



May Cheese Club 2021

Mission Bay Wine and Cheese

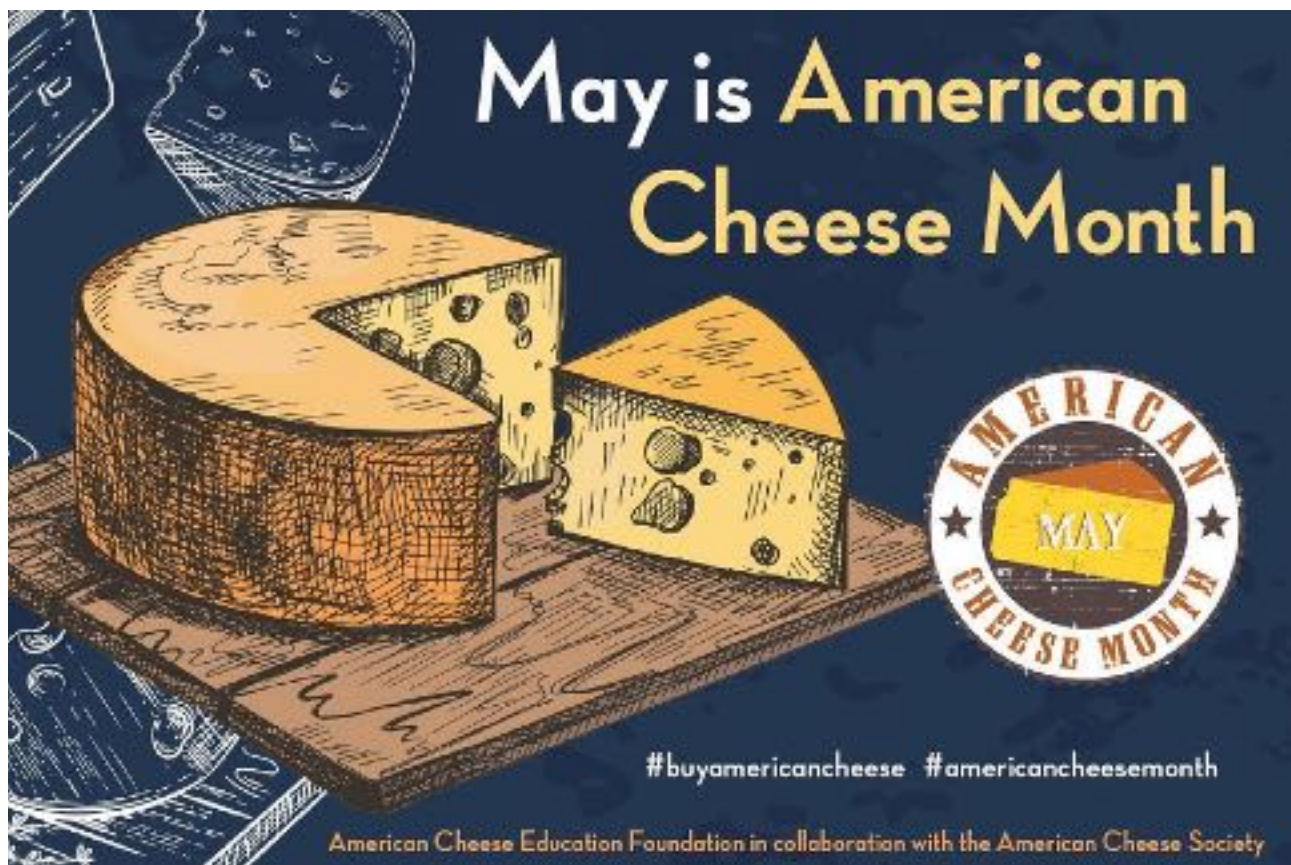


From amber waves to purple mountains, the American Dream is born of the land. And in the last 30 years, cheesemakers from sea to shining sea have been tending it in new and revolutionary ways, making the United States the most exciting producer of artisanal cheese on the planet. For May's American Cheese Month, we are celebrating those cheesemakers, the ones who are pursuing the American Dream to delicious ends and crafting world-class wheels and wedges. Because we love American makers so much we are including an extra cheese this month-- yum! Let's meet the makers!

