

Title:

Everything You Always Wanted To Know About Cheese Curds

Word Count:

735

Summary:

If cheese is at the top of your 'favorite food list', then you must carefully (and I mean, thoroughly) read this article. Cheese curd is yet another variety to the ever growing number of cheese by-products. But before tasting this delectable food, let us first know how it came to be and why it's here to stay.

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Keywords:

cheese, food, food and drink, gourmet food, cheese curds

Article Body:

If cheese is at the top of your 'favorite food list', then you must carefully (and I mean, thoroughly) read this article. Cheese curd is yet another variety to the ever growing number of cheese by-products. But before tasting this delectable food, let us first know how it came to be and why it's here to stay.

Cheese is believed to be discovered by an unknown nomad. This nomad lived in the Middle East and was, as legend would say, on his way to a very long journey. He prepared for it by pouring in lots of milk in a saddlebag. Unfortunately for him (and fortunately for cheese-lovers out there), the milk curdled after several hours of riding under the sun. What was supposed to be milk turned into white curds with liquid!

The science behind this is, the saddlebag has an enzyme (rennin) that causes coagulation. The rennin enzyme can be found in the bag because it is made from the stomach of young cows. Well, the rest as we all love to say, is history.

Cheese curds, although believed to have existed much earlier, were reportedly discovered by accident by some cheese scientists (UW) in their attempt to create a pure cholesterol product that still has the squeaking sound. The lab rats who consumed the first cheese curds then became capable of beer drinking.

A New York Times article in 1911, on the other hand, referred to a very old

Celtic song (about the 12th century) where cheese curds were mentioned. This song was entitled: 'Visions of MacGonlannee'. You now have a rough idea of how old cheese curds are, haven't you?

While most cheese would take about 60 days to coagulate, cheese curds can be 'harvested' way, way before they become cheeses. So, in essence, cheese curd is 'premature cheese'.

Cheese curds are fresh by products of cheddar cheese (or at least most of them are; some can be made from mozzarella, Colby or Monterey jack cheeses). While most cheese would take about 60 days to coagulate, cheese curds can be 'harvested' way, way before they become cheeses. So, in essence, cheese curd is 'premature cheese'.

And the best way to eat them is by eating them fresh. The good news? Canada and the United States have many stores that sell cheese curds in retail. There are also a lot of factories that manufacture them (so don't worry about running out of cheese curd stocks!).

The top two places that produce and sell cheese curds are: Quebec and Wisconsin. So, if you are not from one of these two places or are far from factories that produce cheese curds, then they could be foreign to you.

The best part of eating them is to hear the 'fresh' squeak. It takes only twelve hours before they become unfresh. Another twelve hours after that and they are nothing but unusable cheese.

Fresh cheese curds are about the size of peanuts and are usually orange in color. It tastes much like other dairy products and about as firm as most cheeses are. The difference is, cheese curds have rubber-like texture as compared to cheese that has the texture of clay. And unlike most junk foods that are crunchy, cheese curds are moist and cool while having the same salty taste of your regular snacks.

There are several ways of serving cheese curds. In Wisconsin, Iowa and Minnesota, cheese curds are usually deep-fried and served in fairs and carnivals and sometimes in bars or fast food chains (Culver's and A&W restaurants are examples of this). These deep-fried treats are first covered with batter (beer-based) such as what is used in onion rings. In the absence of this type of batter, the usual breading is used. The good thing about this? It tastes much like mozzarella cheese sticks.

Another popular way of eating cheese curds is: poutine. This is a French-

Canadian recipe that tops French fries with cheese curds that's also oozing with mouth-watering gravy. Yet other ways of consumption is by sprinkling powdered cheeses that are flavored: garlic, jalapeno, Cajun, chipotle, pesto, paprika, butter, pepper or lemon) then serving them like potato chips.

Cheese curds are definitely rare. As mentioned, there are just a handful of places where they are produced and enjoyed. Although cheese curds are not available for everyone to enjoy, for those who do, let us say you are the lucky ones on the planet!