

Wine & Cheese by TCC's January 2011 Cheese Club

For this month's cheese club, we bring you two different Chimay cheeses. What exactly is Chimay - a place, a beer, a cheese? The answer is all of the above. Chimay is a city in Belgium and home to the Scourmont Abbey, a monastery of Cistercian Trappist monks that founded Chimay Brewery. The brewery produces both beer and cheese of the same name since 1862. The monks started producing beer and cheese as a way to sustain employment for the region and to support themselves and the poor of the community.

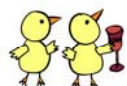
Covered with forests and pastures and crossed by numerous rivers, the countryside of Chimay has always been a livestock-rearing area. And dairy herds mean cheese! Chimay is the name of the four different cheeses of the community. The Trappist monks have known the secrets of making this semi-hard cheese made from good milk from their farm and matured in the vaulted cellars of the abbey. A portion of the feed for the cows is filtered solids created as a result of the Chimay beer making process. That makes for some happy cows and lends to the unique taste of these delicious cheeses. Since the monks carry out their work with the same concern for perfection that they strive for in their life of prayer and study, cheesemaking has become a true art over the course of time and has since been perfected through modern scientific methods.

This month's first selection is the Chimay Grand Cru, their flagship cheese produced from a centuries old recipe. The second selection is the Chimay Grand Classic. The Grand Classic is a younger version of the Grand Cru.

In the following pages, there is some information regarding your cheese club selections. You'll find a description of each cheese and some technical information on the cheeses, including some wine pairing suggestions.

As always, your feedback is greatly encouraged! Please call us or stop by with your comments regarding our selections.

Have a great month!
The Gang at TCC



Wine & Cheese by TCC



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Chimay Grand Cru

This cheese comes from a recipe that was created in the 1200's in Burgundy. Today the cheese is still produced in the same manner, with the same care and consideration you would expect from a monastery.

Location	Chimay, Belgium
Type	Cow's Milk, Pasteurized
Flesh	Semi-Firm
Rind	Washed, inedible
Aged	6 weeks

Tasting Notes

The *Grand Cru* has an earthy richness, mild cow milk tanginess and a roasted character similar to caramelized onions with a hint of spice. A great addition to your favorite pizza or omelet recipe.

Wine Pairing

This is a very wine friendly pairing cheese. Try a medium bodied red with a fruit-driven character such as Shiraz or Zinfandel to complement the smooth, aged flavors of the cheese.

Wine Club Pairing

For this month's wine club selection, pair with the *Viña Calina Reserva Merlot*. The earthy richness and caramelized character of the cheese marries nicely with the juicy fruit and vanilla notes of the wine.

Beer Club Pairing

For this month's beer club selection, pair with the *Founders Brewing Porter*. The rich caramel malt and chocolate notes of the beer marry nicely with the caramelized flavors of the cheese.

Chimay Grand Classic

This younger version of the *Grand Cru* is distinguished by its creamier consistency and whole milk character.

Location	Chimay, Belgium
Type	Cow milk
Flesh	Semi-Firm
Rind	Washed, inedible
Aged	4 weeks

Tasting Notes

The *Grand Classic* has flavors of tangy cow milk with a mild fruity, slightly floral flavor and a smooth, creamy texture. It is also less spicy than the *Grand Cru*. Melt it with your favorite Belgian beer for the classic fondue or serve with rustic bread and pears.

Wine Pairing

Try this cheese with a fruity white wine such as an off-dry Riesling, a Pinot Gris or a Chardonnay. Equally delicious with a light fruity red such as Pinot Noir.

Wine Club Pairing

For this month's wine club selection, pair with the Viña Calina Reserva Chardonnay. The tangy yet fruity and floral character of the cheese is a nice match to the citrus, tropical and buttery notes of the wine.

Beer Club Pairing

For this month's beer club selection, pair with the Founders Brewing Pale Ale. The floral and citrus flavors of the beer are a delicious match to the fruity, floral notes of the cheese.

Enjoy!