This Month's Featured Cheeses

- Picolo
- Lake's Edge
- Fingerlakes Gouda
- Pleasant Ridge Reserve
- Dunbarton Blue





In the United States, we enjoy quite a list of American cheeses. While you may recognize Swiss and Colby, bleu and cheddar, it's the artisan cheeses that add that extra flair. American cheesemakers across the country provide an abundance of flavor and choice and American Cheese Month sets out to let you know what's available.

No matter what you're looking for, there is an American cheese that will fit the necessary taste profile.

According to the USDA, Americans consumed 34 pounds of cheese per capita in 2015, and they have steadily increased that amount over the last 20 years. We love our cheese. There are so many ways we enjoy it. We add it to soups, salads, pizza and so much more. By itself, it's a go-to snack. We. Love. Cheese. Even better than that, we love American cheeses!

American Cheese Month is a grassroots celebration of North America's delicious and diverse cheeses, and the farmers, cheesemakers, retailers, cheesemongers, and chefs who bring them to your table.

HOW TO OBSERVE AMERICAN CHEESE MONTH

There are so many ways to celebrate American cheese. First, explore the cheeses produced where you live. Small batch American cheeses have their very own nuanced flavors that hint at the type of milk, the spice and techniques used in your region.

Other ways to celebrate include:

- Hosting a tasting. Cheeses not only add flavor to many dishes, but they also are enjoyed perfectly on their own. Tastings give you an opportunity to explore cheese flavors you've never tried before and a way to learn what foods they best compliment.
- Make your favorite dish made with American cheese. Mix it up and use more than one kind of cheese.
- Visit a local cheese shop and discover a new American cheese. Learn about how it's made and who makes it!



Picolo by Andante Creamery

Petaluma, CA
Pasteurized Cow's Milk
Traditional Rennet, Triple Creme



Established in 1999, Andante Dairy is owned and operated by Soyoung Scanlan. The creamery is located at the Volpi Ranch near Petaluma, just north of San Francisco, California, which is also the source for Scanlan's goat's milk. Cow's milk is brought in from the 400-strong herd of Jersey cows at nearby Spring Hill Dairy. Prior to becoming a cheesemaker, Soyoung had a successful career working as a biochemist in both the engineering and science worlds. She also has a strong background in classical music as an avid pianist, making her a rare combination of talents that seem to converge over the cheesemaking vat.

Having studied the properties of milk and cheesemaking intensely for two years, including a stint at Cal Poly, in San Luis Obispo, Soyoung has become a highly respected figure in the artisan cheese industry. She is known for producing small quantities of extremely high quality cheeses, many of which are made in the French style. By choice, Soyoung works alone. Her cheesemaking facility is clean, simple, highly organized and has plenty of space to move about. Her early cheesemaking career was greatly encouraged and inspired by Thomas Keller, the owner and chef of the French Laundry in Yountville. Keller and Scanlan both have a tremendous eye for detail and perfection, and it is these qualities that shine through in all aspects of Scanlan's cheese. At Andante, Scanlan produces a range of cheeses made from cow, sheep and goat's milk, or combinations of the three. Picolo is a triple cream cheese made from the milk of Jersey cows and crème fraiche.



Picolo is a beautiful triple cream soft-ripened cheese made in a unique fashion. While most triple cream cheeses have cream added for richness, Picolo has crème fraiche added which balances the richness with a bright and fresh tang. As it ages it will gain a complex nuttiness as well. Pair with an aromatic white wine such as a Gewürztraminer, or a Belgian style blonde ale.



Lake's Edge by Blue Ledge Farm



An inspiring endeavor in Vermont's evolving dairying landscape, Blue Ledge Farm is a sustainable, first generation family-run goat dairy on the property of a former conventional Holstein dairy. Their mission is to "create a high quality product built on the cornerstones of respect for consumers, land and animals as well as [the] local community." The owners, Greg and Hannah, have worked closely with the Vermont Land Trust to ensure that their 150 acres of woods, hayland, pasture and wetland will remain undeveloped, in exchange receiving funding for their cheeseroom. They sold the development rights to their 150-acre farm to the Vermont Land Trust so their farmland will never be developed. In 2009, they started returning the wetlands on their property back to their natural state (rather than filling them in or trying to dry them out) because wetlands are so essential to a healthy ecosystem. They have solar panels, an energy efficient milking machine, an EPA-approved biomass furnace, and more. Blue Ledge is also an Animal Welfare Approved farm, so you know their goats are livin' the good life!



