



ACADEMY OF
CHEESE
...

LEVEL ONE: ASSOCIATE

25 CHEESE PROFILES



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BRIE DE MEAUX PDO

THE BASICS

MAKE:	Soft
POST-MAKE:	External Mould/Yeast Ripened
TYPICAL AGE PROFILES:	Minimum four weeks. Typically ripe at six to 10 weeks
APPROXIMATE SIZE(S):	2.6kg
GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGIN:	The Brie region (Seine-et-Marne and Île-de-France), just east of Paris, France
PROTECTED STATUS:	PDO - made with raw cows' milk and animal rennet in the Eastern Parisian basin
SPECIES (AND BREED) OF MILKING ANIMAL:	Cow. Breed not specified
RAW/PASTEURISED MILK:	Raw cows' milk
VEGETARIAN/ANIMAL RENNET:	Animal rennet
COMMONLY ENCOUNTERED VARIATIONS:	N/A



THE STORY

Known as the 'king of cheeses and cheese of kings' in France, Brie de Meaux was also popular with emperors. According to legend, it was the favourite cheese of Charlemagne in the Middle Ages, who was introduced to the cheese by the monks of Abbaye de Jouarre, who made it.

Protected by a PDO, the cheese must be made with raw milk in the Brie region (now mainly Seine-et-

Marne and Île-de-France) 30 miles east of Paris.

The coagulation temperature must not exceed 37°C and the curd is ladled into moulds by hand using a scoop-like tool called a *pelle à Brie*. This stops it from breaking up and helps retain moisture. The cheeses are salted after they drain and acidify in the moulds.

THE CHARACTER

The white rind of Brie de Meaux comes from the mould *Penicillium camemberti* which breaks down the underlying cheese as it matures. Young cheeses have a chalky texture, but become soft and gooey as they age, ripening from the rind inwards. A strong aroma of ammonia is a sign that Brie de Meaux has been over matured. The flavour is complex with vegetal, dairy and mould notes.

PERFECT PARTNERS:

Try a buttery white burgundy or lighter, fruitier reds such as pinot noir and gamay. The bubbles of sparkling wine can also work well, rebooting the palate after the creamy cheese, while spicy saison beers provide a nice contrast.

CAMEMBERT DE NORMANDIE PDO

THE BASICS

MAKE:	Soft
POST-MAKE:	External Mould/Yeast Ripened
TYPICAL AGE PROFILES:	One month
APPROXIMATE SIZE(S):	250g
GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGIN:	Departments of Orne, Manche, Eure, Calvados in Normandy, France
PROTECTED STATUS:	PDO - must be made with raw cows' milk in the Normandy region
SPECIES (AND BREED) OF MILKING ANIMAL:	Cow. At least 50% of the herd must be Normande breed cows
RAW/PASTEURISED MILK:	Raw cows' milk
VEGETARIAN/ANIMAL RENNET:	Typically animal rennet
COMMONLY ENCOUNTERED VARIATIONS:	N/A



THE STORY

The story goes that Marie Harel, a farmer's wife in Normandy, invented Camembert in 1791 after sheltering a priest on the run during the French Revolution. A native of Brie, the priest was said to have taught her the recipe for a soft, bloomy cheese in return for help. However, there is no evidence to support the story and there are actually much earlier references to Camembert.

The term 'Camembert' is not protected so can be used all over the world, but 'Camembert de Normandie' must be produced in Normandy with raw milk from herds with at least 50% Normande cows. The breed is prized for producing milk that is rich in protein and butterfat. Curds are cut vertically then ladled into moulds in five scoops, each one 40 minutes after the last. The cheeses drain for at least 18 hours and are turned once.

THE CHARACTER

Young cheeses have a chalky texture, but soften as they age, ripening from the *Penicillium camemberti* rind inwards. In Normandy, a chalky heart is welcomed, but elsewhere people prefer it ripened all the way through. The flavour tends to be stronger and more rustic than Brie de Meaux with intense vegetal and earthy notes. A strong aroma of ammonia is a sign the cheese has been over-ripened.

PERFECT PARTNERS:

Try a buttery white burgundy, while spicy saison beers provide contrast.

CROTTIN DE CHAVIGNOL PDO

THE BASICS

MAKE:	Soft
POST-MAKE:	External Mould/Yeast Ripened
TYPICAL AGE PROFILES:	Minimum 10 days, but typically two months.
APPROXIMATE SIZE(S):	60g
GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGIN:	Sancerre, France
PROTECTED STATUS:	PDO - must be made with raw goats' milk in the Cher, Loiret and Nièvre departments
SPECIES (AND BREED) OF MILKING ANIMAL:	Goat. Alpine breed
RAW/PASTEURISED MILK:	Raw goats' milk
VEGETARIAN/ANIMAL RENNET:	Typically animal rennet
COMMONLY ENCOUNTERED VARIATIONS:	N/A



THE STORY

Crottin de Chavignol encapsulates the Loire Valley's reputation as a "hot bed" of goats cheese and wine production. Vineyards in the region raised goats and made cheese as far back as the 16th century and Crottin is believed to derive from the word crot - a small oil lamp that would be used to light wine cellars. *Crottin* also means 'dung', which could be a reference to the cheese's rustic appearance. Chavignol is a town in the region.

Production follows the soft cheese process, however it is a lactic cheese coagulated over several hours predominantly by the acidification of the milk, plus a small quantity of rennet. The curds are pre-drained before moulding. They are turned at least once during draining and are dry-salted after unmoulding. The maturation temperature must be above 10°C.

THE CHARACTER

The rind varies from ivory white to brown in younger cheeses with a coat of blue and grey mould developing as it matures. The texture also changes from smooth and moist to dry and crumbly. Typical flavours include dairy, floral and earthy notes.

PERFECT PARTNERS:

Sancerre (made with sauvignon blanc grapes) is a classic combination.

