

CHEESE-A-HOLIC Issue 2



CHEESELINKS

**The ultimate newsletter for
cheese enthusiasts,
cheesemakers and cheese-a-
holics everywhere!**

**CHEESE-A-HOLIC
Issue 2
20th October 2008**

From the editor

Thanks so much for all your wonderful responses to our first edition! We received so many emails with comments, ideas, questions, suggestions and stories. Some of you loved the name, some hated it! Some loved the layout, some hated it! Everyone seemed to love the content though, so it's good we all agree on something! We have tried to incorporate as many of your suggestions as possible into this edition and hope you enjoy the results!

We've had some exciting new things happening in the Chees-

elinks world this last month. Firstly, the online store is finally here!! We were beginning to think it would never happen, but it's been up a week now and everything is working beautifully!

We have also launched a range of new cheesemaking kits with the website — now you can 'upsized' any cheesemaking kit and get all the equipment you need as well as all the ingredients. In the Cheeselinks office we jokingly refer to it as the 'Would-you-like-fries-with-that?' option, but so far it is proving hugely popular, probably because the discount definitely makes it worth it! You can check

out all of the kits as well as all of our home cheesemaking product range at shop.cheeselinks.com.au It will even calculate your postage for you, which makes it easier than ever to place your orders!

We also have gift vouchers available just in time for Christmas, redeemable for any of our home cheesemaking products or Little River cheesemaking workshops. So you can hint to your friends and family and put a Cheeselinks voucher on your list for Santa!

Anyway, we hope you enjoy our 2nd edition of CHEESE-A-



HOLIC and as always, we welcome your stories, questions and feedback! — Carole Willman

shop.cheeselinks.com.au

FEATURED CHEESEMAKER : Tracy Willman

This month our feature cheesemaker is quite literally, one of the family. Tracy Willman is Carole's daughter and in July this year she joined the Cheeselinks team. She is currently managing the office and administration side of the business, and is responsible for the new-look website and online store.

Tracy comes from a long line of

cheese lovers. As the daughter of two master cheesemakers, she grew up surrounded by cheese and the industry, but her connection to cheese goes back far further than that. Her great-great-great grandfather was of convict stock — he was sent to Australia for seven years hard labour — for the theft of a cheese!

A talented linguist, Tracy is proficient in Japanese, Mandarin Chinese, Spanish, Polish and English, and in the future she dreams of

taking Cheeselinks global so she can utilise her language skills!

But for the moment Tracy is following in her parents' footsteps as an apprentice cheesemaker. Her current passion is creating new combinations of flavours in her home-made yoghurt that she insists can beat any store-bought yoghurt any day!

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Featured Cheese: Boosey Creek Blue

Boosey Creek is one of Australia's newest cheesemaking operations, making cheese for just on 12 months. And for a newly opened cheese manufacturer they have been hugely successful. This month's feature cheese is a definite favourite of all the 'Cheeselinks Chicks'. The **Boosey Creek Burramine Blue** won a silver medal at the recent Royal Melbourne Show, and it

was the highest ranking Victorian Blue in the competition.

The ladies at Cheeselinks don't have the same love affair with stinky, smelly, blow-your-head-off cheese as Carole, but everyone here *adores* this blue. It's a soft blue that even non-blue eaters will love, and so it's great to introduce your friends to the joys of blue veined cheeses!

Boosey Creek have recently started sending cheeses by mail order—details can be found here: www.booseycreekcheese.com.au.





CHEESEMAKING MADNESS: When DIY goes very wrong!

This is why you should do a Mozzarella Workshop with Cheeselinks before trying it at home!!

This email sent to Cheeselinks had us all in stitches, so we thought we'd share it with our readers — hopefully not to put you off making cheese or we'd go out of business, but maybe it will make you feel a little better about your own cheese misadventures... We've all had those 'bad cheese days' when nothing seems to go right, and even experienced cheesemakers will tell you there are days when your Mozzarella just doesn't seem to want to stretch, but this guy's bad cheese day takes the cake!

'Last weekend I decided to make Mozzarella as I like it fresh, like the Boccichini (I suppose if you can't spell it, you can't make it) I prepared well, bought the cheesemaking kit from Cheeselinks and a thermometer. I also bought a pH test kit from a pool shop, which was useless as when I got it home I found it didn't show a pH lower than 6.0 but as I hadn't been in a pool shop since I had a pool some 17 years ago that was interesting - the bloke looked at me rather funny when I told him I was making cheese with it! I also bought some plastic 10L bowls and a new bucket. I already had a large stainless pot I cook crabs in, which I used quite a bit in this process. I also bought small and large sterile syringes from the chemist - again the funny looks when I told them I wanted them to make cheese!

So last friday night I made the starter in a double boiler - I managed to get some nice pasteurised, un-homogenised milk from the local garage - he didn't have any buffalos handy! I did get petrol at the same time so it was okay - I told him I was making cheese as I had bought so much milk - big mistake - strange looks again!

I read the recipe in the book many times and thought I was organised. I also observed that there would be quite a bit of whey left over I so read all about ricotta as well. Clever me - thought he could make two cheeses at once!

