



Holiday Tasting Kit

Savor the Season
with Vermont Cheesemakers



About the Vermont Cheese Council

Our nonprofit membership organization was founded almost 30 years ago by Vermont cheesemakers that wanted a way to foster community with each other, share collective learning, and develop a Vermont Cheese identity. Today, our core members include approximately 40 cheesemakers and producers from across Vermont.

Cheese community is important to us. We bring makers together for educational activities (like our annual Cheesemakers Conference), collective marketing (like our Vermont Cheese Trail), and even celebrations (like our annual Vermont Cheesemakers Festival). But we also create and share resources for things like food safety, greener packaging solutions, or industry sustainability that benefit us all. We even help Vermont cheesemakers with competition entries -- because we know when Vermont cheesemakers enter, they win.

Thank you for helping us produce these programs and resources with your purchase of this Holiday Tasting Kit. If you're inspired by what we do, you can also support by making a gift to our Annual Fund or our Educational Fund. Visit vtcheese.com/support for more information, or scan the QR code with your smart phone.

Scan to Give



Our Resident Monger: Mary Tuthill, CCP

Mary Tuthill is a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America, where she earned a degree in Baking and Pastry Arts Management. With a decade of experience in pastry shops, hotels, and restaurants, she decided to take a new path—entering the world of retail grocery. Mary joined Whole Foods Market as a Specialty Team Leader, where she had the opportunity to study for and earn certification as an American Cheese Society Certified Cheese Professional. She settled in Vermont to become the opening General Manager of the Mad River Taste Place in Waitsfield. This specialty grocery store is dedicated to showcasing Vermont-made products, with a focus on expertly curated cheeses served by knowledgeable mongers.

Mary now works as the Food Service Sales Manager for Cabot Creamery.

We'd like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to Mary for writing the culinary notes for this booklet, as well as her overall guidance in kit composition and logistics.

Eat, Drink, and Be Merry

We recommend moving your cheeses out of the refrigerator a half hour before eating, so they can come up to room temperature. If you're tasting cheeses one by one, we'd recommend moving through them in the order displayed below. If you're using our kit as part of a holiday gathering spread, we've included a few accoutrements to get you started, but we could recommend local honey, nuts, mustards, winter fruits, or additional cured meats like prosciutto.

- 1** *Brie* courtesy of **Vermont Farmstead Cheese Company**
Woodstock, Vermont • vermontfarmstead.com
- 2** *Butter Cheddar* courtesy of **Billings Farm & Museum**
Woodstock, Vermont • billingsfarm.org
- 3** *Gouda* courtesy of **Cabot Creamery Cooperative**
Waterbury Center, Vermont • cabotcreamery.com
- 4** *Gisele* courtesy of **Boston Post Dairy**
Enosburg Falls, Vermont • bostonpostdairy.com
- 5** *Madonna* courtesy of **Sage Goat Farm & Dairy**
Stowe, Vermont • sagegoatfarmdairy.com
- 6** *Conundrum* courtesy of **Jasper Hill Farm**
Greensboro, Vermont • jasperhillfarm.com
- 7** *Urdang* courtesy of **Barn First Creamery**
Westfield, Vermont
saxelbycheese.com/collections/barn-first-creamery
- 8** *Truffle Cheddar* courtesy of **Grafton Village Cheese Co.**
Grafton, Vermont • graftonvillagecheese.com
- 9** *Boucher Blue* courtesy of **Green Mountain Blue Cheese**
Highgate Center, Vermont
greenmountainbluecheese.weebly.com

Tasting Video & Helpful Extras at vtcheese.com/savortheseason

1

Brie

courtesy of Vermont Farmstead Cheese Company

Meet the Maker

Vermont Farmstead Cheese Company began as a community effort to save a local dairy farm and its surrounding rural landscape in South Woodstock, VT.

Thanks to those 14 neighbors, the farm has been transformed into the award-winning cheese company we are today. We continue to create a new generation of unique, artisanal cheeses through a marriage of authentic cheesemaking practices and innovative, playful partnerships within our community.



Meet the Cheese

Our Vermont Brie is a decadently rich soft-ripened cheese. It's mild with sweet cream and mushroom nuance and is a crowd pleaser even for those who claim not to be Brie fans. The star of any cheese plate... Try serving with your favorite fruit preserve or caramelized onion jam on a fresh baguette. We hope you enjoy our Vermont Brie as much as we do.

