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TREND ALERT – CHEERS TO BEER & CHEESE!

WHEN PAIRING GOAT CHEESES REACH FOR THE BOTTLE OPENER INSTEAD OF THE CORKSREW

Explore the Cheese Pairing & Beer Pouring Possibilities With New Tasting Tool Kit from Cypress Grove Chevre

Arcata, CALIF. – Wine and cheese is fine, but the inspiration for beer and cheese was divine. Belgian monks, who relied on the two fermented products as part of their daily diet and a steady income, have been pairing beer and cheese since the Middle Ages. Centuries later, that pairing is gaining a following. In the U.S., the artisan beer and cheese movement of the last few decades has been merging into a new pairing trend that’s starting to rival the popularity of wine and cheese. Just why is beer becoming “the big cheese” when it comes to food and beverage pairing possibilities?

According to Sonny Simonian, Cypress Grove Quality Assurance Manager, who was formerly Head Brewer for Lost Coast Brewery in Eureka, Calif. and Brewer at Mad River Brewery in Blue Lake, Calif., “Beer, with its balance of sweetness, acidity and carbonation, provides a much larger palate of flavors and aromas, making it more diverse in terms of what foods, and especially cheeses, you can pair with it. Sweet, cloying wines can cover subtle food nuances, and the mouth drying substances produced by tannic acids in dry wine can also mask flavors, so you have to be more careful about pairing selections. In my opinion, lots more beers go with a lot more cheeses.”

Simonian isn’t the only one who thinks so. *Say Cheese Magazine* just reported on “Pitcher Perfect Pairings” quoting Bay Area beer expert Beth Wathen: “Compared with most wines, beer has—to steal a wine-tasting phrase—better mouth feel. You have a sip of beer and it coats the mouth, then you taste a piece of cheese, and the flavor changes. The carbonation really opens up the palate. Above all, a good match depends on personal preference. The best thing you can do is to take some risks, invite friends over and start to sample and see for yourself,” Wathen suggests.

This is exactly what Cypress Grove Chevre is encouraging consumers to do. To help get them started, Cypress Grove is offering a free, downloadable beer and cheese pairing toolkit, including a pairing placemat featuring four of its most popular, award-winning goat cheeses: Purple Haze, with its perfect mixture of lavender and fennel pollen; the distinctively luscious Humboldt Fog, with its ribbon of edible vegetable ash along the center creating a cake-like appearance; Midnight Moon, aged six months or more to achieve its firm dense texture and smooth, nutty, brown-buttery flavor with prominent caramel notes; and the earthy and elegant Truffle Tremor, where the classic flavor of truffle meets the velvety perfection of ripened goat milk cheese.

The pairing placemat features a blue dot for glass placement and space for beer names and tasting notes. The toolkit will also include a shopping list featuring Cypress Grove cheeses and recommended serving amounts, a pairing suggestions sheet and instructions for using the kit to help keep track of personal pairing discoveries, or as a hand out for guests when hosting a pairing party. Visit www.cypressgrovechevre.com/newsroom to download a free beer and cheese pairing toolkit, which will be available online as of July 30.

“We hope consumers will join us in raising a toast to the many pairing discoveries that await fans of artisan beers and our hand-crafted cheeses using this open resource toolkit,” said Michael Duffy, Cypress Grove Chevre Marketing Manager. “Look for beer and cheese pairing news on our @CypressGroves Twitter feed and Facebook fan pages, where we invite consumers to share feedback on their favorite beer and cheese pairings.”

For those in search of expert beer and cheese pairing recommendations, a wide range of resources are available, including:

- *Culture* magazine’s Summer 2010 “Beer Culture guide to American craft brews for cheese lovers” which quoted Russian River Brewing Company Owner Vinnie Cilurzo of Santa Rosa, Calif.: “Beer, in many cases, works better with cheese than wine because there are more diverse flavors with beer as compared to wine. Our favorite pairing by far is Temptation – a barrel-aged blond ale – with Cypress Grove Humboldt Fog. The funkiness of the beer pairs well with the rich character of the cheese.”
- *The Hop Press* beer blog featured Cypress Grove Chevre cheeses in June, recommending various styles and specific beers to pair with each of the cheeses featured on the pairing placemat.
- *The New York Times* “Tastings with Craft Beers” story reported “at a recent cheese paring in Eugene, OR at the Bier Stein, an unassuming spot where ties are next to tie-dyes, Cypress Grove Chevre’s rich Truffle Tremor goat cheese sat next to a barleywine, a heady ale that clocks in at around 10% alcohol, from Ninkasi Brewing Company.”
- “Any beer with more herbal notes will work well with fresh chevres, and aged or washed rind goat cheeses can stand up to bolder beers with big hop flavors,” according to Sebbie Buhler, Advocate at Rogue Ales & Rogue Spirits

About Cypress Grove Chevre (www.cypressgrovechevre.com)

Cypress Grove Chevre is the leading producer of fine American goat cheese including the top-selling American artisanal classic, Humboldt Fog. Founded in 1983 by Mary Keehn, Cypress Grove continues a tradition of innovation by introducing original American cheeses to the marketplace, such as Truffle Tremor and new Herbs de Humboldt. Based in Arcata, CA, where the Redwoods meet the Pacific, Cypress Grove’s award-winning family of products can be found at fine retail outlets and restaurants across the country. Cypress Grove’s mission is to provide its customers with an innovative and unique selection of cheeses while taking care of its employees, community, dairies and the environment.”

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