

SKEWERING THE
CHEESE PLATE

NEW FRONTIERS
IN GENETICS

DUTCH MAKERS
BREAKING THE MOLD

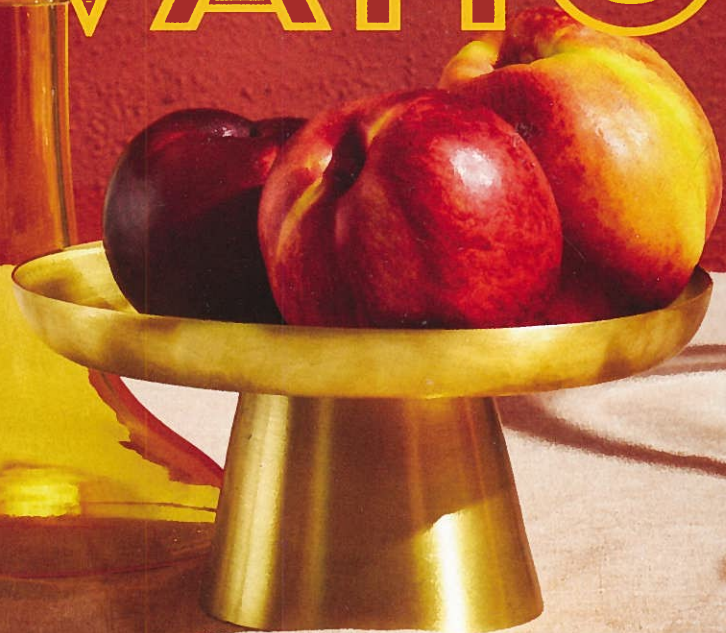
the word on cheese

culture



Centerfold Star
MYSTIC CHEESE'S
THE FINBACK

THE INNOVATION ISSUE

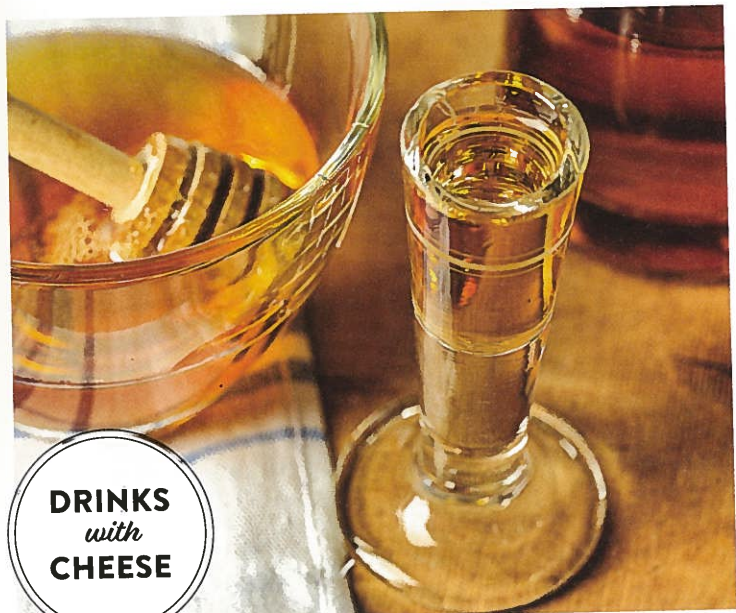


APR./MAY 2023

\$9.95US/CAN



culturecheesemag.com



DRINKS
with
CHEESE

Nectar of the Gods

THE NEW CLASS OF HONEY WINE ISN'T JUST FOR VIKINGS ANYMORE

WRITTEN BY LINNI KRAL

Mead, tej, metheglin, hydromel, karri—whatever you call it, honey wine is one of mankind's earliest alcoholic beverages. Those looking to get a buzz on in the ancient world did so via bees as early as the seventh century BCE, and today the substance is still known for its associations with Vikings and renaissance fairs. It's also, unfortunately, known for being almost undrinkably sweet, medicinally thick, and generally not for everyone. "Sugar hides off flavors," says Gordon Hull, founder of Heidrun Meadery in Point Reyes Station, California. "So mead has possibly been made sweet in the past to be more palatable, as sweetness can mask flaws. The world of mead is evolving now that we're able to control the wild yeasts in other ways."

Hull is part of a new class of mead makers creating delicate, food-friendly honey wines. They're exploring the drink's roots in Africa and Asia, sourcing monofloral varietals from around the globe, and playing with new ways of fermenting mead, like *méthode champenoise*. The result? Crushable, balanced, and food-friendly meads begging to be paired with cheese. They're deeply floral and flavorful enough to stand on their own next to strong wheels, yet delicate enough to play with milder ones, too.

"You're working with this extraordinary substance of honey," Hull says, "So the wine that comes from it ought to be beautiful. It ought to be refreshing and crisp, sort of the way you think of flowers in an open field." Read on for a few of our favorite ways to enjoy these new meads with cheese. **c**

**ENLIGHTENMENT WINES
MEADERY MEMENTO MORI
+ JUMI Schlossberger Alt**

Raphael Lyon and friends harvest pounds upon pounds of dandelion by hand every spring to craft this funky, malty, and vegetal riff on classic New England dandelion tonic. Pair its meadow-floor depth with a toasty and fudgy alpine like JUMI's Schlossberger Alt.

**HEIDRUN MEADERY
CALIFORNIA ORANGE
BLOSSOM
+ Capriole Tea Rose**

Made with the pure monofloral honey of bees who graze the orange trees of California's San Joaquin Valley, this mead tastes like driving down I-5 during peak bloom. Crisp yet perfumed, with a nose of pure citrus blossom, it pairs best with natural-rind blues and fresh herby chèvres like Capriole's Tea Rose.

**ZYDECO MEADERY
HIBISCUS
+ Sweet Grass Dairy Green Hill**

Based on a Trinidadian recipe Zydeco owner Eric Depradine learned from his grandmother, this tart red mead draws inspiration from Caribbean and West African hibiscus drinks like sorrel and bissap. With a light body and a warming note of ginger, it slakes that very specific thirst created by rich, fatty, double creams like Green Hill.

**HEIDRUN MEADERY
TANZANIAN MIOMBO
WILDFLOWER
+ Point Reyes Farmstead Cheese Company Quinta**

Beekeepers sedate bees by spraying woodsmoke into hives, and they need even more smoke for aggressive species of African bees—which is why this mead made with Tanzanian honey tastes like a cross between champagne and peaty scotch. Its mysterious earthy profile will keep you guessing—pair it with an equally inscrutable bark-wrapped cheese like Point Reyes' Quinta.

Mark Your Calendars

APRIL

CheeseCon

April 4–6 Madison, Wis.
cheesecon.org

The BIG Cheese

April 20 Staten Island, N.Y.
thestonehousesi.com/events

North Carolina Wine, Cheese & Chocolate Festival
April 29, Raleigh, N.C.
facebook.com/ncwinecheesechocolate

10th Annual Wisconsin Grilled Cheese Championship
April 29 Dodgeville, Wis.
grilledcheesewisconsin.com

Sacramento Grilled Cheese Festival
April 29–30
Sacramento, Calif.
sacgrilledcheese.com

Liquid City: Cheese Expo 2023
April 30 San Diego, Calif.
liquidcitysd.com

MAY

SIAL Canada International Cheese Competition
May 9 Toronto
sialcanada.com

Artisan Cheese Fair
May 20–21
Melton Mowbray, UK
meltonfestivals.co.uk

Cooper's Hill Cheese Rolling
May 29 Brockworth, UK