

The Cider House Rules

US : 1999 : dir. Lasse Hallström : : 125 min
 prod: : scr: John Irving : dir.ph.:
Kieran Culkin; Erik Per Sullivan.....
 Toby Maguire; Charlize Theron [sic]; Michael Caine; Delroy Lindo; Paul Rudd; Kathy Baker;
 Jane Alexander; Kate Nelligan; Erykah Badu; John Irving; Heavy D. [sic]; K. Todd Freeman

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Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide
 2001 review:

"Loving adaptation of John Irving's novel (by the author), telescoped from the sprawling story about a boy raised in a Maine orphanage (and abortion clinic) by an eccentric doctor who treats him like his own son – and begrudges the boy's decision to go out and see the world once he comes of age in the 1940s. Well cast, beautifully crafted; filmed on perfect locations throughout New England. Beautiful score by Rachel Portman and cinematography by Oliver Stapleton. Oscar winner for Best Screenplay and Supporting Actor (Caine). Shot in Super-35. **** "

Radio Times Guide to Films review:

"The third John Irving novel to reach the screen (after **"THE WORLD ACCORDING TO GARP"** and **"THE HOTEL NEW HAMPSHIRE"**), this is a rich, evocative period piece that makes the most of its New England locations. Toby Maguire (**"RIDE WITH THE DEVIL"**) plays Homer Wells, a foundling who, having spent all his young life at an orphanage run by Michael Caine's kindly abortionist, decides to seek new pastures. Alas, he finds the codes he lives by of little use in the real world. Although drastically slimmed down from Irving's original (Homer's 15-year odyssey is reduced to a mere 15 months), Lasse Hallström's film has a simple integrity that fills every frame, while Caine won his second Oscar for his performance as the ether-addicted Dr Larch. ***** "

Radio Times listing:

"Drama adapted by John Irving from his own novel, showing as part of *The Big Read* strand and featuring Michael Caine in the role for which he won the Oscar for Best Supporting Actor, his second Academy Award. Having grown up in a New England orphanage under the care of kindly Dr Larch, young Homer Wells has the chance to spread his wings. Widescreen. ***** "

"Film of the week: Offbeat, whimsical and uplifting stories are what we've come to expect from novelist John Irving. Following on from **THE WORLD ACCORDING TO GARP**" and **"THE HOTEL NEW HAMPSHIRE"**, **"THE CIDER HOUSE RULES"** is the first he's actually adapted himself. As such, you might say it's the truest and most successful of these movie versions, with seven Oscar nominations – of which it won two: Best Adapted Screenplay and Best Supporting Actor (for Michael Caine).

Not bad for a film that deals with, among other things, the delicate issue of abortion. Dr Wilbur Larch (Caine) runs an orphanage in 1940s New England. He decides to impart his medical knowledge to one of his brightest charges, Homer Wells (Toby Maguire), and instructs him in all aspects of obstetrics, including terminations [sic] (then illegal).

Homer eventually leaves the oddly idyllic, but isolated, institution and finds himself picking apples with migrant black workers where he

learns all about life [*sic again*] and falls in love. Like other Irving stories, it's overpopulated and strives to make too broad philosophical observations about life, but the beauty of the film – aside from its leafy landscapes with which director Lasse Hallstrom is so obviously in love – lies in the acting.

Though Caine sounds like, well, Michael Caine occasionally putting on an American accent, his pivotal patriarch exudes depth and warmth, Maguire strikes just the right note as his protégé, while Delroy Lindo, Charlize Theron and Kieran Culkin are superb in support. Be

warned, though: watching this film may result in a strong desire for a holiday in Maine.”

“Not a lot of people know that... **"THE CIDER HOUSE RULES"** is set in the 1940s, so the scene during which **"KING KONG"** is screened, showing the ape peeling off Fay Wray's clothes, would have been impossible – the sequence was censored from the original print, and only restored in 1971.”

No further information currently available

See also **"BADKONAK-E SEFID"** and **"BASHU"** - both recent Iranian films, and subject index under **ARAB WORLD / MIDDLE EAST**.