

Indulge in the Richness: Portrait of British Cheese



British cheese is renowned for its incredible diversity and outstanding flavors. From the mouth-watering creaminess of Stilton to the sharp tang of Cheddar, each bite of British cheese takes you on a remarkable journey through taste and texture. In this mesmerizing portrait of British cheese, we will explore the

heritage, traditions, and mouthwatering qualities that make it so unique and cherished worldwide.

The Heritage of British Cheese

Cheese-making in Britain dates back thousands of years, with evidence of its existence even during the Roman era. Over the centuries, British cheesemakers have perfected their craft, passing down their knowledge and expertise from generation to generation.



A Portrait of British Cheese: A Celebration of Artistry, Regionality and Recipes

by Angus D. Birditt (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

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One of the most iconic British cheeses is Stilton, known for its blue veins and creamy texture. Legend has it that Stilton was first made in the 18th century at the Bell Inn in the village of Stilton, Cambridgeshire. Today, Stilton remains an all-time favorite among cheese enthusiasts worldwide, thanks to its unique taste and unmistakable aroma.

The Wide Variety of British Cheese

British cheese offers a vast array of flavors and textures, satisfying every palate. Let us take a closer look at some of the most beloved types of British cheese:

1. Cheddar

Cheddar is the quintessential British cheese that needs no introduction. Its smooth and creamy texture, combined with a tangy and robust flavor, makes it a household favorite. Whether enjoyed as part of a sandwich or melted over a plate of nachos, Cheddar cheese adds a delightful richness to any dish.

2. Red Leicester

Red Leicester cheese is known for its vibrant orange color and nutty, caramel-like taste. Originating from the county of Leicestershire, this cheese is made using traditional methods, allowing it to develop a complex flavor profile that perfectly balances sweetness and sharpness.

3. Wensleydale

Wensleydale cheese, made in the Yorkshire Dales, boasts a crumbly and moist texture. With a gentle and milky flavor, it pairs wonderfully with fruit and is often enjoyed alongside a slice of Christmas cake during the festive season.

4. Lancashire

A cheese with a rich history, Lancashire is made using the traditional two-curd method, which gives it a distinct crumbly texture and buttery taste. It is often categorized as being either creamy or crumbly, providing a delightful contrast in flavors.

5. Cornish Yarg

Cornish Yarg is a unique cheese, traditionally wrapped in edible nettle leaves, which impart a delicate mushroom-like flavor. This semi-hard cheese has a

creamy texture and offers a mild, slightly tangy taste, making it a perfect addition to salads or cheeseboards.

Cheese-Making Traditions and Techniques

The art of cheese-making has been passed down through generations in Britain, preserving traditional techniques that contribute to the exceptional quality and distinctiveness of British cheese.

One example is the use of milk from specific breeds of cows, such as Ayrshire, Guernsey, and Jersey, which produce rich and flavorsome milk. Additionally, British cheesemakers take pride in using traditional starter cultures, which are key in shaping the unique flavors and textures of British cheese.

Many British cheeses are handmade and aged in traditional cheese cellars, allowing them to develop complexity and depth of flavor over time. This attention to detail and commitment to traditional methods is what sets British cheese apart and makes it highly sought after worldwide.

Pairing British Cheese with Complementary Flavors

British cheese is incredibly versatile and pairs beautifully with an array of flavors. If you are looking to enhance your cheese-eating experience, here are some delicious combinations to try:

1. Apple Chutney and Cheddar

The tangy and sharp flavors of Cheddar cheese perfectly complement the sweetness of apple chutney. Whether enjoyed on a cheeseboard or in a sandwich, this pairing is a match made in heaven.

2. Stilton and Port

Stilton's creamy richness is perfectly balanced by the sweetness of port wine. This classic combination is a true indulgence that awakens the senses and leaves a lasting impression.

3. Cranberries and Wensleydale

The creamy and slightly tangy taste of Wensleydale cheese is enhanced by the tartness of cranberries. These two ingredients work harmoniously together, creating a delightful contrast of flavors.

The Portrait of British Cheese unlocks the captivating world of flavors, textures, and traditions that make British cheese truly unique. From the rich heritage of cheese-making in Britain to the wide variety of delectable options available, there is something to satisfy every cheese lover's palate.

Whether indulging in the creamy indulgence of Stilton or savoring the rich tang of Cheddar, British cheese is a cheese lover's paradise. So, embark on a culinary journey and explore the astonishing richness and diverse flavors that make British cheese a true masterpiece!



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'I'd happily eat this book – with a spoonful of chutney.' – Gill Meller

'If you want to know more about the human stories behind real cheese, buy this book! It highlights the wonderful diversity of people, scales and skills which characterise and bind together the emergent community of UK artisan cheese makers.' – Patrick Holden, Sustainable Food Trust

A Portrait of British Cheese celebrates the excellence of artisan and farmhouse cheese in the British Isles, expressing it as a product of the land, its animals, and its people, offering a snapshot of rural life, artisan traditions and delicious dishes.

The UK farmhouse cheese industry has faced its biggest challenges in recent years, with the Covid-19 pandemic forcing many small cheesemakers out of business. Food writers and journalists including Jamie Oliver led the call to save British cheeses, and the public's discovery of and support for speciality artisan cheeses helped many producers to weather the storm.

Photographer and writer Angus D. Birditt has been visiting and documenting dairies all over the British Isles, looking at the food, people and landscapes dedicated to artisan and farmhouse cheeses. From Lincolnshire Poacher to Stichelton (the original Stilton), Britain's own Brie in the form of Baron Bigod from Suffolk, to Brefu Bach sheep's milk cheese from Snowdonia and Appleby's Cheshire cheese from the heart of rural Shropshire, this is a unique journey through photos, essays and recipes, revealing the joys and challenges of a life in cheesemaking.



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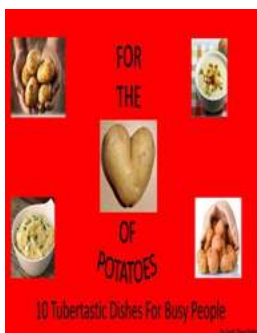
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