

Vermont: Champlain Wishes

On the Vermont cheese trail, treasures of the Gilded Age and modern farm-to-table dining



Shelburne Farms in Shelburne, Vt.

• **By Robert Taylor**

Independence is bred among the mountains and rivers of Vermont.

Vermonters hoe their own row. They abolished slavery nearly 100 years before the rest of the country; women

were voting there 40 years before the ratification of the 19th Amendment; Vermont was among the first to legalize civil unions. At the same time, town meetings and sugaring parties in maple season have endured since colonial times. No state is at once so progressive and steeped in tradition.

Vermont's Old World-inspired yet utterly original cheeses have earned their place on the world stage. And for those who enjoy a winding country drive, the journey to Vermont's finest cheese-country inns and restaurants is as much a reward as the destination.

Largely rural, the Green Mountain State is populated by farmers, cheesemakers, bakers, butchers, brewers, chefs and craftspeople dedicated to preserving Vermont's natural beauty, a landscape that has moved the pens of Robert Frost, Rudyard Kipling, Annie Proulx and Frank Miller.

But the cow is king. Dairy accounts for 70% of Vermont's more than \$700 million agricultural economy. The state's rise to the top of the cheese world is built on a commitment to humane, sustainable practices, and the artisan cheesemaking movement has developed hand in hand with that of farm-to-table cuisine.

Crowley Cheese Co. was the state's first commercial creamery, founded in 1824. Plymouth Cheese Factory, founded by the father of President Calvin Coolidge, followed in 1890. The Grafton Cooperative, founded in 1892, was revived in the 1960s. Cabot Creamery celebrates its 100th anniversary this year.

The artisan cheesemaking movement started small in the early 1980s, with Orb Weaver Farm and Vermont

Creamery, followed in the early '90s by Vermont Shepherd. Parish Hill Creamery founder and longtime cheesemaking educator Peter Dixon hit the scene in the mid-1990s. There are more than 60 creameries in Vermont today.

“When Allison Hooper and Bob Reese started Vermont Creamery, they would show up at the back door of restaurants with cheeses to try,” says Vermont Cheese Council executive director Tom Bivins, a former chef and cheesemaker at Shelburne Farms. “Even Jasper Hill—they showed up at the back of the restaurant with this little cheese called Constant Bliss.”

Soon came awards from the American Cheese Society, founded by a food sciences professor at Cornell in 1983 and now the Western Hemisphere’s leading cheese trade group. Best in Show honors went to Shelburne Farms (1990), Blythedale Farm (1998) and Vermont Shepherd (2000). Cabot Clothbound Cheddar, aged at the Cellars at Jasper Hill, won in 2006; Spring Brook Farm’s Tarentaise Reserve won twice (2014 and 2017). Jasper Hill won again for Winnimere in 2013 and Harbison in 2018, and its Bayley Hazen Blue was named world’s best raw-milk cheese at the World Cheese Awards in London in 2014.

“From almost every road in the state of Vermont, you can see these working farms,” says Bivins. Those scenic byways—routes 7, 30 and 100, in particular—and country roads pass through some of the state’s most picturesque pastures and forests as well—a land both forgotten by and ahead of its time.

Follow along on this road trip from southeast Vermont, up along the eastern border of the Green Mountains and west

to Lake Champlain.

- **[Map of Vermont's Cheese Regions](#)** *(in PDF Format)*

BRATTLEBORO AND BEYOND

Windham County and the town of Brattleboro serve as Vermont's southern ingress and a first impression of the Green Mountain State for most visitors. Like much of Vermont, the scenery has changed little over the past century, aside from a few later-model cars dipping between the maples, sycamores and white pines that line the colubrine Route 30, snaking in concert with the West River.

Downtown Brattleboro is a vibrant small-town arts haven, with first-Friday gallery walks, a museum and art center and the Vermont Theatre Company; nearby chamber music festivals include Marlboro, Yellow Barn and Pikes Falls. The Food Co-Op is the town's main hub, with restaurants and bakeries lining Main Street.

Grafton Village Cheese Company

400 Linden St., Brattleboro

Telephone *(802) 246-2221*

Website *graftonvillagecheese.com*

Fifty-some years after the original Grafton Cooperative was destroyed by fire in 1912, the creamery was resurrected by the Windham Foundation, a nonprofit institution dedicated to the preservation and revitalization of Vermont's rural communities.

