



Notes from... *the Cheese Chicks*

A *Talula's Table* initiative to educate and share our passion for the diverse, dynamic, and ever-enthralling world of Cheese.

OUR CHEESE-LETTER...AT LAST

Issue 1- July 2008

Before we go any further, we need to take yet another opportunity to thank you, our faithful cheese connoisseurs, for allowing us to serve you over this last year and a half. The world of cheese is a vast and exciting one, and it gets even better when we have great people to share our passion with!

This e-newsletter has been "in the works" for a while now, and we are excited to finally see it come to fruition. This is our effort to continue to educate all of you

about the beauty and complexity of the wide-world of cheese. In it, you will find various articles, "staff picks" and information about specific cheeses, pairing notes and suggestions, recipe ideas, cheese plate ideas, and much more.

So, here's to the first of many more editions of our newsletter. We hope you enjoy reading it as much as we enjoy creating it!

See you in the Market...



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TIS THE SEASON...FOR CHEESE THAT IS!

Let's face it, we love cheese anytime of the year, and nobody knows this better than the crew behind the Talula's Cheese Counter. But, we get particularly excited when Spring and Summer roll around, as the world of cheese is at its peak. Cheeses that are normally delicious are even more delicious. Cheeses that are normally rich and golden in color are even more vibrant. In short, cheeses are putting their best (and tastiest) foot forward!

Why does this happen? Well, there are a few reasons to explain away this phenomenon.

- **Great pastures make for great cheese**– We've said it before and we'll say it again. When the pastures are lush and verdant, cheese quality improves exponentially.

- **Plant diversity affects overall taste**– When the animals are exposed to an even more vast selection of plants to graze on, their milk can have a lot more "character." Often times, especially in the case of raw-milk cheeses, you can really taste what they are grazing on in the cheese.
- **Higher butterfat makes better cheese**– Because the animals have such a great diet this time of year, the overall quality of their milk increases as well as the percentage of butterfat. And, when there is more butterfat in the milk, cheeses become richer, creamier, and even more tasty.

So, let's celebrate the season and dig in to our favorite Artisan cheeses!

Goût du Terroir

In French, this literally translates as "taste of the land," with "land" understood in a very holistic and all-encompassing sense. The term highlights the fact that good, hand-crafted cheese (and wine too!) is constantly changing. In the world of cheese, we look forward to these subtle variations, which depend on a slew of factors: climate, nature of the soil, pasture composition, breed of the animal, season, and time of day, among others.

There are such a plethora of factors that go into making cheese that it's no wonder no two cheeses are ever the same!

STAFF PICKS...

We frequently get asked for our "favorite" cheese. Choosing just one cheese that is perfect for all situations, all times of day, and all moods is a virtual impossibility for us. Too many amazing cheeses would be left out! But, here are some cheeses that are really speaking to us right now...

- **Meadow Creek Dairy Grayson**— For us, this cheese was really love at first sight (and smell!). Made on a small-scale on a family-operated farm in the mountains of Southwest, Virginia, this one really reflects raw, fresh Jersey cow milk at its best. It is a farmstead washed-rind cheese, reminiscent of Italian Taleggio and French Livarot, but it maintains its own distinct character. It is smooth, finely textured, and beefy, with subtle grassy undertones. And, its deliciously addictive!

- **Uplands Cheese Pleasant Ridge Reserve**— This one is a legacy among American cheeses, because it won the American Cheese Society's coveted "Best in Show" the first year it was entered! Cheesemaker Mike Gingrich has reached perfection in this complex, sweet, washed-rind, raw milk tome which is only made seasonally (from Spring-Fall) when the pastures are at their peak. This is the perfect cheese to savor after a long day and it stands alone (no accoutrement necessary). Sit back and enjoy American Farmstead Cheese at its peak!
- **Beehive Cheese Barely Buzzed**— After-hours, this is a go-to cheddar for the cheese chicks, sweetened by a drizzle of our delicious lavender honey. This is no average cheddar: it is coated with a mixture of perfectly roasted espresso beans (roasted by the cheese-maker's brother) and French lavender, and set on Utah Blue Spruce racks to age. Ask us for a taste when you come in next time...

STORE HIGHLIGHTS: IN-HOUSE CHEESE PLATES

In a continuing effort to bring each and every cheese to you at its peak, we are now offering perfectly paired cheese plates that you can enjoy right here in the market. All of the cheeses will be at the perfect temperature and will come with tasty, creative accoutrements.

Each week, we will come up with a new "cheese menu" of what we are serving. So, grab a friend, come on over to the market, bring a bottle of your favorite wine, and dig in to this week's cheese plate...or take one back home with you. What a deal...small cheese boards, perfect for 1 or 2, start at \$14.

WHAT WE'RE DRINKING...

A co-operative effort with our friend, wine guru, Dave McDuff, from Moore Bros.

- With our nutty, earthy **Gruyère de Savoie** (which will take your mac & cheese to a whole new level), grab a bottle of **Mâcon-Davayé Domaine des Valanges** or **Custoza from Corte Gardoni**
- To make your **Grayson** experience even more amazing, try drinking **Pommeau de Normandie**, **La Cravantine from Gabrice Gasnier**, or a bottle of **Ribolla Gialla**
- Not that our farmstead **Ossau –Iraty Vallée d'Asp** needs a thing to make it even more satisfying, but if you have a nice red or white (anything except a Bordeaux) from the Southwest of France, this is a good cheese to uncork it for.

To read some more tasty tidbits, wine-pairing recommendations, restaurant reviews, and much more from a veritable foodie, check out Dave's Blog at:

<http://mcduffwine.blogspot.com>

As you know, we always love hearing your cheese tales, feedback, questions and comments. Our new e-mail for the cheese counter is: talulascheese@gmail.com

Farmstead Cheeses are...

"... cheeses made by hand on the farm with only milk produced on that farm, so that the cheese reflects the specific local character of one farm and one herd."

Will Studd, Chalk and Cheese



One of the happy Jerseys at Meadow Creek.

Did you Know...

Goat's Milk has no carotene in it, so it is always purely white, unlike cow's milk which, depending on the breed and the season, can be a rich golden yellow.



EXCITING LITTLE BITES FOR OUR FELLOW CHEESE LOVERS

- On October 4th, from 10-4, you can find us eating our way to dairy euphoria at the **Autumn Leaves Artisan Cheese and Foods Festival** at Valley Shepherd Creamery in Long Valley, NJ. Save the date to enjoy a guaranteed great day with some fine artisan cheesemakers! http://valleyshepherd.com/cheese_festival.htm
- Here's our top three list of books that every bonifide cheese lover should check out. We also have well-worn copies in the store, so feel free to browse when you are in the market!

The Cheese Plate—Max McCalman and David Gibbons
The Atlas of American Artisan Cheese—Jeffrey P. Roberts
The New American Cheese—Laura Werlin