LIVAROT PDO

THE BASICS

MAKE:	Soft
POST-MAKE:	Washed Rind; Wrapped, Rolled or Processed (non-flavoured)
TYPICAL AGE PROFILES:	Two months
APPROXIMATE SIZE(S):	450-500g (Petit 200g and Grand 1.2kg versions also permitted)
GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGIN:	Normandy, France
PROTECTED STATUS:	PDO – must be made with cows' milk in Calvados, Orne or L'Eure department of Normandy
SPECIES (AND BREED) OF MILKING ANIMAL:	Cow. Normande cows
RAW/PASTEURISED MILK:	Examples of both depending on cheesemaker
VEGETARIAN/ANIMAL RENNET:	Typically animal rennet
COMMONLY ENCOUNTERED VARIATIONS:	N/A



THE STORY

Livarot is known as 'the Colonel' because it is encircled by three or five strips of a dried reed-like plant called sedge, which resemble the braids on a colonel's uniform denoting rank. Hailing from the town of the same name in Normandy, the cheese must be made with milk from Normande cows, which is high in butterfat and protein. The animals must also graze for at least six months outside on the lush grass that grows in the clay soil and maritime climate of the Pays d'Auge.

Livarot is made in small vats with a capacity of less than 320 litres to ensure that acidity and moisture are consistent throughout moulding. The cheeses are matured for at least 35 days and washed in salt water to encourage sticky orange bacteria on the rind. Cultures may be added to the solution as well as annatto, which helps colour the rind.

THE CHARACTER

The sticky, pungent rind of Livarot varies in colour from straw yellow to deep red, while the interior is supple with small holes. Flavours include dairy, floral and earthy notes.

PERFECT PARTNERS:

Cider or Calvados are the tipples of choice in Normandy or try a light fruity red, such as Chinon.

ÉPOISSES PDO

THE BASICS

MAKE:	Soft
POST-MAKE:	Washed Rind
TYPICAL AGE PROFILES:	Six weeks
APPROXIMATE SIZE(S):	250-350g or 700g-1.2kg
GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGIN:	Burgundy, France
PROTECTED STATUS:	PDO - must be made in Côte-d'Or, Yonne or Haute-Marne departments of Burgundy and Champagne Ardenne
SPECIES (AND BREED) OF MILKING ANIMAL:	Cow. Brune (French Brown) Montbéliarde or French Simmental cows
RAW/PASTEURISED MILK:	Examples of both depending on cheesemaker
VEGETARIAN/ANIMAL RENNET:	Typically animal rennet
COMMONLY ENCOUNTERED VARIATIONS:	N/A



THE STORY

The pungent orange rind of Époisses comes from being washed in Marc de Bourgogne – a brandy made with the left-over grapes (pomace) from Burgundy wine production. Its roots can be traced back to the 16th century when Cistercian monks in the village of Époisses created a hearty cheese to eat on fast days when meat was forbidden. In 1900 there were 300 producers of Époisses, but by the 1950s the cheese had become extinct after the impact of two world wars.

Thankfully, in 1956 Époisses was revived by two farmer brothers Robert and Simone Berthaut, and restored to greatness.

Made initially as a lactic cheese, the curd is allowed to acidify and coagulate slowly for at least 16 hours, before being cut coarsely and moulded. Maturation lasts for at least four weeks, when the rinds are washed up to three times a week in a mixture of water and Marc (and sometimes salt).

THE CHARACTER

Packed in wooden boxes lined with paper, the cheese is surprisingly firm with a mild, lactic flavour and delicate earthy aroma from the golden rind when young. As it matures it becomes much softer and more intense with a strong aroma and pronounced fruity and savoury notes.

PERFECT PARTNERS:

The wines of Burgundy are a classic match, especially full-bodied chardonnays and meaty pinot noirs.

MORBIER PDO

THE BASICS

MAKE:	Soft
POST-MAKE:	Washed Rind; Wrapped, Rolled or Processed (non-flavoured)
TYPICAL AGE PROFILES:	Three months
APPROXIMATE SIZE(S):	5-8kg
GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGIN:	Franche Comté
PROTECTED STATUS:	PDO - must be made with raw milk in the Ain, Doubs, Jura or Saône and Loire departments
SPECIES (AND BREED) OF MILKING ANIMAL:	Cow. Montbéliarde or French Simmental cows
RAW/PASTEURISED MILK:	Raw cows' milk
VEGETARIAN/ANIMAL RENNET:	Typically animal rennet
COMMONLY ENCOUNTERED VARIATIONS:	N/A



THE STORY

Produced in the Jura mountains, Morbier was historically made on farms in the winter to use up successive milkings (during the summer, milk was pooled with other farms to make Comté). The evening milk would be made into a curd loaf, which was protected overnight with a sprinkling of soot, before curd made from the morning milk was placed on top, leaving a black line running through the centre. The cheese is now made in one process all year round,

but retains a black stripe of vegetable carbon as a nod to tradition. Raw milk is coagulated at below 40°C and the curd cut into 1cm cubes. The curds can also be washed. The whey is drained and the curds formed into cakes, which are sliced horizontally in half with one side dipped in charcoal, before being pressed together again. Morbier is rubbed with brine as it matures to form an orangey-pink rind.

THE CHARACTER

Beneath the fragrant dusky rind lies a supple interior and occasional small holes. The flavour is mild and milky with fruity notes. It's a great cheese for melting.

PERFECT PARTNERS:

In the Jura they drink it with the local Arbois wines, which comprise light, spicy reds, made with pinot noir, trousseau and polsard grapes, and crisp whites, made with chardonnay and savagnin.

