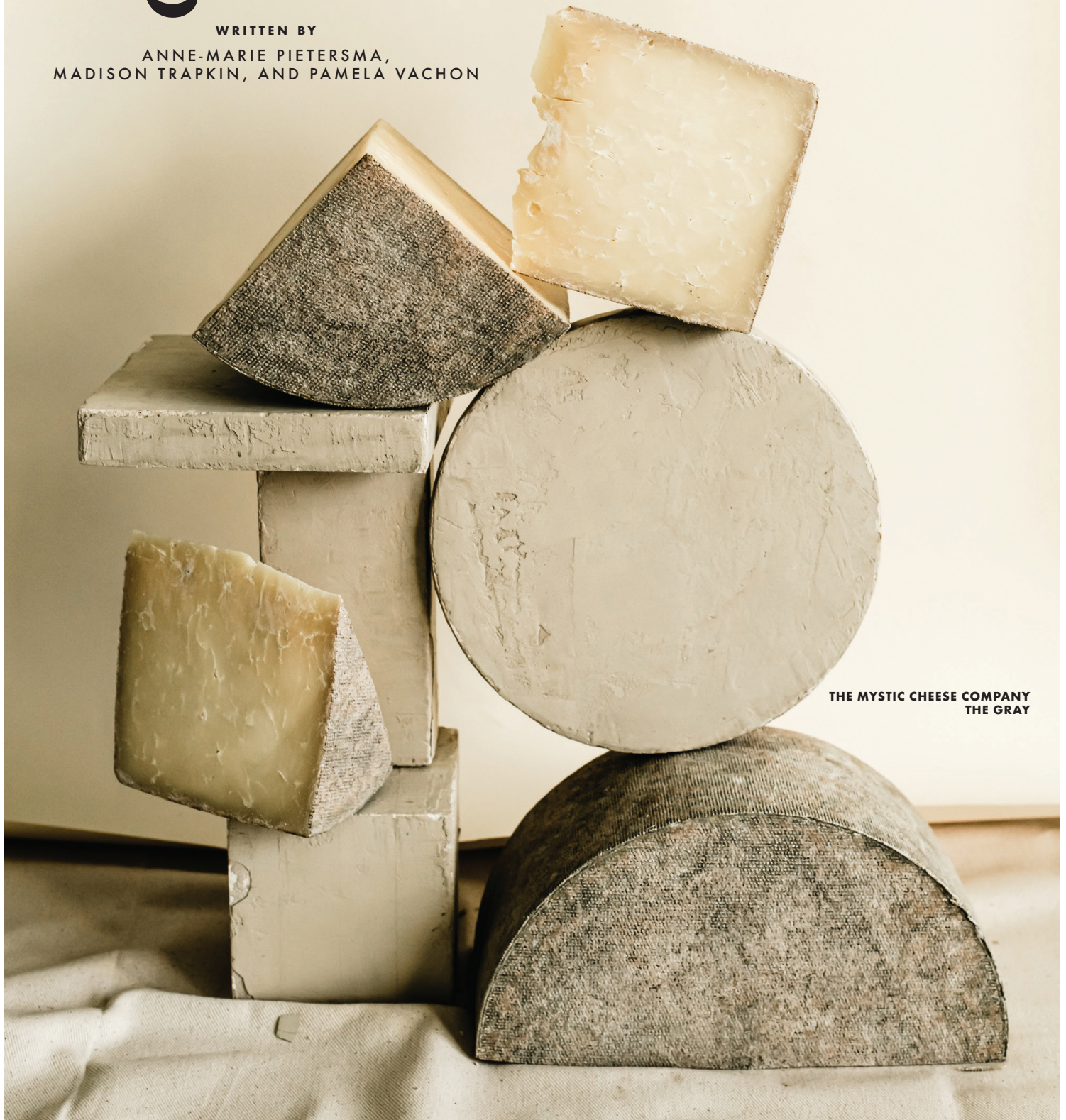


Cow's Milk Cheeses

WRITTEN BY

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THE MYSTIC CHEESE COMPANY
THE GRAY

THE GRAY

The Mystic Cheese Company
Groton, Connecticut

Inspired by Great Britain, this wheel is made in the traditional Cheshire style in the heart of New England. It's made so well, in fact, that it took First in its category at the 2024 ACS. It starts with milk from Ayrshire Cows and is aged 90 days to give it a crumbly yet creamy texture. The Gray has a lactic acidity that's characteristic of classic Cheshires and a lingering buttery finish. **MT**

