



Courtney's Cheese & Beer Pilgrimage to New Orleans

Hey folks, Courtney here, and it's my turn to share a recent trip with you fellow cheese lovers. After a crazy/awesome holiday season at the Cheese Shop, I thought it was time for a little vacation. So off I went on an eight hour road trip to good ole' New Orleans. My main concern was to see what the jazzy city had to offer in terms of beer and cheese. (I know, I know what's new!?) With that in mind here are a few highlights from my trip, and if you ever find yourself in the city, please do not hesitate to check these places out.

To start us off, we headed to Steins, a little Jewish deli off Magazine St, known for their killer sandwiches and their fantastic bottle selection. While I ate my scrumptious prosciutto, mozzarella, and balsamic creation, I did the best kind of shopping I know, beer shopping! Though with limited space to work with the beer selection did not show it; beers from all around the world adorned their shelves, bottles that sadly haven't and may never make it to Texas. For instance, the iStout made by 8 Wired Brewing Co. out of Marlborough, New Zealand or Out Black stout crafted by De Struise Brouwers out of Belgium, which by the way tasted great with Cobb Hills Alpine-style Ascutney Mountain. And of course I couldn't leave my fellow cheesemongers out so I decided to bring them back a bottle of Mikkeller's 1000 IBU an Imperial/Double IPA made by the Danish brewer that collaborated with our friends at local brewery Jester King with their Drinkin' in the Sunbelt. We decided the only cheese pairing that could compete with the outrageous hop profile of this beer would be Joe Widmer's 10 Year Aged Cheddar. The acidity of this cheese paired with the incredible upfront hop presence in the beer was a perfect match. Here's to you Joe!

Next we made our way out to Abita Springs, LA about 30 miles north of New Orleans, where we toured the Abita Brewing Company. They began the tour with a hearty introduction along with an open tap room that was self serve (just the way I like it) and learned that Abita had a reasonably large production being the 34th largest brewery in America now finding their beers in 46 states. With their barley wine in hand, I then headed into the brew house where they brew over 100,000 barrels of beer. Also the guys at Abita are doing their part to help out the Gulf Coast by making the S.O.S, a Weizen Pils that for every bottle sold 75 cents goes to the restoration of the environment. After a quick yet educational tour they sent us back in for more beer, some of my favorites being their Restoration Pale Ale, a rich in body citrusy pale ale which they recommend pairing with an approachable washed rind cheese; for all you hop heads out there the Jockamo IPA paired with a sharp cheddar, maybe something like Mary Quicke's Clothbound Cheddar.

Lastly, there's no way I could go to New Orleans and not check out their cheese shop. Also found on Magazine Street, St. James Cheese Company is the place to go for all your cheesey needs and cravings. Though I hadn't been away for long, almost the instant I walked in, there was something about being in the presence of all those cheeses that made me feel right at home. They had a great selection and though I had definitely brought enough cheese for the trip, I couldn't help but grab a quarter pound of the Montbru di Bufala, one of my all time favorite cheeses! Not only did they sell cheese but they also made sandwiches in the back, so for me it was an order of the Gruyere grilled cheese with onion confit and a side of chips. The sandwich was delicious: the gooiness of the cheese with the combination of the onion was just like eating French onion soup but in the form of a grilled cheese. All in all I'd say it was a fantastic trip!

New Cheese

You've enjoyed their Seahive, Barely Buzzed and Habanero Cheddar. Now you can try the foundation of each of these cheeses: Beehive Cheese Company's Squeaky Cheese Curds. These washed curds could have become a part of a wheel of cheddar, but instead are packaged individually for your enjoyment. Deep fry and turn them into poutine or just enjoy them plain as a nice snack.

Normanville is back! From E. Graindorge, one of the foremost names in French artisanal cheese, comes this wonderful camembert-style cheese made in a larger brie format. Expect a creamy and complex flavor with a lingering broccoli and cauliflower finish from this cow's milk bloomy-rind beauty.

Cypress Grove's Bermuda Triangle is a six-inch long triangular prism of pure white goat cheese. It has a distinctive double rind; it is first ash coated and then covered by a layer of velvety white bloom, giving the cheese a dense and smooth interior.

So you think you've tried Roquefort, eh? But have you tried this Roquefort?! Roquefort Carles is a quintessential French blue cheese made for centuries exclusively in the Aveyron district of south central France. It's piquant, richly flavored, creamy sheep's milk paste melts in your mouth. Carles Roquefort is a perfectly-balanced, utterly spectacular hand-ladled blue and is arguably our shop's favorite Roquefort.

Cheese-y Events!

As January draws to a close, we've got one thing on our minds. Nope, not Valentine's Day (although we do have all the goodies to hook you up with for that!); instead, we're gearing up to celebrate our shop's second anniversary on February 11, 2012! Just like last year, we're going to offer **FREE CHEESE PLATES** around town from Monday 2/6 through Friday 2/10, but this year, we're doing it bigger and better! We'll announce the schedule and line-up in next week's email, so stay tuned!

Keep a close eye on the next two newsletters because chances are high we'll be announcing our upcoming class schedule soon!

Cheesily Yours,
Courtney
Kendall, John, Kelly, Brad, Shawn, and Paul

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Mon: Closed
Tues - Sat: 11am to 7pm
Sun: 12pm to 5pm

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