Salisbury, Vermont Pasteurized Goat's Milk Traditional Rennet



This gorgeous cheese is named for the shore of the great Lake Champlain, which straddles the border between Vermont and New York. Lake's Edge is a musky and zippy little number with a pencil-thin wisp of vegetable ash running through the center. The paste is chalky and concentrated, but has a magnificent melt in your mouth quality that brings just the right amount of tang. Made from the milk of Blue Ledge Farm's herd of Alpine and La Mancha goats, the delicate bloomy rind envelops the cheese over its 6 week ripening period. We like to pair Lake's Edge with a crusty bread, hoppy ale, or a bright tannic white wine!



We know that these soft little cheeses are coated in ash to help develop their rinds—but why?

After they've been drained and shaped into buttons, rounds, or pyramids, the surface of a freshly formed cheese is slightly acidic. It also needs a day or so to dry appropriately before the wheel can go into the aging cave. When combined with a little salt, ash helps with both of these things: A dusting of slightly alkaline ash will lower the acidity of the cheese surface. This creates the ideal conditions for the first of several successions of microbial communities to grow and gradually form the cheese's bloomy rind. Since it absorbs water, it's theorized that ash also hastens the drying process and helps preserve the integrity of the rind throughout its life.

Because of these properties, ash benefits the cheesemaker in other ways beyond rind formation. Its alkalinity can help to modulate the ripening process, meaning that the cheese can age for longer without molds on the surface running wild. Ash can also balance a cheese's acidity, which helps create the maker's desired flavor profile in the finished product.





Since the beginning of cheesemaking, the preservation of the fresh cheese surface has always been a major concern after the cheese has left the brine bath or dry salt table. Then, someone had the idea of coating the surface with the fine gray ash that was readily available from burnings. In earlier times, this was ash from the burning of the grapevine clippings in the Loire Valley of France, which was even then noted for their wealth of fresh goat cheese.

This seemed to preserve the cheese by discouraging the insects, microbes, and mold spores from setting up housekeeping. It also soon became apparent that the ash tended to dry off the surface as well.

The ash applied to cheese once came directly from a fire but is now mainly made from salt and vegetable ash (vegetables that are dried and turned into ash). The ash is sterile, odorless and tasteless.

Aesthetic and Practical Reasons is another reason for ash!

Many folks may look at this ash/charcoal addition and say: "I am not interested in eating dirt with my cheese." The reality is that this is not barbecue charcoal or gritty ash. It is a finely powdered, food-grade component actually revered by the medical world for its ability to control and absorb toxins.

Part of why we love being a cheesemonger is to open and push peoples palettes to a new direction they might not have felt comfortable trying before. We hope that through our journey of learning cheesemaking practices and creamery deep dives this allows you to expand your fromage experience!



Fingerlake's Gold Gouda by Lively Run Goat Dairy



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Lively Run Dairy was founded in New York's Finger Lakes region in 1982, and is one of the longest operating commercial goat dairies in the United States. Steve and Susanne Messmer purchased the farm in 1995 after Steve was discharged from military service in France and Germany, and continued its legacy of producing unique, high quality goats' milk cheeses. Today, Pete Messmer, Steve and Susanne's son, is the head cheesemaker, and their other two children are involved in the business as well. Lively Run has a herd of Alpine and Saanen goats, and also buys goat and cows' milk from neighboring farms to craft their delicious cheeses.

**Interlaken, New York
Pasteurized Goat's Milk
Traditional Rennet
Aged 3+ Months**



Finger lakes Gold is akin to the great goat's milk goudas of the world and packs a unique and distinctive punch! The younger wheels have a firm creamy paste that is bright and nutty, and milky. Pairing Notes: Malty ales, IPA's, Belgian-style beers, lagers, bourbon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Chardonnay

Pleasant Ridge Reserve by Uplands Cheese Company



Pleasant Ridge Reserve is a one-of-a-kind, aged alpine style cheese that's made in Wisconsin from the milk of nine different cow breeds. With an orange-brown rind and caramel-colored interior, Pleasant Ridge Reserve is made seasonally from May to October, when the cows are grazing on fresh pasture. Like the coveted, alpage versions of Beaufort and Gruyere, Pleasant Ridge is made only in the summer months, while the cows graze on fresh pasture. The sweetness born from the grass-fed milk combines with the savory flavors developed by the cheese's natural, washed rind. The resulting complexity – rich and salty, with a long, fruity finish – has made Pleasant Ridge one of the most distinctive and celebrated cheeses in the country.

