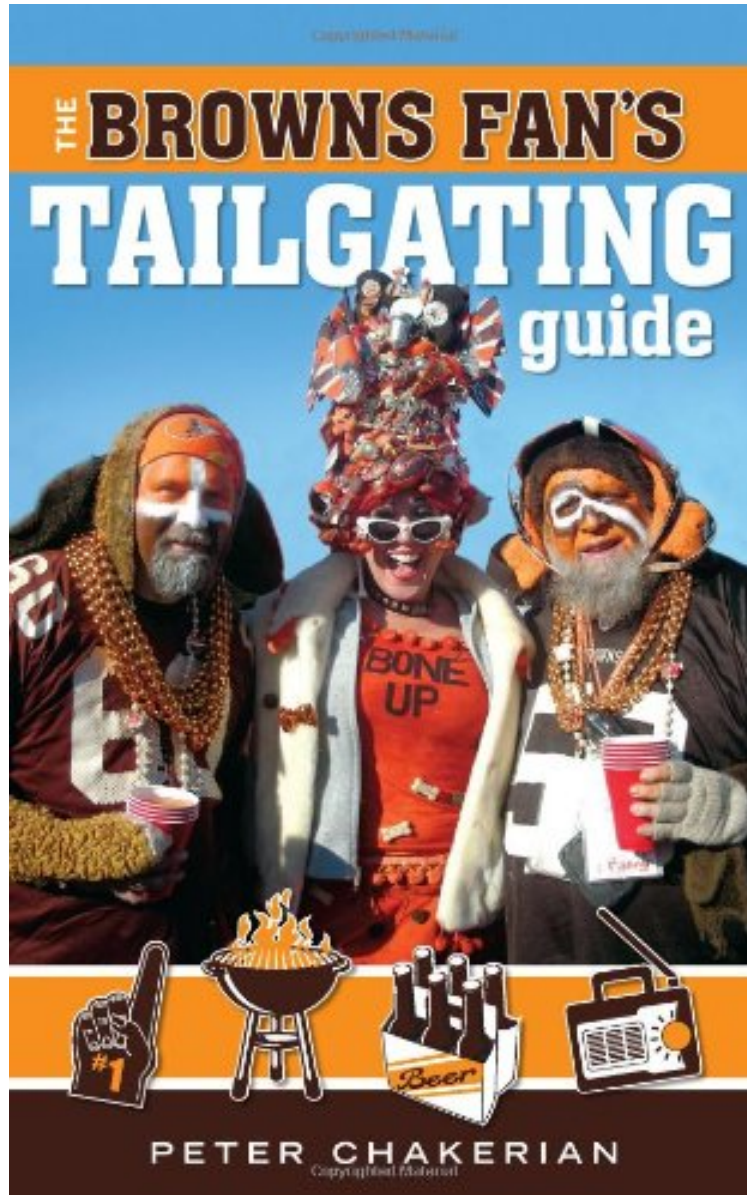


The Browns Fan's Tailgating Guide

Peter Chakerian

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Peter Chakerian : The Browns Fan's Tailgating Guide before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Browns Fan's Tailgating Guide:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. So that's what they're doing over in the Muni Lot...By Susan Petrone If you've ever driven past huge tailgating parties before a football game and wondered what would possess hundreds of people to party outside in sub-zero weather, this book answers a lot of questions. First and foremost, it's a

"how to" guide, giving the would-be Cleveland Browns tailgater the low-down on where to tailgate and the dynamics of each location, what to pack, when to arrive, and what to do and not do once you get there and start partying. (There's even a section on tailgating in other AFC North cities.) Equally important to the "how to" aspect is the social and cultural history of Browns tailgaters (yes, there is one). Chakerian weaves lengthy quotes from some of the most ardent Browns fans with his own analysis and insight as a fan and observer/writer to give a broader, deeper picture of this sub-culture. If you've ever thought you might want to join the tailgating fun, this book not only tells you how to, it also gives you some pretty good reasons why you should.

If you're new to Cleveland Browns fandom, you can read up on the etiquette and customs of the Dawg Pound and beyond; if you're an old hand, you can relive tales of the best and worst of Browns history. Northern Ohio Live Browns fans know: It's not if you win or lose . . . it's how you party in the parking lot before the game! Now it's easy for any Browns fan to tailgate like a well-seasoned veteran. This book shares tips from Cleveland's top tailgaters about where to, when to, and how to do it all, Browns fan style. It also tells inspiring tailgating tales from fellow fans and introduces some of the wild people, crazy vehicles, outlandish foods, and nonstop party activities you'll find in the lot. For decades, hardy Cleveland football fans have enjoyed the pregame (and game . . . and postgame) in sun, rain, or sub-zero temperatures, sitting in folding chairs and clutching red plastic cups while watching a rack of ribs smoke on a homemade grill next to a brown-and-orange Winnebago. This book celebrates the glorious tradition of Cleveland Browns tailgating. It will inspire you to don your dawg mask, grab your favorite beverage, and prepare to join the party!