RACLETTE DE COMPTON AU POIVRE

Fromagerie La Station
Compton, Quebec

This year's First Place Best of Show at the 2024 ACS was a peppery wheel from Canadian cheesemaker Fromagerie La Station. It's a creamy cow's milk raclette that packs a punch, thanks to a line of pink peppercorns running through its center, which imbues the surrounding cheese with a delicately floral and notably zippy flavor. Like a traditional raclette, this cheese is meant to be melted over all manner of accompaniments: hunks of sourdough, classic cornichons, and boiled potatoes. **MT**

LE COUSIN

Fromagerie Médard
Saint-Gédéon, Quebec

An instant classic from Canada, this washed-rind cheese took Second Place Best of Show at the 2024 ACS. Le Cousin is made using pasteurized milk from Brown Swiss cows, resulting in a soft, buttery wheel that's aged for 21 days. The rind is a lovely light orange, and because it's washed, this cheese also has a slightly funky finish. **MT**



POINT REYES FARMSTEAD CHEESE COMPANY FENNEL BLUE

FENNEL BLUE

Point Reyes Farmstead Cheese Company
Point Reyes Station, California

No stranger to award season, California's iconic Point Reyes Farmstead Cheese Company put another blue beauty up for consideration this year, to notable effect. Using the natural-rind, oft-awarded Bay Blue as a base, fennel seeds were added to create Fennel Blue, which earned Third in its category at the 2024 ACS. Flavored cheese had a big year at ACS, and Fennel Blue was part of the excitement in its first year on the market. With sweet and spicy pungency, fennel amplifies not only the natural sweetness of the cheese but its umami depth as well, resulting in what may be the perfect cheese accompaniment to a gin and tonic. **PV**

PHOTO: Courtesy of Point Reyes Farmstead Cheese/Emma Zilbur



PARISH HILL CREAMERY HUMBLE

HUMBLE

Parish Hill Creamery
Westminster West, Vermont

Parish Hill Creamery's Humble would seem to be a fitting name for a cheese described by its maker as a "small-format monastic tomme." However, there's little that's actually humble about Humble, a funky, pudgy, washed-rind stunner with a recent 2023–24 WCA Super Gold accolade to its name. With the banner "natural cheese done right," veteran cheesemaker Peter Dixon is making cheese as naturally as possible, with every step of the process undertaken on-premise, from its farmstead raw-milk operation to starter cultures selected from specific cows to the spontaneously fermented cider used to wash the Humble wheels. **PV**

PHOTO: Melissa Koran

BLUE MOO

COWS Creamery
Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island

As far as blue cheeses go, this Canadian cow's milk blue is mild, creamy, and perfect for those looking for a gentle foray into funk. Blue Moo is a rindless triple cream, which means it has a rich, buttery mouthfeel and a soft, spreadable texture. This newcomer won First in its category at the 2024 ACS, and its versatility shines—whether eaten solo, served on a cheese plate, or incorporated into a classic dish such as macaroni and cheese. **MT**

FLAGSHIP RESERVE

Beecher's Handmade Cheese
Seattle, Washington

Flagship Reserve is no stranger to the awards circuit, and 2024 was no exception—this semi-hard cow's milk cheese took Third Place Best of Show at the 2024 ACS. It's aged for 15 months, which allows complex nutty and caramel-y flavors to develop. In terms of texture, it crumbles like parmesan and has slight crystalline structure that can stand up to anything, from fruity jams to dark chocolate. **MT**

ELDO

Haro Cheese Company
Bertram, Texas

Haro Cheese Company founder Joel Haro may be a relative newcomer to the cheese world, but he's already churning out winners—his Manchego-inspired wheel took First in its category for ripened cheeses aged more than 90 days at the 2024 ACS. Eldo is a raw cow's milk cheese that's coated in vegetable ash and aged in Haro's on-site cheese cave. It's tangy, a tad citrusy, and extremely snackable. **MT**

STICHELTON

Stichelton Dairy
Cuckney, United Kingdom

The result of a partnership between London's legendary Neal's Yard Dairy and cheesemaker Joe Schneider, Stichelton is a resurrection of the original form of Stilton, which was once made with raw cow's milk. (The formation of the Stilton PDO in 1996 sealed its fate as a pasteurized cheese.) Honoring the same, careful process since its inception in 2006, hand-ladled and slowly drained curds create a blue cheese of delicate texture and a remarkably long finish, bringing both toasty and fruity notes to the table. Stichelton was awarded Gold at the 2023–24 WCA. **PV**



