

Confessions of a Cheese-hater

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EVERY time I mention that I do not eat cheese, people either look at me in absolute amazement or utter disbelief. I might as well have been telling them I keep a pet Tyrannosaurus Rex in my back yard or that I am a sumo wrestler by profession! "How can you not like cheese?" usually means "what on earth is wrong with you, woman?" and "Do you have an allergy to cheese?" translates to "there is definitely something wrong with you!" But I am now immune to the raised eyebrows and have stock responses to the now very familiar questions thrown at me. "No, I am not lactose intolerant." What really amuses me is that even to this date my family and friends, who have known me forever, still cannot resist asking me every now and then whether I would like to try some cheesy snack or dish as if I might suddenly have returned to the world of sane cheese eating people! But there have also been numerous occasions where my 'cheese less' existence has been somewhat of a hindrance to me.

Let me take you back in time and give you a few examples. Before I got married, my husband wanted me to meet his younger sister and as you can imagine I was very keen to make a good impression. It was quite nerve racking for me during the one and a half hour drive to Oxford and it was almost a relief when we finally arrived. I had been told that there were going to be a few of my sister-in-law's university friends present as well and I thought it might actually be a blessing to have the focus of attention away from me. I am sure she was just as keen to see whether I was sister-in-law material or not.

The introduction seemed to go well and we chatted for a while until everyone expressed the need for sustenance. Have you ever noticed how students of any age



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