FETA PDO

THE BASICS

MAKE:	Soft
POST-MAKE:	Flavoured or Smoked
TYPICAL AGE PROFILES:	Minimum two months
APPROXIMATE SIZE(S):	Various
GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGIN:	Greece, comprising Mainland Greece, Péloponnèse Thessalia, Epirus, Macedonia, Thrace and Lesbos.
PROTECTED STATUS:	PDO - must be made in Greece with sheep's milk
SPECIES (AND BREED) OF MILKING ANIMAL:	Sheep (minimum 70%) and Goat. Breed not specified
RAW/PASTEURISED MILK:	Examples of both depending on cheesemaker
VEGETARIAN/ANIMAL RENNET:	Examples of both depending on cheesemaker
COMMONLY ENCOUNTERED VARIATIONS:	N/A



THE STORY

Cheesemaking was a gift of the gods, according to Greek mythology, while the Cyclops' cave in Homer's Odyssey was filled with a sheeps cheese believed to be the forerunner of Feta. The ancient cheese was in danger of losing its identity in the 1990s when it was industrially produced across Europe. But after a long campaign, Greece secured a PDO for the cheese in 2002 meaning Feta can now only be made in Greece with sheep and goats' milk. The hardy animals roam the

mountainous landscape grazing on a diverse range of plants, which is expressed in creamy, fragrant milk. Feta is made following the soft cheese process. The curd is cut and may be stirred before acidification in the mould during draining. Most cheeses are salted and matured in brine, but some traditional versions are dry salted in barrels – the salt drawing whey from the cheese which forms the brine.

THE CHARACTER

Feta has no rind and is crumbly in texture with small holes and cracks. Dairy and herbaceous notes predominate with a salty finish.

PERFECT PARTNERS:

Great in pies, pastries and salads, the saltiness of the cheese also makes it a good match for crisp, refreshing beers, such as Pilsner.

GOATS CURD

THE BASICS

MAKE:	Soft
POST-MAKE:	N/A
TYPICAL AGE PROFILES:	One week
APPROXIMATE SIZE(S):	Various
GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGIN:	N/A
PROTECTED STATUS:	N/A
SPECIES (AND BREED) OF MILKING ANIMAL:	Goat. No breed specified
RAW/PASTEURISED MILK:	Examples of both depending on cheesemaker
VEGETARIAN/ANIMAL RENNET:	Examples of both depending on cheesemaker
COMMONLY ENCOUNTERED VARIATIONS:	N/A



THE STORY

If cheese is milks great leap towards immortality, then goats curd is more like the first step. Made to be eaten very young, it is moist and fresh with a milky flavour and silky texture. Goats' milk is high in fat, which means it is particularly good for making creamy curd, although sheep and cows' milk curd is also available. Chefs adore it, using it in everything from salads and tarts to cakes and ice cream.

Made as a lactic cheese, the milk is acidified over several hours until it reaches a pH of around 4.60 and forms a loose, high moisture curd (a small quantity of rennet may also be used). This can be moulded, but is usually drained through cloth, salted (but not always) and packed in tubs. The cheese is typically stored below 8°C to prevent the growth of yeasts and moulds.

THE CHARACTER

Goats curd should have a light, silky texture and fresh clean flavour with some sharpness.

PERFECT PARTNERS:

Crisp white wines such as godello or grüner veltliner match the acidity of the cheese, while the red fruit notes of a Provençal rosé work with the creaminess.

MOZZARELLA DI BUFALA CAMPANA PDO

THE BASICS

MAKE:	Soft
POST-MAKE:	Wrapped, Rolled or Processed (non-flavoured)
TYPICAL AGE PROFILES:	One week
APPROXIMATE SIZE(S):	Various shapes and sizes
GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGIN:	Campania, Italy
PROTECTED STATUS:	PDO - must be made in Caserta and Salerno provinces, or parts of Benevento, Naples, Frosinone, Latina and Rome
SPECIES (AND BREED) OF MILKING ANIMAL:	Buffalo. Italian Mediterranean breed
RAW/PASTEURISED MILK:	Examples of both depending on cheesemaker
VEGETARIAN/ANIMAL RENNET:	Typically animal rennet
COMMONLY ENCOUNTERED VARIATIONS:	Smoked (affumicato)



THE STORY

Mozzarella is made all over the world from buffalo and cows' milk, but it is Mozzarella di Bufala Campana from central-southern Italy that is widely prized above all else.

Buffalo were introduced to the region in the 7th century to work in the marshes and the first mention of the cheese came in the 12th century. It was originally called *mozza*, from the word *mozzare* – to lop off – a reference to the pasta filata 'pulled curd' process.

Mozzarella is classified as a soft cheese, but it has much in common with hard cheese. The milk is heated to 33-39°C and the curd set with rennet. This is cut and stirred and the curds allowed to acidify. Near-boiling water is added to melt them into a solid mass, which is pulled and spun, before pieces of cheese are 'lopped off' and shaped into balls. They are salted in brine and packed in acidified water.

THE CHARACTER

Mozzarella's texture should be elastic, with a tight, smooth surface. There should be no yellowish marks or spots, and, when pressed, the texture should be neither soft nor rubbery. When you slice into mozzarella, droplets of milky whey should seep out and it should have a grainy surface with layers, like an onion, especially near the surface. Sweet, dairy notes predominate.

PERFECT PARTNERS:

One of the world's great cooking cheeses, mozzarella is used in salads and melted on pizzas, but also works on its own with the red fruit notes of rosé.

BRILLAT-SAVARIN PGI

THE BASICS

MAKE:	Soft
POST-MAKE:	External Mould/Yeast Ripened
TYPICAL AGE PROFILES:	Four weeks
APPROXIMATE SIZE(S):	500g, 250g
GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGIN:	France
PROTECTED STATUS:	Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) must be made in the regions of Aube; Côte-d'Or; Saône-et-Loire; Seine-et-Marne; Yonne.
SPECIES (AND BREED) OF MILKING ANIMAL:	Cow. Breed not specified
RAW/PASTEURISED MILK:	Examples of both depending on cheesemaker
VEGETARIAN/ANIMAL RENNET:	Examples of both depending on cheesemaker
COMMONLY ENCOUNTERED VARIATIONS:	Also available as a fresh cheese (non affiné or frais)



THE STORY

Brillat-Savarin was a famous 18th century French food writer and gourmand, but the cheese named in his honour was launched in the 1930s by cheesemaker and affineur Henri Androuët. Today the cheese is made mainly in Normandy and Burgundy. A 'triple cream' cheese, made by adding cream to the

milk to increase the fat content, Brillat-Savarin is rich and buttery.