NODINI

Caputo Cheese
Melrose Park, Illinois

The folks at Caputo Cheese have been making award-winning Italian cheeses stateside for decades, and 2024 was no exception. Their Nodini—a knotted fresh mozzarella made with cow’s milk—won First in its category at the 2024 ACS as well as Best of Class at the 2024 WCCC. This cheese has a soft, stretchy texture and a mild, milky flavor that makes it perfect for cooking or enjoying straight out of the container. **MT**

APPLE WALNUT SMOKED CHEDDAR

Beehive Cheese Company
Uintah, Utah

When it comes to smoked cheeses, balance is key, and this brick from Utah-based Beehive Cheese Company achieves the perfect harmony between subtlety and smoke. The base cheese is a tangy, creamy cow’s milk cheddar that’s cold smoked with apple and walnut wood to give it a toasted, fruity flavor that isn’t overpowering. It placed First in the Smoked Cheddar category at the 2024 ACS. **MT**

DARKSIDE OF THE MOO

Gunn’s Hill Artisan Cheese
Woodstock, Ontario

Gunn’s Hill Artisan Cheese co-owner Shep Ysselstein was no stranger to dairy farming, having grown up on a family farm, but it was an apprenticeship in Switzerland following business school that specifically shaped his cheesemaking approach. Since 2011, Ysselstein has been crafting Swiss-inspired cheeses using locally sourced pasteurized cow’s milk in Ontario, Canada. Modeled after a lesser-known Swiss cheese called Mutschli, Darkside of the Moo is soaked in a local chocolate stout, which brings another element of Swiss influence to the playful award winner. Nutty, buttery, and with just a whiff of cocoa, Darkside of the Moo earned First in its flavored cheese category at the 2024 ACS. **PV**



GUNN’S HILL ARTISAN CHEESE
DARKSIDE OF THE MOO



STREET CHED

Urban Stead Cheese
Cincinnati, Ohio

This English-style clothbound cheddar is aged for a minimum of 12 months to give it the perfect balance of slightly sweet and tangy sharpness that warranted First in its category at the 2024 ACS. Urban Stead Cheese uses local Jersey cow's milk to make this impressive wheel, and the cloth it is bound in imparts a savory earthiness that lingers long after the initial cheddar punch. **MT**

INTERGALACTIC

Perrystead Dairy
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Inspiring “out of this world” metaphors since first hitting cheese cases in 2021, Perrystead Dairy’s Intergalactic placed First among American Originals at the 2024 ACS. Cheesemaker Yoav Perry threw out the earthbound rulebook for this cheese, typical of his signature use of traditional European techniques to create entirely original American cheeses. For Intergalactic, he applies cardoon thistle rennet to pasteurized cow’s milk and sets it in a petite cube mold. The square shape, combined with its mottled *Geotrichum candidum* rind, gives the cheese an otherworldly appearance, but its flavor and texture make it truly cosmic: Think freshly baked bread and savory green olives in a fluffy yet gooey package. **PV**

GALDERWOOD

Jasper Hill Farm
Greensboro, Vermont

This cow’s milk cheese is a master class in milk terroir. The same hay that the cows graze on is also harvested, dried, and used to coat the exterior of the cheese, which equates to a double dose of grassy goodness when it comes to the final product. Calderwood is brined for six months before the hay is added, and the resulting cheese is earthy, nutty, and complex. It won First in its category at the 2024 ACS. **MT**

VICTORIA

McGrath Cheese Company
Hudson, New York

Nestled in the Hudson Valley, you’ll find McGrath Cheese Company, the artisan producer behind this soft-ripened square. Victoria is made with pasteurized cow’s milk and aged for three to six weeks, which gives the cheese a balanced, milky flavor with a hint of funk at the finish and a smooth, buttery texture. This cheese took First in its category at the 2024 ACS. **MT**



MARIEKE GOUDA AGED, 9-12 MONTHS

MARIEKE GOUDA AGED, 9-12 MONTHS

Marieke Gouda
Thorp, Wisconsin

Cheesemaker Marieke Penterman has been bringing her Dutch cheesemaking sensibilities—and boundless enthusiasm—to northern Wisconsin since 2006, crafting award-winning goudas to rival those of her native Holland. Full-flavored raw cow’s milk, collected from the herd in her free-stall “cow spa,” is key to the various expressions of gouda that have earned accolades since her very first batch. Best-selling Marieke Gouda Aged, which took Second in its category at the 2024 ACS, spends nine to 12 months maturing on pine planks that impart a nutty flavor that is equally rich and approachable, with a delectable crystalline crunch. **PV**

