

L'Etivaz Alpage Gruyere

WOW!!! We were smitten with our first taste of this extremely rare and limited production "real" Gruyere!! L'Etivaz is a Canton (county region) in Switzerland just northeast of Montreux, and there are approximately 10 smaller villages within this Canton, and about 70 small dairy farms that all contribute their collective milks to make this GREAT cheese (visit our web site, go to L'Etivaz link, and you'll see some of the small farms with as little as 20 cows, and some built back in the 1700s!!!) Being an "Alpage" Gruyere, this is made from Summer milk only, and exhibits vibrant floral, herbs & roasted nut flavors. The milk is heated in traditional copper pots over open wood fires, just as their ancestors did for generations.

OK, so we just can't help ourselves. . . So here's a fourth choice of cheese:

Koko's Coconut Gouda

First you need to smell this cheese...then think of either Rupert Holmes or Beach Boys' songs...OK, so I am dating myself here!! But this Dutch Gouda has had coconut cream added into the cheese, and the flavors are intense but the texture goes all cheese in the finish. And NO it's not TROPICANA sun tan oil in this cheese!!

And finally, we should mention that as accompaniments to these cheeses, certainly some Marcona almonds from Spain, dried tart Michigan cherries, and various crackers, baguettes, as well as a mix of olives or salames would further enhance the tasting.