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Mastering Cheese: Lessons for Connoisseurship from a Maître Fromager

By Max McCalman, David Gibbons

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Maître fromager Max McCalman, author of *The Cheese Plate* and *Cheese*, is steeped in the world of artisanal cheeses like no one else. In *Mastering Cheese*, he shares the wealth of his expertise to help cheese lovers on their path to connoisseurship.

After years of teaching courses for amateurs at the Artisanal Premium Cheese Center, where he is Dean of Curriculum, McCalman has developed a compelling set of classes for understanding and ex-periencing cheese. A full master's course in a book, *Mastering Cheese* covers the world of cheese in twenty-two distinct lessons, featuring tasting plates that deliciously demonstrate key topics. For example, a chapter titled "Stunning Stinkers" explains why some of the strongest-smelling cheeses can be among the best tasting and then recommends several stars of this category. Learn about the issues facing real raw-milk cheeses and then go out and taste the differences between these cheeses and those made with pasteurized milk.

For the first time in any of his books, McCalman includes extensive information on the modern artisanal cheese revolution in the United States and prominently features these artisans and their products alongside the famous cheeses of Italy, France, Spain, and the United Kingdom.

Complete with helpful charts and an invaluable index of more than 300 cheeses, *Mastering Cheese* is the definitive course that you can use in your own home to pursue your passion for cheese.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Starred Review. Cheese experts McCalman and Gibbons already have two James Beard awards for previous fromage-focused tomes (*Cheese*, *The Cheese Plate*); this outstanding examination of the subject could nab them another. Regardless, it should be required reading for any cheese-lover. The duo start slowly and distantly, with Sumerians, Mesopotamians, and suggestions for the contemporary cheeses that recall the food's earliest versions. After explanations of the cheese making process and tips for detecting flavors and determining ripeness, the two roll up their sleeves and attack cheese in all forms and locales. Suggested tastings are frequent and varied, enabling readers to sample at their own pace as they familiarize themselves with different styles and regions. Even those in the business are sure to pick up a few pointers: tips on the art of preparing a cheese trolley, structuring a tasting, and sophisticated topics like the debate over pasteurized and raw milk. Sample menus give readers a painless introduction to the symphonic pairings of a single wine or beer as well as a multi-wine, multi-cheese event. McCalman and Gibbons prove anything but snobby, employing a down-to-earth, encouraging tone and an egalitarian approach to taste, encouraging readers to eat what they like, not necessarily hunt down "the best."

About the Author

MAX MCCALMAN is America's first restaurant-based Maître Fromager and a Garde et Juré, as designated by France's *Guilde des Fromagers*. He established the critically acclaimed cheese programs at New York City's *Picholine* and *Artisanal Brasserie & Fromagerie* restaurants. He is Dean of Curriculum at *Artisanal Premium Cheese Center* in New York and is a highly visible advocate for artisanal cheese production around the world.

DAVID GIBBONS has collaborated on many books, including two with McCalman: *The Cheese Plate*, which was nominated for James Beard and IACP awards in 2003, and *Cheese*, which won a James Beard Award in 2006.

Users Review

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John Bennett:

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William Rocha:

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Minnie Rivera:

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