

BANDAGED CHEDDAR

THE STORY

Developed by Wisconsin cheesemaker Willi Lehner, the drumlike wheels of cheddar are wrapped in strips of cloth and then rubbed in lard. Lehner then ages them and meticulously tends them for 12 to 24 months in the solar and wind-powered cave he built in 2007 into a hillside in Blue Mounds, Wisconsin.

Lehner drew on his Swiss heritage and time spent with English cheddarmakers like Jamie Montgomery to combine tradition and innovation. His parents immigrated to Wisconsin in the 1950s, and his father ran a cheesemaking facility in Barneveld and then opened his own in Mount Horeb where Lehner worked alongside him. Today, Lehner sources his milk from local farms producing high quality milk and makes cheese at Henning Cheese in Kiel, Wisconsin.

THE CHARACTER

After a minimum of 12 months of aging in Lehner's specially-designed underground cave, the bandaged cheddar is dense and complex with a rustic natural rind and flecks of crunchy calcium lactate throughout the paste. Its firm, dense paste is earthy, toasty, and full of caramel notes.

PERFECT PARTNERS:

Pair this bandaged cheddar with apple jelly, pickled mushrooms, garlic dill pickle spears, or serve it on sea salt crackers with red onion chutney. Dry cider, Gamay, Scotch, make excellent beverage pairings.
