



Carmody – Bellwether Farms, Sonoma County, CA

Carmody is a pasteurized cow milk cheese produced by the mother and son team behind Bellwether Farms in Sonoma County. It was inspired by a tour that cheesemaker Liam Callahan took of an Italian Gorgonzola factory where he was presented with a young table cheese or ‘toma’ that was fresh and clean in flavor, the perfect everyday cheese in his mind. Lacking a recipe and very limited in equipment at the creamery he operated with his mom, Cindy, Liam dauntingly set out to recreate this style of cheese with the rich, full-flavored milk from their herd of Jersey cows. The fresh wheels are not brined nor pressed but instead, salt-dried and aged for four to eight weeks before release. The resulting cheese is dense and semi-firm with many pinhead-sized eyes. While this isn’t the most complex cheese you will ever taste, its purity of flavor, fresh dairy notes and buttermilk tang are extremely charming. The rich, buttery notes in Carmody are just begging for a bright and zippy white like this mineral-tinged Jacquère from the Savoie region in the French Alps. The cheese helps to soften the wines’ piercing acidity while enhancing its flavors of fresh lemongrass and Granny Smith apple.

Wine Pairing: 2017 Domaine Jean Vullien Jacquère, Vin de Savoie AOP, France



Devil’s Gulch – Cowgirl Creamery, Petaluma, CA

Devil’s Gulch is a pasteurized, bloomy rind cow milk cheese made by Cowgirl Creamery in Petaluma with organic Holstein milk sourced from a local dairy. Sue Conley and Peggy Smith left their restaurant industry careers in the early 1990s (at Berkeley-based Chez Panisse and Bette’s Oceanview Diner) to launch a company called ‘Tomales Bay Foods’, a marketing vehicle to help West Marin’s farms and dairies get their delicious products into the hands of the Bay Area’s finest chefs. As fate would have it, their first location featured a small cheesemaking room, which the entrepreneurs quickly put to use. The rest is history, and Cowgirl Creamery has since then won numerous awards, introduced four retail stores and fashioned themselves as one of the leading artisan cheesemakers and purveyors throughout the state. A seasonal winter offering, the wheels of Devil’s Gulch are spritzed with Quady Winery’s Muscat wine and dusted with a mixture of sweet and spicy ground heirloom peppers from Allstar Organics. The cheese offers a bright, sweet spiciness tempered by the rich creaminess of the paste and pairs beautifully with this Sylvaner from Alsace, France. The fresh dairy tang from the cheese enhances the vivid, lychee and honeysuckle notes in the wine, while the wine highlights the peppery notes in the cheese.

Wine Pairing: 2015 Dirlor-Cade Sylvaner ‘Cuvée Vieilles Vignes’, Alsace, France



Bethmale – Fromagerie Jean Faup, Midi-Pyrénées, France

Bethmale is a pasteurized goat milk cheese made by Fromagerie Jean Faup in the Midi-Pyrenees, a mountainous region south of Toulouse near the Spanish border. Named after the picturesque valley of Bethmale that lures adventurous hikers and skiers, this delectable cheese is rumored to have been a favorite of Louis VI’s in the 12th century and boasts a pretty burnt orange rind due to the wheels being brushed and turned while it ages on wood planks for two to three months. Semi-firm in texture and dotted with tiny pinholes, Bethmale offers a somewhat spicy tang along with earthy and nutty undertones that make for a perfect pairing with this vibrant, cassis and thyme-scented Barbera from Piedmont Italy. The savory qualities in the cheese mingle very well with the earthy notes in the wine, accentuating its flavors of spicy anise and dried mint.

Wine Pairing: 2015 Matteo Correggia Barbera d’Alba DOC, Piedmont, Italy



Midnight Moon – Cypress Grove, Humboldt County, CA

Midnight Moon is a pasteurized goat milk cheese produced in a Gouda style in the Netherlands and sold under the Cypress Grove label. Mary Keehn, proprietor and cheesemaker of the Humboldt County-based Cypress Grove Creamery, travels to Europe to find cheesemaking partners who can make classic cheeses to her specifications. Made from high quality milk sourced from a local goat farm, the cheese is aged for twelve months in Holland before it is shipped off to the U.S. During its maturation, Midnight Moon develops a slightly granular mouthfeel and yields a dense and smooth, ivory-colored paste. Rich flavors of brown butter are complemented by salted caramel undertones and hints of roasted nuts. The decadent notes in this cheese call for a wine with ample fruitiness and a juicy acidity, and we were delighted to discover a lovely match with this blend of Grenache, Syrah and Mataro (a.k.a. Mourvèdre) from Australia. The sweet and salty notes in the cheese mimic the interplay of ripe baked fruit and earthiness found in the wine, making for a truly addictive pairing.

Wine Pairing: 2017 Kalleske ‘Clarry’s GSM’, Barossa Valley, Australia