Culinary Notes by Mary the Monger

Brie by Vermont Farmstead is a wonderfully universal cheese. Eat it by the slice with dried apricots, chocolate covered pretzels or your favorite cracker for a perfect snack. If you want to level up, this cheese is perfect for all baking/melting applications. It is the perfect size to wrap in puff pastry with your favorite preserve to make a traditional baked brie, or it melts perfectly into pastas or poured over any vegetable.

Recommended Beverage Pairings

Beer: Harpoon Day Drifter - Bright and smooth IPA with citrus and tropical hop notes • **Wine: 2022 Iapetus Tectonic** - Tectonic is a wild & magical creature! Made from 100% La Crescent grapes grown sustainably in our Vermont vineyards, our skin contact "orange" wine is delicate yet intense. The aroma is complex and layered, with notes of tangerine, apricot, oranges, white pepper, tea, rose water, and floral attributes; you could keep your nose in this all-day.



2

Butter Cheddar courtesy of Billings Farm & Museum

Meet the Maker

Established in 1871, Billings Farm stands as one of Vermont's finest dairy farms, renowned for our exceptional Jersey herd and sustainable farming practices. Our Jersey cows produce milk with higher butterfat content, creating rich, creamy cheese with a golden hue that's distinctive to Jersey milk.

BILLINGS
FARM & MUSEUM

Meet the Cheese

Made in the German Butterkäse ("boo-ter-kay-zuh") tradition, this crowd pleaser of a cheese is aged for about 60 days. It is creamy, superbly melty, and mild with a slight tang. Both kids and adults love it! Fun fact: the butterkäse is also known as damenkäse. What does that mean? Ladies cheese.

Culinary Notes by Mary the Monger

Butter cheddar is a mild, creamy and buttery version of cheddar. This is a wonderfully approachable cheese enjoyed by novice cheese lovers and experts alike. This cheese is also great for culinary applications. With a higher moisture level & creaminess, this is a great melter. Perfect for grilled cheese, mac & cheese or try it melted over roasted potatoes or broccoli

Recommended Beverage Pairings

Beer: Harpoon IPA - Styled after an English IPA but brewed with distinctly American hops, it's citrusy, refreshing, and perfectly balanced

Wine: 2024 Shelburne Vineyard Lake View White - This is a cool, easy breezy semi-sweet white made from sustainably-certified grapes has nice soft juicy fruit flavors like ripe melon, with aromas of night flowers like jasmine and honeysuckle.



3

Gouda courtesy of Cabot Creamery Cooperative

Meet the Maker

The farm families who own Cabot Creamery Cooperative love what they do. And they've been doing it for a long time—every single day since 1919. Over 100 years later, we're proud of our thriving farms, strong communities, and happy, healthy cows that produce the rich, buttery milk that we use to make Cabot's award-winning cheese and dairy products.



Meet the Cheese

Cabot Gouda Cheese packs all the creamy, nutty sweetness you love, crafted with the care you expect from Cabot farmers. Cube it up for an easy, protein-packed snack or make it the star of your next gooey mac and cheese. There's simply no wrong way to enjoy Gouda cheese this good.

Culinary Notes by Mary the Monger

Cabot's version of Gouda is delightfully creamy and subtly sweet. With the color of caramel this cheese is wonderful melted and can be used in so many ways. Try dipping fresh apple slices into some melted Gouda for a fun take on a caramel apple. Or grab a piece of chocolate, some graham crackers and a little bit of melted Gouda for the cheesiest take on a S'more you've ever had!

Recommended Beverage Pairings

Beer: Harpoon Dunkin' Nitro Brown Sugar Shakin' Espresso Stout - Our Brown Sugar Shakin' Espresso Nitro Stout pairs rich Dunkin' espresso roast with a symphony of dark-roasted malts, layered with notes of caramelized brown sugar and all smoothed out by a creamy nitrogen pour.

Wine: 2022 Iapetus Substrata - Substrata is a harmonious blend of our cold-hardy white grape varieties. On the nose you get notes of lemon cream, coconut, and honeydew melon. Neutral oak plays a supporting role, bringing an underpinning of melted butter & vanilla. The first sip has echoes of that tropical coconut and warm butter, followed by a singing zing of tart lemon and mineral pithiness.



Meet the Maker

Boston Post Dairy is a family-run Vermont creamery producing handcrafted cheeses year-round using fresh milk from its own herd of goats and cows. Run by sisters Anne Doe and Susan Blouin, the creamery transforms farm-fresh milk—produced by their sister Theresa Lawyer and her family—into small-batch cheeses made with careful milk-to-cheese craftsmanship. Consistent production highlights clean, bright flavors of Vermont pasture and focused attention to aging and wash techniques. Flagship cheeses Eleven Brothers and Gisele showcase the herd's rich milk character and the creamery's dedication to quality.