The 2,300-square-foot Brattleboro location includes a state-of-the-art production facility, where Grafton Village's cheddars are made most days of the week, observable from the mezzanine of the retail store. The shop carries

more than 200 cheeses from Vermont and beyond, including Grafton Village's cave-aged clothbound cheddar, mixed-milk Shepsog and alpine-style Bear Hill, in addition to craft beers, ciders and wines.

The Four Columns Inn and Artisan Restaurant

21 West St., Newfane

Telephone (802) 365-7713

Website *fourcolumnsvt.com*

Rooms *15, plus a private guesthouse*

Twelve miles up Route 30 from Brattleboro lies the county seat of Newfane. The historic village center, Newfane Common, is studded with Greek Revivalist and Victorian buildings from the town's mid-19th century heyday, including one of southern Vermont's finest inns, the Four Columns.

The main house dates to 1823, built by a Vermont statesman and "veteran of the Revolutionary War, who had married a young woman from the South ... quite a bit younger," laughs owner Charles Mallory, a shipping magnate whose boutique luxury hotels include the three Delamars in Connecticut.

"He contrived this plantation-looking facade to impress her," he says of the antebellum Greek Revival features and the four two-story Ionic columns for which the inn is named.

The home was converted into an inn and restaurant in 1969 and went on to attract a celebrity clientele that has included Mick Jagger, Paul Newman and Sting. Mallory bought and renovated the inn in 2015. Most of the rooms feature pillow-topped king-size beds, French linens, Italian towels, Jacuzzi tubs and double-sided gas fireplaces.

Southern (Vermont) charm and hospitality are the stock-in-trade at this quiet property, which includes the excellent Artisan Restaurant, a spa and fitness center, an outdoor pool set amid the inn's flower and vegetable gardens, and more than 130 acres of private wooded trails.

The casual dining room's exposed beams, holdovers from the building's previous life as a barn, are matched by wooden tables and chairs, each leg neatly fitted with a custom wool sock in the interest of noise reduction.

Chef Erin Bevan arrived in 2017 by way of some of Boston's best kitchens, and her weekly handmade pasta specials are the main attraction.

Bevan marries an elegant execution to her locavore improvisations. A late-summer menu featured straw and hay Spaghetti Carbonara, mixing egg yolk (straw) and spinach (hay) pastas with lardons from North Country Farm, eggs from Coopers Coop (12 miles away), cheese from Parish Hill (19 miles) and locally foraged black trumpet mushrooms. Manager Nicholas Squire, who oversees the wine list, stays local with his pairing suggestion: the minerally and crisp 2016 La Crescent (\$46) from Lincoln Peak Vineyard, near Middlebury.

The concise but well-selected list of about 60 wines is strongest in Italy (Scavino Barolo 2012, \$115) and the West Coast (Stag's Leap Wine Cellars Artemis 2014, \$120; Owen Roe Ex Umbris 2016, \$63) but includes picks from Austria, France, Germany, Spain, New York, Vermont and more.

"I'm proud to feel like I'm nourishing the people who come to eat here," Bevan says, "with [food] that's superfresh and comes with all this clean karma—the way these animals

are raised and that they come from such a hyperlocal area.”

Big Picture Farm

1600 Peaked Mountain Road, Townshend

Telephone (802) 221-0547

Website bigpicturefarm.com

Elvis and Josie, a friendly pair of 80-pound Maremma Sheepdogs, welcome visitors to Big Picture Farm. On Sunday afternoons, owners Louisa Conrad and Lucas Farrell open their farm to the public, trotting out Fern, Junebug, Gertrude and their 40-plus other goats, and serving Big Picture’s caramels and goat’s milk farmstead cheeses, Haiku and Sonnet.

Haiku is a velvety semifirm cheese beloved for its subtle tanginess; Sonnet is the more grown-up of the two, a cave-aged tomme with sharper, nutty flavors and a texture not unlike that of a young Manchego.

Conrad, an artist who grew up in New York City, and Farrell, a poet and Colorado native, met at Middlebury College in Vermont. Following artist residencies in Iceland, they returned to Vermont, taking a cheesemaking apprenticeship at Blue Ledge Farm, where they fell in love with goats.

Conrad and Farrell married in 2010, with a wedding registry that included goats and farming equipment. “My first goat was Fern, given to me by my best friend from high school,” says Conrad, “and some of my dad’s friends got us the shiniest 10-gallon milk pail anyone has ever seen.”

The couple bought the 18th-century farmhouse across the road in 2017. They’ve given it a Brattleboro-meets-

Scandinavia aesthetic, with photos from their time in Iceland, as well as Icelandic sheepskin pelts draped over the furniture. In the spring, they rent out the farmhouse's nine rooms individually for kidding-season weekend retreats, a chance to meet "puddles and puddles of baby goats."

