

Wine & Cheese by TCC's November 2008 Cheese Club

For centuries Holland has been producing beautifully hand crafted cheeses from their own farms using milk produced by their well cared for herds of sheep, cow, and goat. The advent of technology and the demand for Dutch cheese has sprouted the industrial production of commodity cheese throughout Holland; yet, there are still many small farm, artisan cheese producers creating beautiful cheeses. This month we bring you two goat cheeses from Holland. Both cheeses have a very unique style and will challenge any preconceived notions of goat cheese you may already have.

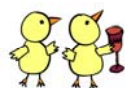
The first selection is called Benning. Benning goat cheese is exported from Drente, an area known for its vast fields of wild heather where goat herders have grazed their flocks for more than 200 years. This is the most rural agricultural province in Holland. The cheeses here are still being made according to traditional methods using goat milk produced on small family farms.

The next selection is Balarina. This cheese has been aged for 2 years and has a caramel like color. This is a very uniquely flavored goat cheese with a distinctly rich and nutty flavor. The cheese is made in a very traditional way, using wooden forms to shape the wheels and aged on wooden shelves in a temperature and moisture controlled room.

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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Benning

This cheese is aged for two weeks and has a pure white color. The taste is distinctive and flavorful yet mild, and unlike soft French style cheeses, the texture is firm enough to slice.

Location	Holland
Type	Goats milk, pasteurized
Flesh	White, semi-soft
Rind	Inedible, natural

Tasting Notes:

In a blind taste test, it may be hard to tell this is a goat cheese due its nutty, sweet flavors. The flavors of fresh milk and wild herbs present themselves in a subtle creamy manner.

Wine Pairing:

A lighter fruit forward wine such as a rosé will drink nicely with the Benning. Or try a Sauvignon Blanc or Pinot Grigio to contrast the creaminess of the cheese and the acidity of the wine.

Wine Club Pairing:

Benning is a great complement for the wine of the month, Le Rosé de Clarke. The light fruit notes in this rose complement the creaminess of the cheese and bring out the cheese's herb character.

Balarina

This cheese is quite different from the Benning even though it is produced from the same milk. Balarina is a firm dry aged cheese more closely reminiscent of an aged Parmesan with a full and complex flavor.

Originated	Denmark
Type	Goats milk, pasteurized
Flesh	Caramel colored, hard
Rind	Inedible, natural

Tasting Notes:

Balarina is hard and granular with a rich caramel color. It has rich full flavors of nut, caramel and butterscotch with a touch of tang on the finish. Great for grating or flaking, and makes a tasty alternative for Parmesan.

Wine Pairing:

This is a good cheese to stand up to any nice fruit driven red wine. Try a bold Napa Cabernet Sauvignon or a rich Petit Sirah.

Wine Club Pairing:

This month's Siduri Pinot Noir, with its bigger fruit forward style, is a nice complement to the bold flavors of this aged goat cheese.

Enjoy!