Meet the Cheese

Gisele is an alpine-style cheese made with a blended cow and goat milk, finished with a spiced apple cider wash and aged 3-5 months. Creamy and slightly tangy with warm spice notes from the wash, Gisele—all lovingly named for the sisters' mother—has earned multiple American Cheese Society honors.

Culinary Notes by Mary the Monger

Giselle is a colder weather favorite! Made with cow and goat milk blended together, this is a great introduction to goat milk cheese! The rind's flavors of cinnamon and nutmeg are the perfect compliment to the soft tanginess of the goat milk. This is a cheese that shines with simple accompaniments. Try it with fresh apples, a glass of cider and a graham cracker. Dry cured salami is also a great pairing to add some silky mouthfeel to the cheese.

Recommended Beverage Pairings

Beer: Harpoon UFO White - California orange peel and freshly ground coriander lead a lineup of all-natural ingredients that make UFO White a refreshing accompaniment to any occasion.

Wine: Eden Peak Bloom - Made entirely with Vermont-grown apples and fermented without any added sugars, this is the best version of canned hard cider you're ever going to try. Floral and clean with the sweetness of biting into an apple, this semi-dry canned cider is made with McIntosh and Empire plus a smattering of heirloom apples to add complex layers to its flavor profile.





Anne Doe & Susan Blouin, Boston Post Dairy



Boston Post Assorted Cheeses



Cabot Creamery Cooperative Gouda



Blue Spruce Farm, Cabot Co-op Members



Molly Pindell, Sage Goat Farm



Sage Goat Farm Assorted Cheeses



Green Mountain Blue Cheese



Kayleigh Boucher, Green Mountain Blue Cheese



Grafton Village Traditional Cheddars



Mariano Gonzalez, Grafton Village Cheese



Billings Farm Cheddar



Billings Farm Herd



Vermont Farmstead Brie



Rebecca Velazquez, Barn First Creamery



Assorted Barn First Cheeses



Jasper Hill Farm



Assorted Jasper Hill Farm Cheeses

5

Madonna courtesy of Sage Goat Farm & Dairy

Meet the Maker

Sage Farm Goat Dairy is a small, family-run farm in Stowe, VT. Sisters Molly and Katie Pindell milk a herd of registered Alpine dairy goats and produce small-batch artisanal cheeses. Katie runs the milking operation and has developed a highly productive herd with genetics selected from farms across the country. Molly is the head cheesemaker, crafting our milk into a variety of award-winning cheeses. The herd moves daily through a variety of pasture and browse across our approximately 50 acres of fields and woodlands. We tailor our cheesemaking to the season. Some cheeses are made only in spring, such as the maple banon, which is wrapped in newly unfurled sugar maple and grape leaves. Others, such as the decadent Spruce, a bark-wrapped, bloomy rind cheese, we make with the rich, high-fat milk the goats give us in the fall. We strive to maintain a healthy and productive goat herd, promote a sustainable farm ecology, and produce high quality cheeses for our local New England market.



Meet the Cheese

Madonna is a small disc of ripened chèvre, aged for 2-3 weeks. Made with pasteurized goat's milk, Madonna has a delicate rind of snow-white wrinkles. Young Madonna has a firmer, lemony paste, while older Madonna develops a classic gooey creamline and lovely mushroom flavors.

Culinary Notes by Mary the Monger

Madonna is a perfect example of a soft ripened goat cheese. With a delicate, fluffy white rind and the creamiest paste underneath, this is a truly spectacular cheese. With hints of citrus, earth and mushroom this cheese needs to be the highlight of whatever you are pairing it with. Try it spread onto a whole grain bread with a drizzle of honey or a tiny bit of fruit jam. The jam/honey adds a little sweetness that plays with the citrus tones and just makes this cheese sing.

Recommended Beverage Pairings

Beer: **Harpoon Vermont Lager** - A smooth, crisp, and balanced Amber Lager brewed with Maine-grown malt and balanced with a mild hop spice delivers an easy-drinking finish perfect for any occasion. Available on draft only.

Wine: **2024 Shelburne Vineyard Lake View Rosé** - Lake View Rosé is a dry, elegant rosé with balanced acidity and notes of pink guava, red berries and citrus. Crafted from a blend of Cayuga White, Chardonnay and Petite Pearl, this lovely rosé is refreshing and crisp like a mountain lake breeze.