SoLo Farm & Table

95 Middletown Road, South Londonderry

Telephone (802) 824-6327

Website *solofarmandtable.com*

On the eastern edge of Green Mountain National Forest, SoLo Farm & Table occupies a restored 1790 colonial. The foyer, hung with pastoral engravings, opens to a hearth, sitting room and bar, and past that the kitchen. The sensation that this is dinner at a friend's house is occasionally cemented by the appearance of a pajama'ed, bedtime-resistant child. Owned and occupied by the Genovart family—wife Chloe runs the front of the house, husband Wesley runs the back; son Rafa, 8, and daughter Esmé, 4, are support staff in training—SoLo is a homecoming, of sorts.

Chloe grew up in nearby Manchester. Wesley grew up on the Spanish island of Mallorca. In 2001, having come to Vermont to be near his aunt and brother, Wesley found work, and met Chloe, at a restaurant in Manchester. Wesley went on to cook at South Londonderry's Three Clock Inn before the couple moved to Boston, then New York, where Wesley was the opening chef at Degustation. Chloe served as host and wine steward there before becoming maître d' at Per Se. Married in 2008, the couple was expecting their first child in 2010 when opportunity

knocked in Vermont.

The Three Clock Inn, in foreclosure and having fallen into disrepair, was up for auction. “We thought, let’s just go check it out,” Chloe recalls. “[Wesley] started bidding, and I was looking at him like, are you crazy?” They won the auction—“It was crazy,” he laughs—and a serious renovation project as reward.

Rafa was born in 2010, and SoLo, shorthand for South Londonderry, opened in May 2011. The cuisine is Mediterranean-influenced, with a farm-to-table philosophy: dill and rye seed pappardelle, with rosemary, olives and shaved Parmesan, stars rabbit confit from Wannabea Farm in Manchester Center.

There is, however, one dish never sourced locally, and it might be SoLo’s greatest attraction. Wesley insists his octopuses come from Spain. It’s an animal he feels so connected with that, for a time, he stopped serving it.

“They’re amazing creatures—such smart, intelligent beings that I took them off the menu ... but they are delicious,” he laughs again, “so many people kept asking for it, and I missed eating it!”

His Crispy Spanish Octopus has a three-step preparation: simmered whole, then portioned and fried, and finished on the wood-fired grill. It was recently set with cauliflower couscous, curried sultana puree, hot sauce and chicharrónes. Chloe pairs it with Frédéric Mallo Riesling Alsace Grand Cru Rosacker 1998 (\$75). “It’s a really beautiful bottle, an older vintage ... I want something with minerality but a little bit of body, something to contrast the heat of the hot sauce and the unctuous quality of the octopus.”

The 200-selection wine list (a dozen available by the glass) is strongest in California, Oregon, France and Spain, with Italy and Austria well-represented. West Coast notables include Bergström, Merry Edwards, Heitz, Ridge and Phelps, but Spanish selections are the highlight, including R. López de Heredia Viña Tondonia White Rioja Reserva 2003 (\$95) and Aalto Ribera del Duero 2015 (\$120).

“Like our food, I like to put things on the wine list that excite me,” Chloe says. “I’m drawn to smaller-production, grower-produced wines with a story.”

“We took a chance [coming back to Vermont],” Wesley says. “And I don’t think we could be happier.”

UP THE MAD RIVER VALLEY

The Mad River flows south to north, fed by the Green Mountains to the west; the Northfield Mountains hem the valley from the east. At the valley’s heart lies the town of Waitsfield, home to a thriving farmers market with more than 50 local purveyors. “The *terroir* of this valley, and what is available to us ... to me that’s the most remarkable part of this place,” says Inn at Round Barn Farm proprietor Kim Donahue.

“And the nearest stoplight is about half an hour away,” her husband, Jim, adds. “The only traffic rule in town is to wait your turn at the covered bridge, and wave to your neighbor.”

The river’s clarity and many bends, pools and falls have made its best swimming holes, like Warren Falls and Moretown Gorge, a source of local pride (and modest secrecy). Pro tip for swimmers: The water warms as it

flows north.