Initially made as a lactic cheese with a long coagulation period, the curd is cut and moulded while still very moist, after which it acidifies as the whey drains off. The cheeses are salted before maturation.

THE CHARACTER

It has a white fluffy rind and the texture is soft and creamy with dairy and vegetal notes.

PERFECT PARTNERS:

Such a decadent cheese deserves something special – the bubbles and acidity of Champagne cut through the richness beautifully.

PECORINO SARDO PDO

THE BASICS

MAKE:	Hard
POST-MAKE:	Wrapped, Rolled or Processed (non-flavoured)
TYPICAL AGE PROFILES:	Mild 20-60 days Mature two to 12 months
APPROXIMATE SIZE(S):	Mild: 2kg; Mature: 3-4kg
GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGIN:	Sardinia, Italy
PROTECTED STATUS:	PDO - must be made in Sardinia with sheep's milk
SPECIES (AND BREED) OF MILKING ANIMAL:	Sheep. Breed not specified
RAW/PASTEURISED MILK:	Typically pasteurised or thermised milk
VEGETARIAN/ANIMAL RENNET:	Animal rennet
COMMONLY ENCOUNTERED VARIATIONS:	N/A



THE STORY

Shepherds have wandered the sun-drenched pastures of Sardinia for thousands of years and sheep's milk cheeses are a speciality of the Italian island. The milk would traditionally have been heated over open fires in cauldrons with hot stones placed inside during the cheesemaking process. Not to be confused with Sardo Fiore, Pecorino Sardo is a hard cheese made in two styles: *dolce* (sweet/mild) and *maturo* (mature), and is

an essential part of the island's rural economy.

The curd is set with animal rennet and broken up to the size of hazelnuts for the younger cheese or grains of rice for the mature version, and then heated. The curds are then pressed in the moulds and can be dry-salted or brined. The rind is typically plastic-coated or rubbed in olive oil.

THE CHARACTER

The mild cheese has a straw yellow interior, often scattered with small holes, plus a firm but springy texture. The sides of the cheese are often slightly convex. It is mild and sweet.

Pecorino Sardo Maturo has straight sides, a more golden hue and a hard, grainy texture. The flavour is more intense and salty.

PERFECT PARTNERS:

Both are good for grating over pasta dishes and are used in the local speciality *Culurgiones* – pockets of dough stuffed with ricotta, Pecorino Sardo and mint. In Sardinia, they eat the cheese with a juicy red called Cannonau (grenache) – key elements of a diet that many believe is responsible for Sardinians' famously long lives.

YORKSHIRE WENSLEYDALE PGI

THE BASICS

MAKE:	Crumbly
POST-MAKE:	Wrapped, Rolled or Processed (non-flavoured)
TYPICAL AGE PROFILES:	Typically one to two months
APPROXIMATE SIZE(S):	5kg
GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGIN:	Yorkshire, UK
PROTECTED STATUS:	PGI - must be made in the Wensleydale area
SPECIES (AND BREED) OF MILKING ANIMAL:	Cow. Breed not specified
RAW/PASTEURISED MILK:	Examples of both depending on cheesemaker
VEGETARIAN/ANIMAL RENNET:	Examples of both depending on cheesemaker
COMMONLY ENCOUNTERED VARIATIONS:	Flavoured varieties with additions such as cranberries and apricots



THE STORY

'A nice bit of Wensleydale' has become a national catchphrase thanks to the exploits of Wallace & Gromit, but the cheese has a history that dates back much further. French Cistercian monks began making a sheep's milk cheese in the region in the 12th century in what is believed to have been an attempt to recreate Roquefort. The recipe passed to local farmers after the dissolution of the monasteries and evolved into the

crumbly cows' milk cheese of today.

Yorkshire Wensleydale is made by scalding the curds to remove whey and, after draining, they are piled up and cut into blocks in the vat. The blocks are turned, cut finer and stirred. They are then salted by hand and milled (cut finer again) before moulding. The cheeses are pressed for up to two days and can be bandaged in cloth. They are matured for one week to 12 months.

THE CHARACTER

The texture is firm and flaky with a white to ivory interior. The flavour takes in dairy and citrus notes.

PERFECT PARTNERS:

IPAs can work well with this cheese – the bitterness stands up to the acidity. Light fruity reds also work well with the creaminess.

CLOTH-BOUND CHESHIRE

THE BASICS

MAKE:	Crumbly
POST-MAKE:	Wrapped, Rolled or Processed (non-flavoured)
TYPICAL AGE PROFILES:	Four months
APPROXIMATE SIZE(S):	8kg
GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGIN:	Cheshire Plain, UK
PROTECTED STATUS:	N/A
SPECIES (AND BREED) OF MILKING ANIMAL:	Cow. Breed not specified
RAW/PASTEURISED MILK:	Examples of both depending on cheesemaker
VEGETARIAN/ANIMAL RENNET:	Examples of both depending on cheesemaker
COMMONLY ENCOUNTERED VARIATIONS:	N/A



THE STORY

Cheshire cheese is made by big factories all over the UK and tastes very similar to other mass-produced sharp, crumbly 'territorials', such as Wensleydale and Lancashire. But the original farmhouse cheese has a venerable history stretching back to at least the 16th century and its own unique flavour, which is linked to the mineral rich soil of the Cheshire Plain, where it originates from. Cheshire was once the pre-eminent cheese of the UK, but its popularity declined massively and today there is only one farmhouse

producer making a traditional cloth-bound cheese with unpasteurised milk.