All went pretty well for a while - the kitchen was full of good stuff - plenty of pots and pans. I used a long grill plate on the top of the gas stove - you can have a burner going at one end with the pot on the other and the heat transference allows the maintenance of a steady temperature as I couldn't get anything for a proper water bath. Stage 1 to 6 of the recipe - really going well.

Then I got to stage 7 - drain off the whey. Into the bucket she goes! Great! Heaps of the why, little bit of cheese left, perhaps 10% by volume. Stage 8 - keep curd at 42-43 degrees for an hour (pouring off the excess whey as you go) which I did and then it will fuse together into a single mass... Hey watchew talking about? Fuse? Whole lotta lumps going on!

I had the big boiler going on the BBQ outside with the whey and got a nice little bowl of ricotta out of that (by the whey!) with a lot in the cheese cloth and a fair bit in the colander.

Anyway after the ricotta was made I put some fresh water into my boiler on the BBQ for the 70 degree water to form the mozzarella. I had my iced water standing by in one of my new bowls all ready for the final event. The brine was in a similar bowl - all organised...

I kept the cheese at 43 deg for an hour and three quarters and still no fusion - was looking for some organic uranium to create a fusion process but couldn't find any. I didn't even have any gelegnite handy!

Rather than throwing it all in the bin, I tried little bits in the hot water and sort of got some stretching going on so I tossed the lot in the hot water in absolute frustration - then I got some fusion of sorts. Using my brand new heavy duty rubber gloves I attempted to work the curd but 70 deg water is hot - fortunately I had the iced water to quench my burning hands from time to time. I knew then that I should have used welding gloves but as mine were somewhat dirty from being used for their normal purpose I decided against that.

I persevered for a while and now have a whole pile of white rocks of varying sizes in a bowl in the fridge - I did chuck them in the brine for a while of course. I am going to get the blow torch out later to see if they will melt. After all that my dear wife volunteered to clean up the mess - I am sure she regretted that action. The kitchen was just a tad full of stuff. I am still looking for some pigs to feed this bucket of whey to as I can't give it all to our dogs. It is quite possible that it will make excellent weed killer. Now I started at about 9am Saturday morning and finished at about 4.30pm and was so exhausted that I went to bed a wreck at 8.30pm and woke up this morning feeling sore all over from all the lifting of pots and pans! I swore yesterday (quite a lot actually) that I will never ever attempt to make cheese again and if I do my wife is entitled to hit me with the biggest shovel she can find.

Cheese comes from Woollies! And that's fact!



"I kept the cheese at 43 deg for an hour and three quarters and still no fusion - was looking for some organic uranium to create a fusion process but couldn't find any. I didn't even have any gelegnite handy!"

If you want to brush up your cheese-making skills and avoid a disaster like this, come along to one of our cheese-making workshops. Now taking bookings for 2009! Private workshops can also be arranged if you have a group, ideal for those wanting to customise their own class and try new cheeses such as Cheddar, Triple Cream Brie, Gouda, Swiss, Caerphilly and more!



Problem solving/Q&A Section

Haloumi

I store haloumi cheese in brine in the fridge but the brine always goes cloudy and softens the surface of the cheeses and they eventually disintegrate. I store feta under similar conditions and it remains firm and the brine stays clear. How can I stop this happening to the haloumi cheeses?

Georgina

Haloumi is a high pH cheese. When you put a high pH cheese into a weak brine solution it changes the surface composition and causes the disintegration you experienced. Firstly, you need to make sure you have a saturated brine solution.

Making 250g of salt up to 1L of water should make a concentrated solution. You know it is concentrated when not all the salt is able to dissolve into the boiling water. Secondly, add 2ml of vinegar per litre of water to the brine. This will reduce the pH of the brine and should fix your problem.

Parmesan/Romano

When pressing either Parmesan or Romano cheese, the cheesecloth sticks to the curds rather badly and has to be removed slowly with a knife easing it away. My cheddar works a breeze. I've tried increasing the cream content but with no appreciable difference



Devonia

When making Romano or Parmesan the cheese is hot when it goes into the hoop, i.e. the curd is 'flowable'. But this means that it fuses with the cheesecloth. The only way to solve this problem may be by using blue disposable cheesecloth designed specifically for using with parmesan cheese.



have to wait the 30 minutes before scooping the curds off?

Kate

No you don't need to wait. Scoop the curd as soon as they rise to the top and knit together as one solid mass.

Bubbles in my cheese

My cheese has bubbles in it and has started to 'blow up' as it matures? What is wrong with it? Can I still eat it?

Paul

Generally, you should find few gas bubbles or holes in your cheese, even when using gas-producing starters.

If your cheese is starting to 'blow up' it is usually because of coliforms, indicating contamination from hands or equipment that hasn't been sanitised properly. Also, coliform contamination could come from raw milk, or cross contamination of pasteurised milk with raw milk. The coliforms could be harmless or pathogenic. There is no way to tell without sending the cheese off for an expensive round of tests.

The best thing you can do now is take the lesson for next time and re-visit principles of hygiene and sanitation, making sure you are scrupulous with sanitising absolutely everything that touches your milk and ensuring that your milk is pasteurised properly.

