Real California (Cheese) Wedge on a Ledge

Wedge on a Ledge is a holiday tradition where a new, interesting wedge of California cheese appears in a precarious position each day from December 15th to December 24th. Instead of reporting to Santa, the wedge brings cheesy joy, fun challenges, and delicious surprises leading up to Christmas Eve — when a grand Cheese Board for Santa concludes the game.

How to Play

KICKOFF – December 15th

- Introduce the idea with your first "Wedge" (a small wedge-shaped piece of California cheese).
- Identify the cheese (no brand names): E.g., Real California White Cheddar
- Place it on a ledge, shelf, or kitchen counter — with a small welcome note:

"Hi! I'm your Real California (Cheese) Wedge on a Ledge! Each day until Christmas, you'll see a new wedge for a very cheesy holiday! Keep your eyes (and noses) open!"

THE DAILY ROUTINE – December 15–23

Each day, a wedge shows up in a new spot in the house and brings:

- A **cheese-related clue or challenge**, such as:
  - "Try a new cheese today!"
  - "Tell your cheesiest joke!"
  - "Pair your snack with something unexpected — like honey or hot sauce!"

- A **mini gift or treat**, like:
  - A small cheese sample
  - A new cracker, fig jam, or spread
  - A cheese pun or riddle card

Optional: Take a photo each day to document the wedge's adventures and tag Real California Milk (IG: @realcalifmilk, TT/FB: @realcaliforniamilk)

THE GRAND FINALE – December 24th

- On Christmas Eve, the Wedge leaves a note:

"I've helped you sample, laugh, and share the joy of California cheese. Now, let's make the ultimate gift for Santa — a beautiful cheese board!"

The Cheese Board for Santa:

- Gather all your favorite California cheeses from the month.
- Add nuts, fruits, crackers, and charcuterie.
- Set it out for Santa (and anyone else who's been nice!).
- The next morning, find a thank-you note from Santa:

"Best board ever! You're truly grate!"

OPTIONAL RULES & VARIATIONS

Families: Include cheese trivia or simple tasting notes for kids.
Adults: Make it a wine, beer or other beverages pairing calendar — new pairing ideas each night. Find pairing tips here: **https://www.realcalifornamilk.com/cheese-pairings**
Offices: The wedge hides around the workspace; whoever finds it first gets to enjoy the cheese and wins a cheese-themed prize.

TIPS FOR EXTRA FUN

- Use cheese puns liberally: "Brie merry," "Cheddar late than never," "Stay cool as a Colby."
- Share daily Wedge photos on social media with the hashtag **#WedgeOnALedge** and **#RealCaliforniaMilk**.
- Make the final cheese board a collaborative family event — a culmination of all the flavors and laughs shared during the month.

Cheese Safety 101

KEEPING YOUR WEDGE FRESH & FABULOUS

Cheese may be the life of the holiday party, but it also deserves careful handling to stay safe, delicious, and full of flavor. Follow these guidelines to keep your wedges in top form all season long — from December 15th through Santa's big night.

Keep It Cool — But Not Too Cold

- Store cheese in the **refrigerator between 35°F and 40°F (1.6°C–4.4°C).**
- Avoid freezing — it alters texture and flavor.
- If possible, keep cheese in a **dedicated drawer or container** to maintain consistent humidity.

Wrap It Right

Different cheeses need different wrapping:

- **Hard & Semi-Hard Cheeses** (Cheddar, Gouda, Gruyère): Wrap in **wax paper or parchment first**, then loosely in plastic wrap or a reusable beeswax wrap.
- **Soft Cheeses** (Brie, Camembert): Keep in their **original packaging** or wrap lightly in wax paper to let them breathe.
- **Fresh Cheeses** (Mozzarella, Ricotta, Feta): Store in their **liquid brine** or an airtight container and consume quickly.

Tip: Avoid wrapping cheese directly in plastic wrap — it traps moisture and can cause spoilage.

Mind the Shelf Life

- Always **check expiration dates** on pre-packaged cheeses.
- For cut wedges:

  Hard cheeses: Last about **3–4 weeks** when properly wrapped.

  Soft cheeses: Best within **7–10 days** after opening.

  Fresh cheeses: Eat within **5–7 days**.

- When in doubt, **sniff and inspect** — cheese should smell pleasant and creamy, not sour or ammonia-like.

Avoid Cross-Contamination

- Use **clean knives and cutting boards** for each cheese type — especially between raw and cooked foods.
- If serving cheese, keep it **covered** until serving time to prevent airborne contamination.
- Do not rewrap and store cheeses that have sat out for **more than two hours** (especially soft cheeses).

Serve Cheese Safely

- Take cheese out of the fridge about **30–60 minutes before serving** to reach ideal flavor and texture.
- During parties, avoid leaving cheese out for **more than 2 hours** (or 1 hour if the room is warm).
- After serving, **discard any leftover soft cheeses** that have been unrefrigerated for extended periods.

Handle Wedge on a Ledge Wisely

If you're playing ***Wedge on a Ledge***:

- Keep **real cheese wedges refrigerated** until it's time for tasting or display.
- If using real cheese as part of the daily reveal, **replace or refrigerate it immediately** after discovery/ taking photos or setting up clues.

The Christmas Eve Cheese Board

- Prepare your board close to serving time.
- Keep backup wedges chilled until ready to add.
- If Santa's late, refrigerate leftovers promptly to enjoy safely on Christmas morning.

REAL CALIFORNIA MILK

LOOK FOR THE SEAL.