The Inn at Round Barn Farm

1661 E. Warren Road, Waitsfield

Telephone (802) 496-2276

Website *theroundbarn.com*

Rooms 12

On the eve of the annual Vermont Cheesemakers Festival, about a hundred growers, cheesemakers, restaurateurs and cheese lovers gather for as close as you'll find to a formal affair in cheese country: the annual Cheesemakers Dinner at the Inn at Round Barn Farm. A menu celebrating Vermont's bounty is served in the restored 1910 Joslin Round Barn, which was a member dairy of the Cabot Farmers Cooperative until 1969 (Cabot order slips are still tacked to a stanchion in the milking parlor).

Executive chef Neillea Dee complements local pork belly with corn custard made with Shelburne Farms six-month-aged cheddar and smoked trout with Vermont Creamery crème fraîche.

Round barns were an agricultural architecture innovation of the 19th century, designed, not unlike a gravity-fed winery, to maximize efficiency. The Joslin Round Barn, a true circular barn with a silo at its center, is one of only five of its kind remaining in Vermont.

The farmhouse, built in the 1830s, was fully renovated in the 1980s. Wood floors, exposed beams and more than a dozen different wallpaper patterns give the inn the air of a well-appointed country home. All the guest rooms have private baths, and the most popular rooms feature four-poster beds, gas fireplaces and oversize whirlpool tubs.

Outside, a patio built from stones that formed the farmhouse's original 19th-century foundation overlooks a pond, beautifully landscaped gardens, and pastures where the dairy cows of the farm's founding family still graze. A mile past the brook behind the inn is Von Trapp Farmstead (see below).

Former New Jersey-based electronics and appliance sales executives Kim and Jim Donahue bought the property in 2014.

"I used to make a pilgrimage every Saturday morning," says Kim. "I would volunteer at a homeless shelter on the Bowery [in New York City], and then I would go over to Saxelby Cheesemongers, and Anne [Saxelby] would pick me out five or so cheeses. Now, I can see the cows where those cheeses came from. I took a bridge and a tunnel before; now it's on the other side of the fence."

Von Trapp Farmstead

251 Common Road, Waitsfield

Telephone (802) 496-3964

Website *vontrappfarmstead.com*

Waitsfield's Common Road turns south from Joslin Hill and bisects Von Trapp Farmstead. An oversize, brightly painted mailbox signals the redbrick von Trapp house; rope swings hang from a maple in the front yard. Twice a day, Kelly von Trapp leads her photogenic herd of 50 Jersey, Ayrshire and Normande milkers across the dirt road. They're undoubtedly the best-known cows in the valley, and the source of the valley's most acclaimed cheeses.

Sebastian von Trapp, Kelly's son, runs the creamery. His best products include Oma, a washed-rind tomme aged at

the Cellars at Jasper Hill; a Camembert-style bloomy rind called Mt. Alice; the alpine-style Savage; and Mad River Blue. Von Trapp also produces pork and salamis (pictured below). “[The cheese] all starts with the milk,” Sebastian says, but when it comes to organically and sustainably raising the herd, “It starts with taking care of your soils.” The von Trapp farmland was settled in the 18th century; the farm was purchased by Werner and Erika von Trapp in 1959 (Werner was a tenor in the Trapp Family Singers, of *Sound of Music* fame, before enlisting with the U.S. Army). Their son Martin and his wife, Kelly, took over the dairy farm in 1979, but it’s Sebastian who spearheaded the family’s foray into cheese, starting in 2009. The farm also captures Vermont’s spirit of interdependence. Day-old bread from Red Hen Baking Co. is collected for pigfeed. Butcher Erika Lynch makes Von Trapp’s Savage Salami and Saucisson Sec, and uses the farm’s whey-fed pigs for her own charcuterie brand, Babette’s Table. Sebastian’s sister grows vegetables at the family’s Marble Hill farm, which are served at the local Mad Taco restaurants, run by her husband, Joey Nagy; the scraps come back to the pigs at Von Trapp, as do the spent grains from local microbrewery Lawson’s Finest Liquids, Sebastian says. “The pigs really tie all the loose ends together.”

Hen of the Wood

92 Stowe St., Waterbury

Telephone (802) 244-7300; *55 Cherry St., Burlington*

Telephone (802) 540-0534

Website *henofthewood.com*

Vermont’s modern farm-to-table fine-dining movement

was born in a 19th-century gristmill in Waterbury. Chef and co-owner Eric Warnstedt opened Hen of the Wood here in 2005. “I was 29 and I had no money,” he says, “but I had a business plan: solid ethics, community involvement, farm-to-table connection, daily changing menu, focused wine list. And it grew from there. ... The farm-to-table connection was strong here already, but I feel like we arrived at just the right time to take it to a new level,” he adds. “We certainly didn’t write that book here. The small food producer has been alive and well in Vermont for a really long time.”