The cheese is made by scalding the curds at temperatures lower than in cheddar making, which results in more moisture being retained. Once the curd has been cut, drained, milled and salted, it may be left overnight before pressing, which stops it from fusing together to the same extent as cheddar and helps create a flaky texture in the finished cheese. Muslin is applied to the surface of the cheese after pressing.

THE CHARACTER

Moist and crumbly in texture, the cheese should have zesty and mineral notes, plus a long finish. The interior can be ivory white or coloured a light red with the addition annatto.

PERFECT PARTNERS:

Medium-bodied reds, such as Côtes du Rhône and Rioja work well, as do hoppy pale ales.

BLUE STILTON PDO

THE BASICS

MAKE:	Crumbly
POST-MAKE:	Internal (Blue) Mould
TYPICAL AGE PROFILES:	Three months
APPROXIMATE SIZE(S):	8kg
GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGIN:	Midlands, UK
PROTECTED STATUS:	PDO - must be made in Leicestershire, Derbyshire or Nottinghamshire using pasteurised cows' milk
SPECIES (AND BREED) OF MILKING ANIMAL:	Cow. Breed not specified
RAW/PASTEURISED MILK:	Pasteurised milk
VEGETARIAN/ANIMAL RENNET:	Examples of both depending on cheesemaker
COMMONLY ENCOUNTERED VARIATIONS:	White Stilton PDO Blue Stilton PDO



THE STORY

Under its PDO, Britain's most famous blue can only be made in three counties with just six producers currently in operation. It's roots stretch back to at least the early 18th century and the village of Stilton in Cambridgeshire, when it was a hard, creamy cheese (which, according to Daniel Defoe, was served riddled with mites or maggots). But over time production concentrated in the Midlands and the cheese became the popular blue of today.

Blue Stilton must, by law, be made from pasteurised

cows' milk. Starter cultures, the blue mould *Penicillium roqueforti* and rennet are added to set the curd. It is then cut and drained overnight, before milling, salting and moulding in cylindrical hoops. The cheeses are turned not pressed, creating an open texture with space for the blue veins to grow during maturation. This begins at five weeks when the cheeses are pierced with spikes, allowing oxygen to penetrate and activate the blue mould.

THE CHARACTER

Look for an even web of veins that spread out from the centre to the rind. Young cheeses can be sharp and tangy, but as they mature they mellow, becoming much richer with complex dairy, fruity and umami flavours. The crumbly texture becomes creamier as it matures.

PERFECT PARTNERS:

Port is the classic combination, but dessert wines and porters also work well – their sweet flavours contrast with the salty cheese.

GORGONZOLA PDO

THE BASICS

MAKE:	Soft
POST-MAKE:	Internal (Blue) Mould
TYPICAL AGE PROFILES:	Minimum 50 days for the largest wheels, but typically three to six months. Minimum 80 days for the Piccante variety
APPROXIMATE SIZE(S):	6-13kg
GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGIN:	Italy
PROTECTED STATUS:	PDO - made with pasteurised cows' milk in the Lombardy and Piedmont regions of Italy
SPECIES (AND BREED) OF MILKING ANIMAL:	Cow. Breed not specified
RAW/PASTEURISED MILK:	Pasteurised milk
VEGETARIAN/ANIMAL RENNET:	Animal rennet
COMMONLY ENCOUNTERED VARIATIONS:	Dolce and Piccante



THE STORY

The story goes that Gorgonzola was discovered more than a thousand years ago when a cheesemaker in Lombardy abandoned his curd over night in pursuit of a beautiful woman. He returned the next morning and tried to cover up his mistake by adding fresh curds to the previous day's production. Little did he know that the higher acidity of the overnight curd would prevent it from knitting together with the new batch, leaving cracks for blue mould to develop.

Today, Gorgonzola is made with pasteurised milk following the soft cheese process. Once the curds are drained in moulds, the cheese is dry-salted over several days before it is pierced to allow oxygen to activate the blue mould. Gorgonzola Dolce is often matured in slatted wooden belts to stop it from collapsing on itself.

THE CHARACTER

There are two types of Gorgonzola. Dolce (sweet), which makes up the vast majority of production, is soft and creamy with a delicate blue spice, while Piccante (spicy) is aged at higher temperatures and for longer so has a crumbly texture and stronger flavour. The pink rind should not be eaten.

PERFECT PARTNERS:

The sweetness of fruity reds and dessert wines work with both the creaminess of Gorgonzola Dolce and the spice of Piccante.

ROQUEFORT PDO

THE BASICS

MAKE:	Soft
POST-MAKE:	Internal (Blue) Mould
TYPICAL AGE PROFILES:	Minimum 90 days
APPROXIMATE SIZE(S):	2.5-3kg
GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGIN:	Aveyron, France
PROTECTED STATUS:	PDO - made with raw sheep's milk in Aveyron, Aude, Lozère, Gard, Hérault and Tarn
SPECIES (AND BREED) OF MILKING ANIMAL:	Sheep. Lacaune breed
RAW/PASTEURISED MILK:	Raw milk
VEGETARIAN/ANIMAL RENNET:	Typically animal rennet
COMMONLY ENCOUNTERED VARIATIONS:	N/A



THE STORY

According to folklore, a young shepherd distracted by his sweetheart left his lunch of bread and cheese in a cave around a thousand years ago. He returned a few days later to discover blue-green mould from the cave had penetrated the cheese, and it was rather delicious. Whether the tale is true or not we'll never know, but by law the cheese must be matured in the limestone caves of the Combalou mountain in Roquefort-sur-Soulzon. Roquefort is made following the soft cheese recipe

using raw milk from the Lacaune sheep, a hardy breed that roams the region's parched, rocky landscape grazing on wild herbs. *Penicillium roqueforti* can be added to the milk or sprinkled on the curds prior to moulding. The cheeses are not pressed and piercing takes place after two days. Roquefort is matured for at least 90 days with at least two weeks in the Combalou caves.