Highly recommended. The book is a great, fun read. But then, what would you expect from a book that offers a drink recipe for A Brownie Mary on one page and, on another, lists The Most Essential RB, Urban Contemporary and Hip-Hop Tracks to play at your tailgate party? We give it two thumbs up! (Roger Brown sportstimeohio.com 2008-12-11) Offers a peek at the rituals surrounding a game in Browns stadium. There's a little bit of history and a bit of celebration of the celebrations, especially in the Muni lot at South Marginal Road and East Ninth Street. Chakerian takes an appreciative look at costumes (bizarre), behavior (play nice) and other rituals (come early, party long) of Cleveland Browns tailgating. (Laura Kennelly Morning Journal 2008-12-14) Peter Chakerian gives a tour of the colorful world and even more colorful characters surrounding Cleveland Browns Stadium before any home game . . . A good starting point for any would-be tailgater looking to start some pre-game traditions of their own. (Michael Leonard Stow Sentry 2009-01-04) There is a different culture when it comes to Cleveland tailgating. Consider this book your reference guide to make sure you tailgate the right way . . . No matter if you are a veteran tailgater or a novice just starting out, by reading this book everyone can gain some insight on how to not just tailgate but tailgate better. (tailgatingideas.com 2009-02-25) Part history lesson, part sociological study, part users guide . . . Chakerian calls tailgating one of the last grassroots happenings still unspoiled by corporate America. And if you don't know the first thing about becoming part of it, this book is a good place to start. (Jim Vickers Cleveland Magazine 2008-11-01) If you're new to Cleveland Browns fandom, you can read up on the etiquette and customs of the Dawg Pound and beyond; if you're an old hand, you can relive tales of the best and worst of Browns history. (Northern Ohio Live 2008-11-01) About the Author Peter Chakerian is an award-winning writer, reporter and journalist. His byline has appeared in The Plain Dealer, Akron Beacon Journal, Sun Newspapers, Cleveland Magazine, Northern Ohio Live, Scene Magazine, America Online, Blogcritics.org, and dozens of other publications throughout the Midwest. Chakerian is the Managing Editor of CoolCleveland.com, a weekly online newsletter on arts, culture, economic development and all things cool in Cleveland. A lifelong Northeast Ohio resident and Browns fan, he lives in Bay Village, Ohio. Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. Origin and History of Cleveland Browns Tailgating A Tailgating Genesis At the dawn of the Automotive Age, the word tailgate referred specifically to the hinged back section of a vehicle that could be removed or let up or down for the ease in loading or unloading cargo. Although its invention was a convenience for the driver and passengers, it became the foundation for the modern tailgating experience that has come to accompany concerts and sporting events. When did the concept of tailgating start? Some say that the very first college football game between Rutgers and Princeton back in 1869 served as the very first tailgating experience. Back then, spectators traveled to the game by horse-drawn carriages, and spent the time prior to kickoff grilling sausages and burgers at the tail end of the horse. Others suggest that the phenomenon began at Yale University in 1904. By all accounts, a locomotive made up of private railcars had transported a throng of fans to a Yale football game. When that train stopped at the station a fair distance from the stadium, according to the story the fans inside were starving. From there the idea was hatched by the fans to bring along appropriate provisions to be consumed before the start of the next game. Still others claim that the cradle of tailgating is Green Bay, Wisconsin, and point to the year 1919, when the three-time Super Bowl Champion Green Bay Packers were first formed. Wisconsin farmers would back their pickup trucks around the edge of the open football field, open their tailgates to sit on and graze from a picnic basket of food as they watched The Pack play. Freelance writer Chris Warner, who wrote A Tailgaters Guide To SEC Football, produced a 2003 documentary on tailgating for The History Channel cable