BRUNY ISLAND CHEESE CO. C2



C2

Bruny Island Cheese Co.
Bruny Island, Tasmania

Started in 2003 as a passion project to create something distinctively Tasmanian, Bruny Island Cheese Co. was founded by Nick Haddow, who previously spent a decade working with specialist cheesemakers from around the world. Created from a blueprint using Northern Italian and French mountain cheeses, along with milk from rare breed Tasmanian cattle, C2 was Australia's first raw-milk cheese when it was initially made in 2009. Sweet and nutty in character, the raw-milk experiment has paid dividends: C2 was awarded Super Gold at the 2023–24 WCA, as well as Best Australian Cheese. **PV**

HORNBACHER

Gourmino AG
Emmental, Switzerland

Commonly and lovingly referred to as the “baked potato cheese,” Hornbacher gets its name from the river that flows next to Michael “Michu” and Monika Spycher’s dairy, Mountain Dairy Fritzenhaus. Over the past 10 years, the wheel has gone from being sold solely in their cheese shop in Switzerland to being distributed worldwide and, most importantly, being crowned World Champion at the 2024 WCCC. A Master Cheesemaker, Spycher is no stranger to awards, having won the WCCC three other times. But for the first time, his 2023 win wasn’t for a Gruyère. Hornbacher is a complex umami bomb of flavor, with everything you’d find in the best baked potato—skin on, of course. Equally earthy and buttery, allium and herb notes show off the raw milk in this Alpine champion. **AP**

APPALACHIAN

Meadow Creek Dairy
Galax, Virginia

Rick and Helen Feete began Meadow Creek Dairy in 1988, set high in the Appalachian Mountains of Virginia to allow Alpine-style seasonal grazing for their Jersey-Holstein hybrid herd. Modeled after certain tomme-style cheeses of France and Italy, Appalachian is Meadow Creek’s first and signature cheese—a square, raw-milk tomme that’s aged for four months with a bright *Penicillium candidum* rind and a semi-firm texture. A Super Gold winner at the 2023–24 WCA, its flavors evoke lemon curd and damp earth, perfect for snacking or melting alike. **AP**

TOKYO BROWN CHEESE

Cheese Stand
Tokyo, Japan

Modeled after the famously brown Norwegian cheese Brunost, Tokyo Brown Cheese, from Japanese producer and retailer Cheese Stand, was awarded Super Gold at the 2023–24 WCA. Brown Cheese is packaged exactly like a bar of candy, complete with individual, breakable squares and an aluminum foil wrapper. This move is not only whimsical, it's also a savvy way to help consumers contextualize the cheese—made with caramelized whey and cow's milk in a move that is both sustainable and delicious—Brown Cheese is absolutely candy in cheese form. **PV**



NIDELVEN BLÅ

Gangstad Gårdsysteri
Inderøy, Norway

A pasteurized cow's milk blue cheese, Nidelven Blå was awarded Super Gold, as well as overall Champion, at the 2023–24 WCA. Named for a river in the Trondheim region of Norway, it was lauded by judges for its especially dense, creamy, and fudgy nature with fruity overtones. (Note to cheesemakers: Fruity blue cheeses named after rivers tend to perform well at the WCA.) Given its rich but approachable nature, it's no surprise that Nidelven Blå was made by dairy artisans who also produce ice cream on their farmstead property. Established by Astrid Aasen and Perry Frøysadal in 1998, Gangstad Gårdsysteri was Norway's first licensed cow's milk creamery. **PV**

Terre des Volcans



France's Auvergne region has a long tradition of cheesemaking and is home to some of the country's most distinctive cheeses. The area's ancient volcanoes have eroded into rolling hills and plateaus with fertile soil and lush pasture, creating a unique micro-climate for cheesemaking. With three distinct blues to choose from, you are sure to find your winner.

Fourme d'Ambert Dense and creamy with sweet milky notes balanced by spicy blue molds, and a long, fruity finish. Pair with honeycomb on a dessert cheese board.

Bleu 1924 Rich, buttery paste balanced with spicy blue veining and the occasional crunch of tyrosine crystals. This exceptional cheese is best enjoyed simply, on an appetizer or dessert cheese plate.

Bleu d'Auvergne Crumbly and moist, with a buttery and slightly spicy character. Great for cooking; delicious melted on steak, or in a Bleu d'Auvergne and pear tarte for a sweet-savory delight.