In fact, Pleasant Ridge is the most-awarded cheese in American history, having won Best of Show in the American Cheese Society's annual competition three times (2001, 2005 and 2010), and having also won the US Cheese Championships in 2003. It is the only cheese to have won ACS Best of Show three times, and the only cheese to have ever won both of the major, national cheese competitions.

Uplands Cheese Company was founded in 1994 by two neighbors, the Gingriches and the Patenaudes, with the intent of joining their small herds and managing them in a seasonal, pasture-based system. Andy Hatch and Scott Mericka, who purchased the farm with their wives Caitlin Hatch and Liana Mericka, both began as apprentices under founders Mike Gingrich and Dan Patenaude.

The farm's location is ideal for growing a diverse range of herbs, legumes and grasses which contribute to high quality milk with exceptional flavors.

Although a strong standalone cheese, Pleasant Ridge Reserve pairs well with jammy cabernet sauvignon, pear and apple slices, rosemary herb bread, and dried cranberries. For dessert, pair with a sweet dessert wine and chocolate covered cherries.

Dodgeville, Wisconsin
Raw Cows Milk
Aged 2 Years



Dunbarton Blue by Roelli Cheese Haus Schullsburg, Wisconsin Pasteurized Cow's Milk Aged 90 Days

For Master Cheesemaker Chris Roelli of Wisconsin's Roelli Cheese Haus, the inspiration for Dunbarton Blue was something similar to "a cracked wheel of bandaged cheddar that happened to turn blue." What resulted was Dunbarton Blue, an earthy, English-style cheddar base with a kick of piquant blue flavor that's pronounced but approachable.

Combining the two styles, Dunbarton Blue is pressed and cave-aged like a traditional English cheddar—but like a blue, it's pierced and inoculated with *Penicillium roqueforti* mold spores before being cellar-aged. The cheese ages in cellars on wooden boards for about 90 days on wooden boards, during which time it develops a natural rind. The rich, earthy flavor of English cheddar highlights Dunbarton's slight blue zing for a cheese that's distinct and pleasantly balanced. While the blue flavor is noticeable, it's not overwhelming, making this a good pick for those new to blue. You can literally see the spores of where the needle was inserted into the wheel to create the mold, so cool!

With a handful of awards under its belt, Dunbarton Blue is the flagship cheese for Roelli Cheese Haus, which is helmed by fourth-generation cheesemaker Chris Roelli. The Roelli family has been making cheese since the early 1920s.

Made from raw milk in the summertime when the cows are out on pasture, and from heat treated milk in the wintertime when the cows are eating stored hay. The wheels are aged for a minimum of four months, to allow the intense flavors to develop.



Pairings

This flavorful cheese pairs well with sweeter accompaniments like honey, riesling, or Belgian style beer. (Need something bigger? Dunbarton Blue is full-bodied enough to hold up to rich brown ales and even barleywine.)

Cheddar Blue Cheese Puffs

Instructions

- Heat oven to 400°F. Line a 15 x 10-inch baking pan with parchment paper.
- 2. Bring the water, milk, butter, salt and pepper to a boil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Reduce heat to low. Add flour; stir vigorously until mixture pulls away from the sides of pan and a ball forms, about 30 seconds. Remove from the heat. Let stand for 5 minutes.
- Add eggs, one at a time, beating each until well combined. Continue beating until dough is smooth and glossy. Stir in Dunbarton Blue®.
- Pipe or spoon heaping tablespoonful rounds of dough on prepared pan. Bake for 15-20 minutes or until golden brown and puffed. Let cool on pan for 5 minutes before removing to a wire rack. Serve warm.

Recipe Tip

To freeze, allow puffs to cool completely. Store in an airtight container in the freezer up to 3 months. There's no need to thaw them—to reheat puffs, bake at 325°F for 10-12 minutes.



Ingredients

- 1/2 cup water
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, cut into small cubes
- 1/4 teaspoon each salt and pepper
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 4 large eggs
- 6 ounces Roelli Dunbarton Blue cheese, shredded (1 1/2 cups)