Meet the Maker

Jasper Hill Farm makes award-winning artisan cheeses in an effort to support the rural economy of Vermont's beautiful Northeast Kingdom. Raw milk cheeses are made from the Farm's own single herd, while the rest of the collection draws milk from several local family farms. All cheeses are cave aged to perfection in an innovative set of underground ripening caves. Jasper Hill Farm is a demonstration that deliciousness is a powerful force for good.



Meet the Cheese

What do you call an experimental cheese that is so delicious you have to share it? A Conundrum. This special edition cheese is a different take on our spruce bark wrapped classic, Harbison. With this special batch, we've changed the ripening cultures used in the cheese and given it a few washes of sparkling wine. The result is a soft, spoonable cheese with washed rind flavors of cured ham and sourdough.

Culinary Notes by Mary the Monger

The best part about Harbison is that it comes in its own little serving dish. Keep the bark on, slice off just the top rind and then you can scoop or dip to your heart's content! Some favorite dipping components are perfectly crisp tater tots, flavored potato chips (especially the fancy Jambon or truffle flavored ones), dry cured salami slices, fruits/veggies etc. For a truly decadent experience once you have the top cut off, add some honey and perhaps some chopped nuts, pop under the broiler until melted to perfection, slather on sliced baguette and enjoy!

Recommended Beverage Pairings

Beer: Harpoon Dark - A blend of specialty malts gives our Dark a velvety mouthfeel with roasted notes and a hint of chocolate, balanced by a subtle hop aroma. Hard to describe but easy to drink, Harpoon Dark is rich in character and light on the palate. The overall character is hearty malt and chocolate balanced with a crisp hop bitterness. Available on draft only.

Wine: 2024 Shelburne Vineyard Riesling - Our single vineyard, estate-grown and hand harvested Shelburne Vineyard Riesling greets you in the glass with evocative notes of honeysuckle, warm lemon and wet stone. There's a light and very pleasant sweetness on the palate, and a lingering finish.



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Urdang courtesy of Barn First Creamery

Meet the Maker

Barn First Creamery is a 100% farmstead goat creamery in Westfield, Vermont. Informally founded in 2013 by husband-and-wife Merlin Backus and Rebecca Velazquez, the farm has grown from two goats and two people to a herd of ninety six milking goats and four people. The preschooler and first grader don't help much yet. Barn First produces seven types of cheese: three bloomy rinds, two washed rinds, a blue and a tomme, along with bottling gently pasteurized goat milk.



Meet the Cheese

Urdang is a goat cheese whose rind is washed in Sip of Sunshine IPA during the aging process to promote a slightly pungent, fruity funky flavor. Urdang is mild for a washed-rind cheese—the paste is dense and fudgy with a chalky and tangy core to balance the fuller flavors that arise from the wash.

Culinary Notes by Mary the Monger

Urdang is a washed rind 100% goat milk cheese. Washing the rind imparts a lovely complexity to this bright and creamy goat milk. This cheese has bigger flavors so the pairings can also be a little bolder. Try this with a gingersnap or dark molasses cookie to bring in a hint of sweetness and play off of the earthy tones. Drizzle with honey to compliment the citrus notes of the goat cheese. This is also a great pairing with any bubbly beverage to cleanse the pallet in between bites.

Recommended Beverage Pairings

Beer: Harpoon Rec. League - Brewed with tropical modern hops and a groundbreaking blend of ingredients (buckwheat kasha, chia seeds, and sea salt). Light and refreshing but full of flavor, it packs everything we love about hop-forward beers into an easy-drinking

Wine: 2022 Iapetus Tectonic - Tectonic is a unique white wine made by allowing white grapes to ferment on their skins. The aroma is complex and layered, with notes of apricot, peach, raisin, white pepper, tea,

rose water, and floral attributes; you could keep your nose in this all-day. This vintage is medium-bodied and has power, yet is balanced.



Meet the Maker

Grafton Village Cheese Company has been producing award-winning cheeses in Grafton, Vermont, for over 60 years. Our handcrafted cheeses are made with unpasteurized milk from local family farms, rBST/rBGH free, vegetarian, and kosher approved. Products include cow's milk traditional and flavored cheddars, as well as a line of Cave Aged cheeses - cheddars, alpine style, and Pyrenees-style made with cow, sheep, and mixed milk. Head Cheese Maker Mariano Gonzalez has 30+ years of experience producing award-winning cheeses, including cheddars and original creations. He has been credited with reintroducing clothbound cheddar to the United States and has won multiple World's Best titles for this iconic cheese.