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KALTBACH APPENZELLER

Emmi Group
Lucerne, Switzerland

Emmi Group's Kaltbach Appenzeller perhaps owes its success to not one but two wonders of the cheese world: First, the raw, full-fat cow's milk wheels are treated with a secret brine recipe that imbues the cheese with savory and distinctively herbal characteristics; second, the wheels are aged in the mineral-rich environment of the natural sandstone Kaltbach Cave, where only the most exceptional will finish their affinage. Kaltbach Appenzeller was awarded Super Gold at the 2023–24 WCA—just one of many accolades earned in its lifetime. **PV**



ARTIKAAS VINTAGE LOT 18

Dutch Cheese Makers
Heerenveen, Netherlands

Artikaas has spent six generations perfecting the art of Gouda, and they might have actually achieved it. Using traditional, sustainable methods dating back more than 2,000 years, Vintage Lot 18 climbed the ranks to win Best of Class at the 2024 WCCC (after coming in second in 2020) and was First Runner Up to the overall champion out of 3,302 entries. The “18” in Lot 18 stands for the number of months this Gouda is aged. A year and a half of aging allows nutty, praline-like flavors to develop slowly and thoroughly throughout the cheese for a consistently complex taste. **AP**



GELLO ARTISAN COPPER KETTLE PARMESAN

Schuman Cheese
Turtle Lake, Wisconsin

Copper Kettle isn't just a name, it's also a time-honored method of cheesemaking. Borrowing from Swiss tradition, the experts behind this Wisconsin staple transform fresh milk into award-winning cheese in large copper vats. Named Best of Class at the 2024 WCCC, this pasteurized cow's milk wheel is aged 16 months, and its firm-yet-creamy nature makes it a truly versatile cheese. Shred it on soups, shave it on salads, or sprinkle it on your favorite chili. The unique cooked-caramel notes make it delightful for snacking on its own and a perfect partner to bring out the complexity in any pairing. **AP**



TATIE

Moro Formaggi
Oderzo, Italy

Moro Formaggi has been refining cheese in Italy's Treviso region since 1930, working with artisan cheesemakers to hand-select individual wheels for its award-winning recipes and processes. A Super Gold recipient at the 2023–24 WCA, Tatie almost defies categorization: A cow's milk blue cheese base is mixed with fresh mascarpone for an extra creamy texture and is combined with an aromatized Piedmont vermouth for tangy, floral, and herbaceous notes. Tatie is a sweet and complex dessert in a single blue bite—a cheese better spooned than sliced. **PV**

SLEEPING BEAUTY

Cascadia Creamery
Trout Lake, Washington

When we think of the term “cave aged,” we might think of aging caves in Europe or temperature-and-humidity-controlled concrete rooms in the United States. But Cascadia Creamery is a Washington producer that takes cave aging to a truly explosive level. Sleeping Beauty is aged in tubular caves carved by lava from Mount Adams, a formerly-active volcano. The delicate, natural rind complements the smooth, hole-ridden interior, and its flavor is somehow both deliciously simple and incredibly complex.

To make great cheese, you need great milk. Cascadia Creamery's certified organic raw milk comes from Jersey cows grazing on the Cascade Mountain grass that sprouts from nutrient-dense volcanic soil. The pale, straw-colored paste is rich and buttery, with a balanced acidity to keep you, and the judges at the 2024 GFA, coming back for more. Eat Sleeping Beauty by itself or, as cheesemaker John Shuman advises, melt it on almost everything. **AP**

HOLLAND DELTA, 1 YEAR OLD

Van der Heiden Kaas
Bodegraven, Netherlands

The Dutch have been known to honor tradition while embracing new technology, and the Van der Heiden Kaas family has been perfecting cheese with this mindset for over 50 years. You can try several of their aged Goudas, but the Holland Delta, 1 Year Old has proven to be a favorite of fans and judges alike, winning Super Gold at the 2023–24 WCA and being named Best Cheese in the Netherlands. Leaving the wheels to mature for at least a year is the perfect amount of time to attain the sweet spot of robust, nutty flavor and consistent crystallization without overtaking the super golden paste. **AP**



GREEN HILL

Sweet Grass Dairy
Thomasville, Georgia

This mushroomy delight is everything you want in a soft-ripened double cream cheese. Named after the family's first rotational-grazing dairy, Green Hill showcases the commitment to land and craft inherent in everything Sweet Grass Dairy does. Following in the footsteps of her parents Al and Desiree Wehner, Jessica Little and her husband Jeremy carry on the tradition of cheesemaking that highlights the cultural value and flavor of their grass-based milk. Impressing the judges at the 2024 GFA, this buttery, bloomy beauty is silky, handcrafted goodness. **AP**

PHOTO: Andrew Thomas Lee

Indulge in a
golden slice
of Vezzena
Cheese



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