THE CHARACTER

Characterised by a soft, moist and open texture with pockets of blue-green mould, Roquefort is a wonderfully complex cheese taking in herbaceous, fruity and umami notes.

PERFECT PARTNERS:

Sauternes is the traditional choice, but most sweet wines work well, as do powerful reds, such as a robust Languedoc.

AGED GOUDA

THE BASICS

MAKE:	Hard
POST-MAKE:	Wrapped, Rolled or Processed (non-flavoured)
TYPICAL AGE PROFILES:	Typically over 12 months
APPROXIMATE SIZE(S):	Typically 5-10kg
GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGIN:	Traditionally the Netherlands, but the name 'Gouda' is not protected so is made in many countries throughout the world
PROTECTED STATUS:	Boerenkaas TSG - made with raw milk on the farm in the Netherlands Gouda Holland PGI - cow's milk, made and matured in the Netherlands Noord-Hollandse Gouda PDO - milk obtained from the Noord Hollandse province
SPECIES (AND BREED) OF MILKING ANIMAL:	Cow, sheep, buffalo or goat. Breed not specified

RAW/PASTEURISED MILK:	Examples of both depending on cheesemaker
VEGETARIAN/ANIMAL RENNET:	Examples of both depending on cheesemaker
COMMONLY ENCOUNTERED VARIATIONS:	Cumin seeds and other herbs and spices are often added to Gouda



THE STORY

Widely adored for its sweet flavour, Gouda is named after the Dutch town where it was traded. Large rounds of the cheese are still brought into Gouda's cobbled square in the summer by handcart, where farmers and merchants haggle by slapping hands before sealing the deal with a handshake.

Gouda is a washed curd cheese, which involves removing some of the whey from the vat (after the

curds have been set, cut and stirred) and replacing it with hot water. This removes lactose so the bacteria have less to feed on and produces less acidity, resulting in sweet, caramel notes in the final cheese. The hot water also scalds the curds by raising the temperature to 36°C, causing more whey to be released. The cheeses are pressed, brined and often waxed or plastic-coated.

THE CHARACTER

Young Gouda has a smooth, pliable texture and sweet, fruity flavour, but after 12 months the aged cheeses become hard and brittle with typically fruity, spicy and dairy notes. Aged Gouda should have a closed texture, with or without small eyes. Splits or jagged, uneven openings should not be present. Crunchy crystals

are also often present in older cheeses.

PERFECT PARTNERS:

The sweet, cocoa notes of stouts and porters work well or try a robust, fruity red, such as Barolo.

BLOCK CHEDDAR

THE BASICS

MAKE:	Hard
POST-MAKE:	Wrapped, Rolled or Processed (non-flavoured)
TYPICAL AGE PROFILES:	Various
APPROXIMATE SIZE(S):	18kg
GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGIN:	UK, but the name 'cheddar' is not protected so is made in many countries throughout the world
PROTECTED STATUS:	N/A
SPECIES (AND BREED) OF MILKING ANIMAL:	Cow. Breed not specified
RAW/PASTEURISED MILK:	Typically cow. Breed not specified
VEGETARIAN/ANIMAL RENNET:	Typically vegetarian rennet
COMMONLY ENCOUNTERED VARIATIONS:	N/A



THE STORY

There is no protected status for the term 'cheddar', so the cheese can and is made anywhere. While round truckles of farmhouse cheddar are often cloth-bound and made with raw milk, block cheddar is made on a much larger scale in factories using pasteurised milk. The cheddaring process for artisan cheeses, which involves stacking blocks of curd by hand to help drain

whey, is carried out in automated machines for block cheeses with capacities of up to 15 tonnes per hour. The 18kg cheeses, which are formed into straight-edged blocks to make cutting easier, are matured in sealed plastic bags to stop a rind from forming and to prevent weight loss.

THE CHARACTER

There are no legal definitions for cheddar ageing terms. However, the British Cheese Board says: 'mild' cheddar is typically sold at three months; 'medium' at six months; 'mature' at nine months; 'extra mature' at 15 months; and 'vintage' at 18 months or more. The texture is typically moist, smooth and consistent

with flavours including sweet and dairy notes with some sharpness.

PERFECT PARTNERS:

Great for sandwiches and melting on toast or pasta. Bitter beers are a traditional accompaniment.

CLOTH-BOUND CHEDDAR

THE BASICS

MAKE:	Hard
POST-MAKE:	Wrapped, Rolled or Processed (non-flavoured)
TYPICAL AGE PROFILES:	Three to 24 months
APPROXIMATE SIZE(S):	Typically 25kg truckles
GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGIN:	UK, but the name 'cheddar' is not protected so is used in many countries throughout the world
PROTECTED STATUS:	PDO for West Country Farmhouse Cheddar for cheeses made in Somerset, Dorset, Devon or Cornwall and matured for a minimum of nine months
SPECIES (AND BREED) OF MILKING ANIMAL:	Typically cow
RAW/PASTEURISED MILK:	Examples of both depending on cheesemaker
VEGETARIAN/ANIMAL RENNET:	Examples of both depending on cheesemaker
COMMONLY ENCOUNTERED VARIATIONS:	Three Somerset-based cheesemakers: Montgomery's, Westcombe and Keen's, are members of a Slow Food Presidium for Artisanal Somerset Cheddar



THE STORY

Cheddar takes its name from a gorge and village in Somerset, where the cheese was first linked as far back as the 16th century. There are many different shapes, sizes, colours and ages of cheddar, using different milks, made all over the world. However, the traditional cheese is made in round truckles using cows' milk, which are bandaged in muslin to protect them as they mature. Following the hard cheese process, the curds are cut,

stirred and scalded to temperatures around 38-42°C to remove moisture. The whey is drained and the piles of curd are cut into blocks which are turned and stacked (cheddared) to promote drainage as they acidify. Once the target acidity is reached, the curds are milled and salted before moulding and pressing. The muslin is traditionally applied using lard. Natural moulds grow on the cloth during maturation and contribute to the development of the rind.

