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Cooking

Mastering Artisan Cheesemaking: The Ultimate Guide for Home-Scale and Market Producers

Gianaclis Caldwell
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Somewhere between art and science, cheesemaking is not for the faint of heart. Caldwell begins her guide to the enterprise with a great deal of science. An extremely nuanced process becomes friendly through the author's cheery advice and enthusiasm, then the book transitions into recipes that range from simple to quite advanced. A great guide for beginners and experts alike, Caldwell makes sense of the culture of cheese-making.

Caldwell, the proprieter of Pholia Farm, a licensed cheese dairy, has taught cheesemaking at all levels. She is also the author of *The Farmstead Creamery Advisor: The Complete Guide to Building and Running a Small, Farm-Based Cheese Business*. Her experience and awards speak to her ethos in writing this book. Here she focuses on the intricacies of the cheesemaking process. By teaching the science behind the process, Caldwell enables would-be artisans to gather the knowledge necessary to troubleshoot their own work. Not all of the science will immediately make sense and Caldwell offers a lot of information in the initial pages, from the best type of milk to use to when and how to cut the curds. As the text progresses, she makes references to earlier points to help integrate the newly offered information with the old. The second half of the book features recipes from rindless blue cheese to firm and salty Greek-style grilling cheese, again with increasing levels of difficulty.

Between recipes and advice, Caldwell gives credit to other experts in the field, pointing to relevant books, suppliers, and masters of the craft. The book also features a useful glossary of terms, an appendices with a troubleshooting guide, quick reference guide, and resources list. The layout is easy to read and well-organized; pictures illustrate what the end product should look like, a useful referent for those new to the process. More experienced cheesemakers will find ample difficulty to suit their study. Recipes start with the history of the cheese, then list ingredients, steps, and large-batch guidelines.

From equipment to acidity, humidity to storage, Caldwell takes care to make sense of every step and each element. Throughout the process, she offers multiple options for further study and understanding, encouraging her readers to embrace the art, science, and community of cheesemaking. Caldwell's comforting and impassioned talk of cheese will encourage any student willing to take on the adventure of cheesemaking. With its depth of information, this book will keep on giving as cheesemakers increase their mastery of the craft.

Camille-Yvette Welsch