Warnstedt, a Shelburne Farms alum, tapped a team of local organic and sustainable producers as partners, including Pete’s Greens, LaPlatte River Angus and Jasper Hill.

In 2011, Warnstedt’s longtime friend and restaurant manager William McNeil took a 50% stake in Hen of the Wood, and together they re-envisioned the wine list. “We decided to make a move and change our whole wine program because we were sourcing these beautiful food products from local farmers growing minimally and sustainably,” McNeil says. “Why not take that same approach to our wine list?”

Now 80 selections strong, the list leans French, with the U.S., Italy and Spain well-represented, but it’s driven by organic, sustainable and minimalist production methods. “We don’t use the word ‘natural’—we use the term ‘minimalistic intervention.’ ”

They opened a second Hen of the Wood in downtown Burlington in 2013. It’s livelier, with walk-in bar seating and another bar facing the open kitchen. Dining is quieter in

Waterbury; the main dining area wraps around the old mill's grinding room.

The menu features local rabbit, duck, lamb and beef. A few standby favorites include Parker House rolls with house-made cultured butter, and gem lettuces with Jasper Hill Bayley Hazen Blue cheese, candied pecans and honey. The restaurant's signature dish is Hen of the Woods Mushroom Toast, featuring Red Hen Baking Co.'s Cyrus Pringle bread (made from all Vermont-grown wheat), house-cured bacon made from Vermont Heritage Farm pork belly, a hard-poached free-range egg and locally foraged hen of the wood mushrooms.

McNeil pairs it with the 2016 C/Ghost Mondeuse (\$60) from Forlorn Hope in Calaveras County, Calif. "It has the earthy tones to match those mushrooms, with some acidity in the background to cut through the meatiness." "Pretty simple," Warnstedt says of the Mushroom Toast, "but fitting for our little place."

ON LAKE CHAMPLAIN

With more than 40,000 residents, Burlington is far and away Vermont's largest and most cosmopolitan city. The downtown historic districts and nearby Waterfront and Battery parks on Lake Champlain are easily walkable, with Church Street Marketplace drawing the lion's share of visitors.

Among the pedestrian mall's galleries and restaurants is Leunig's Bistro, a nod to Burlington's French Canadian neighbors to the north and a longtime local favorite; the bistro's duck confit poutine is an indulgent reward after an afternoon walking or biking the city's 8-mile waterfront

Greenway. The newer Hen of the Wood venue is in the stylish Hotel Vermont.

Two other restaurants on the leading edge of Vermont's innovative regional cuisine movement are the Great Northern in South End, the city's formerly industrial arts district, and Misery Loves Co., just across the river in Winooski.

Shelburne Farms

1611 Harbor Road, Shelburne

Telephone (802) 985-8686

Website shelburnefarms.org

Rooms 24, plus 4 cottages

No one forgets their first time passing through the stone-walled front gate of Shelburne Farms and up the elm-lined, macadamed allée, past a grove to reveal the impossible five-story Farm Barn and its 2-acre courtyard enclosed by red Monkton quartzite walls, half-timbered lofts and château-inspired cone-roofed turrets.

“Nothing prepared me for when I came to the gate,” says Shelburne Farms vice president Megan Camp.

Passing by the Farm Barn, realization sets in that this is not the estate's crown jewel—not even its largest barn, in fact. Through another grove, there's a far-off glimpse of “the big house” and its 13 chimneys; past that, the Dairy Barn and its herd of Brown Swiss.

Up a hill above the Champlain shoreline sits the Inn at Shelburne Farms, the 100-room Queen Anne–style übermanse dreamed up by architect Robert Robertson and landscaped by Frederick Law Olmsted for Dr. William Seward Webb and his wife, Lila Vanderbilt Webb.

The story of Shelburne Farms could fill a book (at least

three on the subject have been published since 1986). Completed in the 1890s, the house, its barns and its grounds were monuments to late-19th-century American agricultural-estate architecture.

Dr. Webb's dream of breeding all-purpose hackney carriage horses—300 could be stabled in the Breeding Barn, said to be the largest in the country and inside of which his children liked to play polo—was doomed nearly from the start, to the great future benefit of Vermont.

His great-grandson Alec Webb was a teenager when the family was faced with the reality of a dairy being crushed under the weight of its own upkeep. They opened Shelburne Farms to the public in 1972, founding a nonprofit corporation with the mission of “inspiring and cultivating learning for a sustainable future.” The big house was restored and opened as a luxury inn and restaurant in 1987.