THE CHARACTER

The texture and flavour depends greatly on who made the cheese and how long it is matured. Young cheddars are smooth and tender with sweet, dairy notes, while mature cheeses can develop calcium lactate crystals and a firm, brittle texture with deep savoury notes.

PERFECT PARTNERS:

Beer is best from golden ales and bitters to IPAs and Belgian farmhouse beers.

SMOKED CHEDDAR

THE BASICS

MAKE:	Hard
POST-MAKE:	Flavoured or Smoked
TYPICAL AGE PROFILES:	Three to 12 months
APPROXIMATE SIZE(S):	Various
GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGIN:	UK, but the name 'Cheddar' is not protected so the cheese is made and smoked in many countries throughout the world
PROTECTED STATUS:	N/A
SPECIES (AND BREED) OF MILKING ANIMAL:	Typically cow
RAW/PASTEURISED MILK:	Examples of Both depending on cheesemaker
VEGETARIAN/ANIMAL RENNET:	Examples of both depending on cheesemaker
COMMONLY ENCOUNTERED VARIATIONS:	N/A



THE STORY

Smoking has been used for millennia as a way of preserving and flavouring food, although smoked cheddar is a relatively recent development. Both block and cloth-bound versions can be smoked, with producers using different techniques. Some add smoke flavouring to the curd, others cold smoke the cheese over wood chippings, such as oak or maple, for several hours, while a combination of both techniques can also be employed.

The production steps are otherwise the same as for other types of cheddar, following the hard cheese

process. The curds are cut, stirred and scalded to temperatures around 38-42°C to remove moisture. The whey is drained and the piles of curd are cut into blocks which are turned and stacked (cheddared) to drain more whey from the curds as they acidify. Once the target acidity is reached, the curds are milled and salted before moulding and pressing. The cheese is often cut into wedges and slices to help the flavour better penetrate during the cold smoking process.

THE CHARACTER

Smoked cheddar typically has a yellowy brown exterior from the smoking process with the level of smoke flavour dependent on how it was smoked and the cheese itself. The best versions have gentle smoky notes that are integrated with the flavours of the cheese itself.

PERFECT PARTNERS:

A tricky cheese to match with wine. Try the floral spice of an Alsatian Gewurztraminer. Traditional British beers, such as bitter and golden ale are a safer bet.

MIMOLETTE

THE BASICS

MAKE:	Hard
POST-MAKE:	Flavoured or Smoked
TYPICAL AGE PROFILES:	Three to 24 months
APPROXIMATE SIZE(S):	3-4kg
GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGIN:	Northern France, but made in other locations
PROTECTED STATUS:	N/A
SPECIES (AND BREED) OF MILKING ANIMAL:	Cow. Breed not specified
RAW/PASTEURISED MILK:	Examples of both depending on cheesemaker
VEGETARIAN/ANIMAL RENNET:	Typically animal rennet
COMMONLY ENCOUNTERED VARIATIONS:	N/A



THE STORY

There's no mistaking a mature Mimolette, thanks to its canonball shape, bright orange interior and craggy rind, which comes from allowing tiny cheese mites to burrow into the surface, while also creating unique flavours and textures.

The cheese was developed in Flanders during the 17th century Franco-Dutch war (possibly at the request of King Louis XIV). Holland refused to export its popular cheese Edam to the French, so they developed their

own copycat version, adding the orange pigment annatto to give it a point of difference. The cheese is also known as *Boule de Lille* after the city where it was first matured.

Mimolette is made following the hard cheese process. As with Aged Gouda, the curds are washed to remove lactose – a process which keeps the pH relatively high. The cheeses are moulded and pressed, and acidify on the press, before being brined.

THE CHARACTER

Mimolette can be eaten at just a few months old when it is mild and pliable, but is often matured for much longer. The *très vielle* (very old) cheese is aged for up to 24 months and has an extraordinary pitted rind, luminous orange colour and brittle texture. The flavour is full of sweet, dairy notes.

PERFECT PARTNERS:

The spice of Malbec provides an interesting counterpoint, but Belgian farmhouse ales, such as tart and fruity saisons, are hard to beat.

MANCHEGO PDO

THE BASICS

MAKE:	Hard
POST-MAKE:	Wrapped, Rolled or Processed (non-flavoured)
TYPICAL AGE PROFILES:	30 days to two years
APPROXIMATE SIZE(S):	400g to 4kg
GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGIN:	Spain
PROTECTED STATUS:	PDO - Queso Manchego must be made with sheep's milk in the La Mancha region of Spain, specifically Albacete, Ciudad Real, Cuenca and Toledo
SPECIES (AND BREED) OF MILKING ANIMAL:	Sheep. Manchega breed
RAW/PASTEURISED MILK:	Examples of both depending on cheesemaker. Raw milk cheese must carry the term <i>Artesano</i>
VEGETARIAN/ANIMAL RENNET:	Typically animal rennet
COMMONLY ENCOUNTERED VARIATIONS:	N/A



THE STORY

Manchego can only be made in the La Mancha region of Spain made famous by Don Quixote and his trusty sidekick Sancho Panza. They nibbled on the cheese when not tilting at windmills in Cervantes' famous story. Dry, arid and with temperatures up to 40°C during the summer, the harsh landscape is home to the hardy Manchega sheep breed, which graze the wild grasses and shrubs of the *dehesa* (wild meadows) and provide rich milk for cheese.

The curds for Manchego are scalded up to 40°C and the cheese is pressed, then dry-salted or brined. The zig-zag pattern on the rind was originally formed when the curd was placed in *esparto* baskets made from plaited grass to drain, but is now formed from an imprint on the moulds. The rinds may be sealed with a coating or rubbed with olive oil.

