



*News & Press • November 30, 2007*

**SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE**  
**NOVEMBER 30, 2007**  
**BY JANET FLETCHER**



**CHEESE COURSE: A SELECTION OF CHEESE TO PAIR WITH CHAMPAGNES AND SPARKLING WINES** —

Unlike other wines, red and white, sparkling wine has few enemies on the cheese board. It's as happy with a young, soft Robiola as it is with aged Parmigiano-Reggiano, as compatible with a buttery triple-cream as with a pungent blue. I can't make sense of it, but it's true.

If you're planning to pour brut with your cheese course, the good news is that the list of cheeses to avoid is short. In my experience, stinky washed-rind cheeses such as Munster and aggressive blue cheeses like Cabrales won't do the wine any favors. But that leaves innumerable choices, so let's try to narrow them.

A brut sparkler's lively acidity and palate-cleansing fizz complement cheeses with plush, silky textures. Tongue-coating double- and triple-cream cheeses such as Cowgirl Creamery's Mt. Tam, Brillat-Savarin, Pierre Robert and Nancy's Hudson Valley Camembert fit that description, but so do many other bloomy-

— continued on page 2 —

rind cheeses that are not as high in fat. Consider Chaource from France, a rich, bloomy-rind cow's milk cheese with mushroom aromas; or Constant Bliss, a luscious Vermont cheese modeled after Chaource.

Fromager d'Affinois, a popular double-cream French cow's milk cheese, has the sort of supple, oozy interior that contrasts so well with sparkling wine. So does a ripe Edel de Cleron, another cow's milk cheese from France with a more compelling fragrance than Fromager d'Affinois. For a sheep's milk option, look to Brebiou, a bloomy-rind cheese with a fluffy interior and the aroma of clotted cream.

Northern Italy produces several cheeses that sparkling wine loves, among them the ingratiating La Tur, a small mixed-milk cheese packaged in its own paper doily; and the many Robiolas from Piemonte, which tend to have delicate, cultured-milk aromas and molten textures.

Although it is a finicky cheese and not always in good condition at local cheese counters, a ripe Nevat would be divine with sparkling wine. This luscious goat's milk cheese from Spain's Catalonia region matures from the outside in, so look for one that is obviously softening under the bloomy rind.

I'm not a huge fan of truffled cheeses, but there's no denying their affinity with sparkling wine. Cypress Grove, producer of the beloved Humboldt Fog, has recently launched Truffle Tremor, a ripened goat cheese infused with black truffle. Open a bubbly and you've got a party.

Blue cheese with sparkling wine may raise a few eyebrows, but with the right blue, you should make converts. Mellow, creamy blues such as Ireland's Cashel Blue, France's Bleu des Basques, Spain's La Peral or Ewe's Blue from New York's Old Chatham Shepherding Company are the best choices.

Janet Fletcher is a Chronicle staff writer.

**SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE**  
**"CHEESE COURSE: A SELECTION**  
**OF CHEESE TO PAIR WITH**  
**CHAMPAGNES AND SPARKLING**  
**WINES"**  
**PAGE 2**

**CYPRESS GROVE CHEVRE**

1330 Q Street · Arcata, CA 95521 · p 707-825-1100 · f 707-825-1101 · [www.cypressgrovechevre.com](http://www.cypressgrovechevre.com)