

**Title:** Cheese: Milk's Leap Toward Immortality

**Subtitle:** A deep and tasty dive into one of the world's most beloved food groups

**Lecturer:** Janet Fletcher

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**Time/Location:** Online;

Tuesdays: March 31, April 7, April 14, April 21

10 am to Noon

***Course Description:*** Where does cheese come from and how are its hundreds of varieties around the world made? What gives each cheese its unique texture and taste? In this Zoom-based course, explore the development of cheesemaking through history and how the major styles evolved. Your instructor will guide you through the cheesemaking process and explain how different types emerged in different regions. Learn about curds, whey, rennet and culture as you follow cheese from the milking parlor to the aging process. Lastly, become a smarter shopper and learn to evaluate cheese like a pro in a lesson devoted to sensory appreciation. A brief segment on cheese and health concludes the course. The course material is based on *Cultured: The Epic Story of Cheese*, Janet Fletcher's lecture series for Audible. All four classes include tastings relevant to the lecture; Janet will recommend cheeses to purchase for this purpose. (Purchase is optional.)

### **Lecture 1: A History of Cheese in Five Slices**

- the historical origins of cheese (when/where/why)
- the role of monasteries in advancing cheesemaking and developing new styles
- the birth of Camembert, its marketing breakthrough and its role in a post-WWII incident between France and the U.S.
- Swiss cheeses, the devastating impact of the Swiss Cheese Union and the recent renaissance in Swiss cheesemaking
- The rise of American artisan cheese, including the first U.S.-made World Champion Cheese

## **Lecture 2: Cheesemaking in Nine Steps**

We look at the many choices available to the cheesemaker and how these choices affect the outcome. We also go into the cellar to examine the highly skilled craft of affinage (cheese aging).

## **Lecture 3: Taste of Place: Exploring the World's Great Cheesemaking Regions**

- The Netherlands and the development of Gouda
- The Alps and the vanishing tradition of transhumance
- The Pyrenees and transhumance in Basque culture
- Loire Valley's beloved goat cheeses
- Somerset: birthplace of Cheddar
- Sardinia: source of pecorino romano and other sheep cheeses including the forbidden Casu Marzu
- La Mancha: where Manchego rules
- Wisconsin: the rise of artisan cheeses in a commodity-cheese state
- Vermont: small state, huge impact
- California: role of the missions; history of Marin French and Monterey Jack; modern artisan-cheese pioneers

## **Lecture 4: Sharpen Your Sensory Appreciation of Cheese/Is Cheese Healthy?**

- How to evaluate cheese like a pro:

Visual clues to quality (including a look at healthy and unhealthy rinds and the curious case of Mimolette)

Aromas and where they come from

Textural attributes

The five tastes and their relationship to cheese

The difference between taste and flavor

This segment includes two short videos of professional cheese judging.

- A few thoughts about pairing cheese with beverages and condiments
- Cheese and health: what current nutrition science tells us, plus some myth-busting