Ricotta

I've been playing around with Ricotta recipes, both whole milk and whey, and had some interesting results. Do you

Recipe Ideas—Quadruple Cheese Sauce

This is a great 'cheesy' recipe contributed by one of our readers that can be used on cauliflower or broccoli, or used as the base for a creamy pasta sauce. Ideal using home-made quarg, but indeed, all four types of cheeses could be home-made if you are really feeling adventurous!

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tablespoons of butter
- 2 tablespoons of plain flour
- 1/2 cup milk

- 1 cup grated cheddar
- 1/2 cup finely grated Parmesan
- 1/4 cup quarg
- 1/2 cup mild blue cheese, crumbled
- Salt & freshly ground black pepper

METHOD

Melt the butter in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Add the flour and cook, stirring constantly with a wooden spoon, for 30 seconds or until mixture is smooth and begins to bubble. Remove from heat and gradually stir in the milk until smooth and

combined. Return to medium heat and stir until mixture thickens and comes to the boil. Remove from heat.

Add the cheddar, Parmesan, quarg and blue cheese to the milk mixture. Place over low heat and cook, stirring, for 3 minutes or until cheese melts. Taste and season with salt and pepper.





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Bringing cheese and yoghurt making to the kitchens of Australia!



Cheeselinks is an Australian company that is both family-owned and operated. The company was established in 1986 as Home Cheesemaking Supplies, specifically to provide quality cheesemaking ingredients and education to people who wanted to learn to make cheese in their own homes.

Over time the business expanded and began to supply small to medium size cheese factories with cultures, baskets, and other equipment. The name was changed to Cheeselinks in 1999, to reflect the increasing service provided to commercial manufacturers.

With master cheesemaker Carole Willman at the helm, Cheeselinks has over 20 years experience in cheesemaking training and education, serving both commercial cheese manufacturers, and home cheese and yoghurt makers.

CHEESELINKS CALENDAR OCT/NOV 08

This month Carole is travelling and conducting workshops in SA, NSW, ACT and VIC — she may be in an area near you.

Oct 14	Cheeselinks online store goes LIVE! shop.cheeselinks.com.au
Oct 15	Fetta Workshop in Newstead, VIC
Oct 19/20	Carole travels to Small Cow Farm in Robertson, NSW for Mozzarella/Halloumi/Parmesan Workshop
Oct 22	Geelong Cup Day—Geelong Post Office is closed so no posting today. Cheeselinks office is open for business as usual otherwise.
Oct 26/27	Carole travels to Barossa Valley Cheese Company in SA for Camembert/Fetta Workshops
Nov 1/2	Carole travels to CIT Solutions in Canberra for Camembert/Blue Workshops
Nov 4	Cheeselinks holiday for Melbourne Cup Day
Nov 8/9	Carole travels to Duck Under the Table in Wingham, NSW for Camembert/Goat Fetta Workshops
Nov 14	Cheddar Workshop in Monbulk, VIC



Royal Melbourne Show — Award Winning Cheeses!

In September Melbourne enjoyed the Royal Melbourne Show, and as always there was much fun to be had and many delightful dairy foods exhibited.

Some of the most successful cheeses were entered by companies who purchase some of their ingredients from Cheeselinks!

We encourage you all to track down these award winning cheeses and give them a try to see if you agree with the judges!

Woodside Cheese Wrights - Champion non-bovine cheese for Woodside Figaro and a Silver Medal for Woodside Masquerade.

Boosey Creek Cheese—Silver Medals for

Boosey Blue and Burramine Blue.

That's Amore Cheese — Silver Medal for Ricotta Thimble, Baby Provolina, and Scamorza Bianca. Gold Medal for Baby Smoked Provolina.

Barossa Valley Cheese Company - Silver Medal for Washington Washed Rind and Petite Princess.

Fresh Cheese Company - Silver Medals for Joycix Choc chip and Wild Cherry Flavoured Cheese, Mamma Lucia Mascarpone, Mamma Lucia Pecorino Romano and Gold Medals for Pecorino Chilli and Mamma Lucia Bocconcini.

Meredith Dairy - Gold Medal for Meredith Dairy Blue and Silver Medals for Ashed Pyramid Cheese and Marinated Soft Goat Cheese.

Milawa Cheese Company—Silver Medals for Milawa Chevre and Milawa Capricornia.

Shaw River Buffalo Cheese Company -Gold Medal for Annie Baxter, and Silver for Buffalo Panir and the Buffalo Mozzarella.

DAIRY NEWS

This month Dairy Australia have played host to two international groups from the cheese industry—from Japan and China.

Both groups spent time learning about dairy technology in lectures and also touring around Victoria visiting commercial factories.

Australia is one of leading manufactures and exporters of cheese and dairy products in the Asia-Pacific region and these programs are aimed to build relationships between customers and potential customers in the region with the Australian industry.

CHEESELINKS gift vouchers are now available, valid for 12 months, redeemable for any of our home cheesemaking products or Little River Cheesemaking Workshops. So hint to your friends and family and put a Cheeselinks voucher on your list for Santa!