networks Modern Marvels series. In it, Warner suggests any of the three origins could be considered valid, but that [W]hile modern tailgating has only recently [within the last 30 years] become popular, the practice of enjoying both food and football has post-Civil War, 19th century roots. Origins of Cleveland Browns Tailgating Depending on which Browns fans you talk to, you're likely to get a number of different answers on when pregame Browns tailgating began. Some will tell you that 1964 Championship was a watershed moment for tailgating, but those people have difficulty pointing you to someone who actually experienced it first-hand during those days. Others point to the September 1970 Monday Night Football premiere of the Browns against the New York Jets as the beginning of the tailgating phenomenon here in Cleveland. In both cases, the idea of tailgating was probably a far cry from the experience it is today. It was more like a brown-bag lunch or picnic basket with a little something extra before game time. Author, NPR commentator and longtime Cleveland Browns fan Scott Huler sums up what he calls pre-tailgating times on the North Coast (pre-late 70s): Our tailgating consisted of making pastrami sandwiches with brown mustard on Kaiser rolls, putting them in baggies with napkins and little baggies of potato chips, and bringing them to the Stadium with us [and] also a thermos of coffee [or] a little flask of tea, but again: no actual tailgating. Scott Huler, author and Cleveland expatriate living in Raleigh, N.C. If you're to believe most tailgaters, festivities before Browns games never really hit their stride until the 1980s first with Sam Rutigliano's Kardiak Kids success, and then with the AFC Championship teams helmed by the teams beloved quarterback, Bernie Kosar. That's when a few lakefront fan photos begin to emerge in local print media. But do a little more digging and you'll find that the spirit and atmosphere on the lakefront before the big game might owe a debt to an almost completely unrelated event on the same premises. Long Before the Tailgate Party on the North Coast Cleveland's lakefront landscape has changed a great deal over the years, but one thing has remained constant: Cleveland football (both Rams and Browns) has taken place on the lakefront as long as most football fans can remember. Cleveland Municipal Stadium, which opened July 1, 1931, served as the home of Browns fans for generations until its demolition in November 1996. (Aside from football, the venue played host to everything from boxing matches and baseball to concert events.) The area surrounding that F.R. Walker-designed Municipal Stadium has had a rather festive history, playing host to the grand Great Lakes Exposition in the mid-1930s as a centennial celebration of Cleveland's incorporation. The exposition was a huge to-do not to mention a welcome respite for Clevelanders enduring the Great Depression. The exposition was a great place for a picnicking, shopping, live music and entertainment for millions of residents during its two-year lakefront tenure. Stretching as far south as Public Hall and east to where today's Cleveland State University begins, the exposition featured jazz and dance concerts, parties, a floating stage and, at the north end/mouth of East 9th Street, a magnificent entryway that ushered in patrons. The core footprint for the exposition's fairgrounds reflects most of the Browns tailgating locations there are to choose from today, including the ground occupied by the Great Lakes Science Center, the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, Burke Lakefront Airport and the remaining land on either side of today's North and South Marginal Roads that makes up the now legendary Cleveland Municipal Parking (known as Muni) Lot. From the Heyday to the Move . . . and Back From the 1980s on, the Browns experienced a surge, popularity and heyday not seen since the 64 Championship. And the fans set about to celebrate the return to form in the many key tailgating locations that Browns fans still have to choose from. The Muni Lot; the Burke Lakefront Airport and adjacent Naval Lot; the northernmost Port Authority Lot (now called the Yellow Lot); parking lots to the west of the stadium off of West 3rd Street, near the Route 2 overpass (sometimes referred to as The Pit); and down into the East Bank of the Flats all have faithfully served as bastions for Cleveland tailgaters and continue to draw the most revelers. Other locations off of East 9th Street; the Justice Center and Lakeside Avenue Parking; Mall B/C by the Convention Center, and the Warehouse District tended to draw fans who were headed to a busy tailgate location, directly to the stadium or to brunching and barhopping for the game. Sadly, many of these party parking locations went silent during the 1996 NFL season, after Browns owner Art Modell had moved the team to Baltimore. It would be a heartbreaking three years of disorder, resentment and, for some people, regular commutes to Buffalo, New York for Bills Browns Day games and to Columbus for Ohio State Buckeyes games before a tailgating Browns fans life would return to normal. Some tailgating fans were so lost without the Browns, they couldn't even stomach watching football, choosing instead to drown themselves in home projects, golf and a variety of other sports to occupy their time. When the Browns finally returned in 1999, all of these locations were beyond invigorated, filled with old and new generations of fans. Today, tailgating before a Browns game is more popular than ever. Tens of thousands of fans jam all of these downtown locations to tailgate before each home game. And not all of these fans have tickets for the game. Some of them spend the entire game in the lot, or head to their favorite local watering hole when the crowds start their approach to the stadium. Some of these tailgate locations are low-key and laid back; others are nothing less than a carnival midway. [Excerpted from The Browns Fan's Tailgating Guide, Peter Chakerian. All rights reserved. Gray Company, Publishers.]