

## Matters of Taste

September 14, 2009

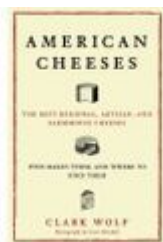
### Say "American Cheeses" by Clark Wolf...and Smile



I had breakfast last week with [Clark Wolf](#), the most quoted restaurant consultant in the U.S. Whip-smart and wise-cracking to boot, he's every food writer's go-to authority on restaurant decor and menu design, farmers markets and food trends, cuisine, culture and Camembert.

It's the Camembert we were talking about over breakfast at [Loews Coronado Bay Resort](#). Camembert, that is, as one of the many glorious cheeses being made in America today.

Wolf's new book "[American Cheeses: The Best Regional, Artisan, and Farmhouse Cheeses -- Who Makes Them And Where to Find Them](#)" is a comprehensive look at a food niche that was dominated by Cheez Whiz and Velveeta for decades. Few people have Wolf's passion or encyclopediac knowledge of what's been called "milk's leap toward immortality." (He basically created the cheese department at the legendary [Oakville Grocery](#) back in 1980.) And he shares both passion and knowledge with us in these pages.



The basics are there: How cheese "happens." The various families of cheese, including fresh, soft, semi-soft, blue, goat, sheep, rind vs. no rind, etc. How to buy cheese, store it, and eat it.

But my favorite part of the book is the road-trip across the U.S, with stops at dairies, cheese plants and small farmstead kitchens, and introductions to some of the personalities responsible for the growing sophistication of American cheese.

Well, actually, that's my second most favorite part of the book. My absolute favorite, and reason enough to purchase this tome, is the Macaroni and Three-Peppercorn Goat Cheese recipe from [Zingerman's Roadhouse](#), a deli-market in Ann Arbor, Michigan. A bubbly masterpiece of fresh goat cheese, roasted red bell peppers, Dijon mustard, and ground white, black and green peppercorns, it's topped with a crusty, bread-crumble-cloaked round of aged goat.

That's just one of the dozens of tantalizing recipes -- Lemon-Goat Cheese Tart or Berkshire Blue Cheese Bread Pudding, anyone? -- included in "American Cheeses." Available at [Amazon.com](#).

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You bite your tongue about Velveeta and Cheez Whiz. I've had memorable "cooking" experiences with both of them.

Posted by: Queijo Fan | [September 23, 2009 at 11:57 AM](#)

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