“I grew up here,” says Alec, who still lives on the property and serves as president of Shelburne Farms. “My strongest experiences were working in the dairy farm. That was meaningful, and wanting to share that with other people is a natural extension.”

There's a disconnect here between a school trip to the Farm Barn and a stay at the inn, with its original Tudor-style fireplaces, broad balustrades and formal gardens bathed in applause-inducing sunsets. And yet the farm is on the table at dinner service, the menu being the only significant change of the past century to the neoclassical, marble-floored and burgundy damask-papered dining room, where formal French fare was formerly the norm. The wine list features about 120 selections, strongest in

France and the U.S., including Failla Chardonnay Sonoma Coast 2015 (\$80), Evening Land Pinot Noir Seven Springs 2015 (\$95) and Mayacamas Cabernet Sauvignon Mount Veeder 2008 (\$185).

The cheesemaking operation began in the 1980s, with a creamery and education center built inside the Farm Barn, where visitors can watch head cheesemaker Andi Wandt and her team making cheddar—about 170,000 pounds a year. A clothbound English farmhouse-style version is aged for a year at the Cellars at Jasper Hill, where Shelburne Farms alum Nat Bacon is creamery manager. In August, the annual Vermont Cheesemakers Festival (see above) brings over 200 cheeses, plus nearly 100 other food, wine, beer, cider and spirit makers, to Shelburne Farms' Coach Barn, yet another of the property's architectural wonders.

“Shelburne Farms can have this Disney-like perfect appearance, but so much hard work and sweat goes into not just the cheese, but the maple syrup and the dairy ... It's magic,” says Wandt. “We take sunshine and we turn it into food, and we try to connect people with that. We really are trying to make the world a better place.”

THE VERMONT CHEESEMAKERS FESTIVAL

The tent poles go up under America's greatest cheese big top each summer outside the Coach Barn at historic Shelburne Farms. Cooled by Lake Champlain's summer breeze, the Vermont Cheesemakers Festival (vtcheesefest.com) hosts about 2,000 cheese lovers and their appetites, along with the best that Vermont's 50-plus

cheesemakers have to offer, not to mention local ciders, spirits and wines, prepared foods and, perhaps second only to the cheeses in popularity, some of the state's best boutique ice creams. The 2019 festival (Aug. 10–11) will feature seminars, workshops, demonstrations and a more formal sit-down cheesemakers dinner.

Plan ahead: Tickets typically sell out weeks ahead of the festival, and festival-weekend rooms at the Inn at Shelburne Farms are snatched up by the time the summer season opens in May.

GREEN MOUNTAIN STARS



5

1

Lucy Schaeffer

Vermont's rise to the top of the cheese world is built on a commitment to humane, sustainable practices, and the artisan cheesemaking movement has developed hand in hand with that of farm-to-table cuisine.

1 Vermont Creamery

Couple^[L]_[SEP]**(GOAT)**^[L]_[SEP] ***vermontcreamery.com***

This wrinkly, tennis ball–sized semisoft dome is one of Vermont’s most recognizable goat cheeses, with refreshing grassy, citrusy acidity.

2 Parish Hill Creamery Vermont

Herdsman^[L]_[SEP]**(COW)**^[L]_[SEP] ***parishhillcreamery.com***

One of Vermont’s many excellent alpine-style cheeses, Herdsman is aged for at least a year and delivers a fruity, nutty flavor reminiscent of Comté. **on map**

3 Cabot Creamery Clothbound

Cheddar^[L]_[SEP]**(COW)**^[L]_[SEP] ***cabotcheese.com***

Aged in the Cellars at Jasper Hill for up to 14 months, this Vermont standard-bearer is a classic crumbly farmhouse cheddar: sharp and savory, with hints of caramel and a smattering of crunchy crystals. **on map**

4 Jasper Hill Farm

Harbison^[L]_[SEP]**(COW)**^[L]_[SEP] ***jasperhillfarm.com***

Bark-wrapped, soft-ripened Harbison’s gooey, rich, mouthcoating paste hits all the sweet, salty and umami marks. Spoon a schmear onto your favorite freshly baked bread.

5 Consider Bardwell Barden

Blue^[L]_[SEP]**(COW)**^[L]_[SEP] ***considerbardwellfarm.com***

Made in collaboration with Murray’s, this raw cow’s milk blue is aged 60 days for a perfect balance of sour, salt-and-pepperiness and sweet chocolaty flavors. **on map**

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