THE CHARACTER

There are various styles of Manchego, depending on age. The tender, buttery *fresco* is typically just a few weeks old. *Semicurado* is aged for up to four months and has a firmer texture, although still mild flavour, while the three-to six-month *curado* is harder still with the beginnings of Manchego's trademark sweet dairy and nutty characteristics. This is fully pronounced in

viejo (old) cheeses, which are aged for a year or more and have a long complex flavour.

PERFECT PARTNERS:

Keep it all Spanish with Pedro Ximénez sherry – the wine's raisin notes marry with the mature cheese's sweet, meaty flavours.

SINGLE GLOUCESTER PDO

THE BASICS

MAKE:	Crumbly
POST-MAKE:	External Mould/Yeast Ripened
TYPICAL AGE PROFILES:	Two months
APPROXIMATE SIZE(S):	2.25kg
GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGIN:	UK
PROTECTED STATUS:	PDO - must be made in Gloucestershire with at least some milk from Old Gloucester cows
SPECIES (AND BREED) OF MILKING ANIMAL:	Cow. Old Gloucester breed
RAW/PASTEURISED MILK:	Examples of both depending on cheesemaker
VEGETARIAN/ANIMAL RENNET:	Examples of both depending on cheesemaker
COMMONLY ENCOUNTERED VARIATIONS:	N/A



THE STORY

Single Gloucester was widely made on Gloucestershire farms more than 200 years ago, but the cheese had completely died out until it was revived in the 1990s. Under the terms of its PDO, it can only be made in Gloucestershire with milk from farms with at least some Old Gloucester cows. It is believed that the cheese was traditionally made

with skimmed milk or during the winter when the cows were fed hay and their milk was thinner. Double Gloucester was richer and had a higher fat content, hence 'single' and 'double' (as in single and double cream). The curds are scalded up to 32-35°C, before salting, moulding and pressing.

THE CHARACTER

Single Gloucester has a natural mouldy rind, and is softer and has a more open texture than other British territorial cheeses. It has a mild, lactic flavour.

PERFECT PARTNERS:

A glass of perry - traditional pear cider - works well with the delicate dairy notes of the cheese.

LE GRUYÈRE PDO

THE BASICS

MAKE:	Hard Cooked
POST-MAKE:	Washed Rind
TYPICAL AGE PROFILES:	Six to 18 months
APPROXIMATE SIZE(S):	35kg
GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGIN:	Switzerland
PROTECTED STATUS:	PDO - must be made in the cantons of Fribourg, Vaud, Neuchâtel, Jura, and Berne
SPECIES (AND BREED) OF MILKING ANIMAL:	Cow. No breed specified
RAW/PASTEURISED MILK:	Raw cows' milk
VEGETARIAN/ANIMAL RENNET:	Animal rennet
COMMONLY ENCOUNTERED VARIATIONS:	Gruyère PDO "Classic" Gruyère PDO Réserve Gruyère PDO Bio Gruyère d'Alpage PDO



THE STORY

This mighty mountain cheese, which can trace its history back to 1115, takes its name from the Swiss market town of Gruyères, where it has long been traded. The cheese is made in around 165 village dairies using milk from farms within 20km and is matured by specialist affineurs for at least five months. Tiny amounts of Gruyère d'Alpage are made during the summer, when the cows are taken high up to graze on mountain pastures and the cheese is often made in

small huts using copper cauldrons over open fires. The starter cultures for Gruyère typically come in the form of whey from the previous day's production. The curd is cut into small grains, stirred and heated to 54-59°C, before being moulded and pressed for a minimum of 16 hours after which the cheeses are either dry-salted or brined. The rind is washed in brine periodically during maturation.

THE CHARACTER

Gruyère Classic is aged for six to nine months and has a pliable texture and sweet flavour. Réserve is matured for at least 10 months, often longer, and has a slightly drier but still waxy texture, plus layers of flavour taking in dairy, fruity and umami notes.

PERFECT PARTNERS:

A wonderful cheese for melting in baked goods and fondue, Gruyère works well with fruity reds, including Burgundy and Côtes du Rhône.

PARMIGIANO-REGGIANO PDO

THE BASICS

MAKE:	Hard Cooked
POST-MAKE:	Wrapped, Rolled or Processed (non-flavoured)
TYPICAL AGE PROFILES:	12-36 months
APPROXIMATE SIZE(S):	38kg
GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGIN:	Italy
PROTECTED STATUS:	PDO - must be made in the provinces of Parma, Reggio Emilia, Modena and areas of Mantua and Bologna
SPECIES (AND BREED) OF MILKING ANIMAL:	Cow. No breed specified
RAW/PASTEURISED MILK:	Raw cows' milk
VEGETARIAN/ANIMAL RENNET:	Animal rennet
COMMONLY ENCOUNTERED VARIATIONS:	N/A



THE STORY

This grand Italian cheese, known as Parmesan in the UK, has been made for more than 900 years on the plains between the Rivers Po and Reno in Emilia Romagna. Produced with raw milk from cows that only eat grass and hay (no silage), the cheeses are matured for at least 12 months, but usually much longer. Made with partially skimmed milk, the curd is cut into small grains and scalded at 55°C. The curds settle

beneath the whey and mass into a single block which is cut in half to yield two cheeses from each vat. The cheeses are moulded in a round, bottomless cheese mould, called a *fascera*, and are pressed under their own weight, giving the distinctive shape of the final cheese. They are brined for about 24 days. Traditionally, the waste whey was used to feed pigs, which were used to make Parma ham.

THE CHARACTER

Cheeses matured for over 18 months are given a red seal; over 22 months a silver seal; and over 30 months a gold seal. The older the cheese, the harder and more granular it becomes with an abundance of amino acid crystals. The flavour also becomes more intense, balancing fruity, floral, umami and dairy notes.

PERFECT PARTNERS:

Wonderful for grating over pasta, Parmigiano-Reggiano also deserves to take pride of place on a cheeseboard. Serve with powerful reds such as Barolo and Primitivo from Puglia.



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