Meet the Cheese

Lovers of truffles will recognize the heady, earthy aromas of this delectable fungus in our Truffle Cheddar. We use a perfect balance of fresh truffle and truffle oil to infuse the cheese throughout with that telltale truffle quality. With a semi-firm texture that is both pliant and creamy, this is a cheese to satisfy nearly any mood or application. Serve with a drizzle of raw honey and toasted hazelnuts on a cheeseboard or use it to turn almost any kitchen creation into a truffle-scented luxury.

Culinary Notes by Mary the Monger

Truffles make everything more elegant and that includes cheese! This truffle cheddar has a balanced truffle flavor and aroma, with the creamiest cheddar background. Eat this on its own with dry cured meats and something bubbly for an elevated party hors d'oeuvres, or this can be melted and used in almost any application. Decadent mac & cheese, add a little to mashed potatoes, or grate it over a pasta dish. The possibilities are endless!

Recommended Beverage Pairings

Beer: Harpoon Winter Warmer - Combining the subtle sweetness of caramel malt with holiday spice additions of cinnamon and nutmeg, it's both hardy and satisfying yet surprisingly easy-drinking. Cheers!

Wine: 2022 Iapetus Terrane - This wine is a study in our Vermont-grown cold hardy Petite Pearl grapes. Allowed to ferment with wild native yeasts and bottled unfiltered, the nose is full of black currant and red plum, with a touch of smoky mocha. Acidity and body are medium... fuzzy but bright and attention-getting. On the palate, Terrane is an overflowing bowl full of berries; blue, red, black, purple, plum! The finish is lengthy, smooth, and lightly tannic.

Meet the Maker

Green Mountain Blue Cheese offers a taste of Vermont's finest, crafted with care on our family farm in Highgate, VT. We turn our fresh raw milk—still warm from the cows—into handcrafted wheels during morning milking. Rooted in 14 generations of family farming, our cheeses carry forward the Boucher tradition of hard work and Vermont's agricultural heritage. Our blues are a celebration of place, process, and flavor. Our award-winning artisan cheeses offer rich, bold flavors that can make a blue cheese lover out of anyone!



Meet the Cheese

Bold, creamy, and crumbly, Boucher Blue Cheese is our most popular award-winning cheese. Made in the French Forme d'Ambert style, it's richly veined and savory, crafted with care on our Vermont family farm. Perfect for salads, burgers, or made into a compound butter for steak.

Culinary Notes by Mary the Monger

Boucher Blue is a natural rinded blue cheese, on the firmer side with a more crumbly than creamy texture. Known as a gateway blue cheese, this appeals to a wide audience. Great as part of cheese board, snacking with chocolate covered fruit or pretzels. Also give it a try crumbled into salad with dried cranberries, pears and almonds, or as a topping on a ribeye steak!

Recommended Beverage Pairings

Beer: Harpoon Catamount IPA - Soft, pale, & hazy with notes of citrus zest & pineapple. Available on draft only.

Wine: Eden Heirloom Ice Cider - This special cheese deserves a truly special beverage. Eden Heirloom Ice Cider, which is naturally cold concentrated and contains only natural apple sugars, pairs surprisingly well with the nutty intensity of blue cheese. This flagship Ice Cider is made with over 15 heirloom apple varieties, all grown in Vermont. The combination of heirloom apples creates a beautifully textured, still, sweet dessert style cider that is elevated by a backbone of bright acidity. It boasts a beautiful balance of sweetness, acidity, and fruit, with notes of baked apple, pineapple, citrus and turbinado sugar.



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And three cheers to our beverage experts:



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Our Membership

Support cheesemakers all year round by buying local. Many of our members have farm stands and retail spaces you can visit - find out who at vtcheese.com/trail.

5 Generations Creamery	Jasper Hill Farm
Barn First Creamery	Lazy Lady Farm
Big Picture Farm	Maplebrook Farm +
Billings Farm & Museum	Ploughgate Creamery
Blue Ledge Farm	Mt. Mansfield Creamery
Boston Post Dairy	Parish Hill Creamery
Bridport Creamery	Plymouth Cheese
Cabot Creamery Cooperative	Sage Farm Goat Dairy
Champlain Valley Creamery	Shelburne Farms
Cobb Hill Cheese	Shepherd Moon Farm
Creek Valley Farm	Spring Brook Farm Cheese
Crooked Mile Cheese	Stony Pond Farm
Crowley Cheese, LLC	Sweet Rowan
Fat Sheep Farm	Three Cow Creamery
Fern River Farm	Three Shepherds Farm
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Grafton Village Cheese Co.	Vermont Shepherd
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