cheddar' again. --Laura Werlin, author of 'Laura Werlin's Cheese Essentials'

Cheddar by Gordon Edgar is a book of vignettes, ripened from the author's wanderings around the country, milled with both large and small cheese-making experiences, peppered throughout with Gordon's political views, and aged to perfection. Edgar shares his knowledge in sometimes smooth, sometimes sharp, and sometimes bitter ways, coming up with an overview that is tried, ripened, and ready to read. --Ricki Carroll, owner, New England Cheesemaking Supply Company

Gordon Edgar's latest work, Cheddar, is a lively story of this much-maligned but iconic cheese. No longer will I quickly pass over the large blocks of golden cheddar. Edgar has traveled the country unearthing the historic roots of cheddar, from the artisan clothbound wheels to the mass-produced blocks of commodity cheese, and writes with wit and humor. His passion and experience as a cheesemonger are evident, and the reader can't help but love cheddar by the end of this spirited book. --Kurt Timmermeister, author of Growing a Farmer

In this witty and well-researched study of an iconic food, Gordon Edgar serves up a satisfying slice of Americana. More than any other cheese, cheddar evidences America's tradition of innovation and embodies the paradoxes of our food system. From mammoth, processed blocks to clothbound, lard-rubbed wheels, Edgar details how cheddar straddles the continuum of industrial and artisanal manufacture to safely nourish great numbers of people while reinforcing class distinctions marked by taste. This welcome book credits the labor and ingenuity of America's food makers, both past and present. --Heather Paxson, author of The Life of Cheese: Crafting Food and Value in America

Over the years I have read many thought-provoking works on cheddar cheese, mostly dealing with cheese science and technology, but rarely have such texts been 'fun' to read. Gordon Edgar's exploration of cheddar is both thought-provoking and fun, and has given me a fresh perspective on a cheese that I have studied for years and cherished all my life. --Paul Kindstedt, author of Cheese and Culture

Kudos to Gordon Edgar for his comprehensive history and contemporary analysis of America's iconic cheese. For any lover of cheddar, Edgar crafts the story of its unique place--from early farm-based, handmade products to standardized, industrial cheese to its renaissance over the past twenty to twenty-five years. A book to savor, it helps us understand how cheddar evolves over four centuries. He stirs an entertaining vat of literature, science, poetry, and sociology to reflect broad changes in American agriculture and our connections to food and place. Make sure to have a piece of cheddar, and perhaps a glass of beer, to accompany your journey! --Jeffrey Roberts, author of The Atlas of American Artisan Cheese

About the Author 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 enjoys mold in the right places, good cheese stink, and washing his hands upwards of one hundred times a day.