

COMTÉ News



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Comté Cheese
Association

Jura's Golden Boy!

As of this printing, French Nordic skier Quentin Fillon Maillet racked up a number of medals for France at the 2022 Winter Olympics Games held in Beijing. Hailing from Saint-Laurent-en-Grandvaux, the 29-year-old Jura-born star took gold in both the biathlons, (20 km, individual and the 12.5 km pursuit), giving France 5 medals!

Overall, the French won 13 Olympic medals, including 4 gold.



Interview with Ellie and Sam Studd — a.k.a. the ‘Studd Siblings’— a brother-sister team and Australia’s hippest cheese experts.

Q. I’ve heard Comté is the one cheese you’d want to “be marooned on a desert island with,” why is that?

A. Because being marooned on a desert island, you would likely get bored... and Comté is the cheese that just keeps giving and providing something different every time you eat it, in the best possible way. One day it can be butterscotch caramel and pecans, the next it can be savory like caramelised onions. It’s also subtle and complex and lingering, coating your mouth with its smooth and firm texture. On the desert island, it would act as your entertainment, your protein energy bar, and your companion!

Also weighing in at around 40 kg a wheel, it would take you a while to get through it.

Q. What is your favorite Comté pairing or recipe? Have you learned any new recipes or pairings from visiting the Franche-Comté region of France on your trips to visit the producers and affineurs?

A. The French affineurs we visit are purists and very French – they eat Comté as is! But the savouriness and umami of Comté plays off many food and beverage pairings, making it beautifully versatile.

Our sister Fleur runs Market Lane Coffee in Melbourne, so it’s been fun to pair Comté and filter coffee. Pairing them together enhances the existing flavours of both the coffee and Comté. The creamy texture and nuttiness of the Comté can play off the fruity and floral notes of the filter coffee. The real fun begins when you experience a third flavour that wasn’t present before by combining the two.

Other interesting pairings we have enjoyed with Comté are Daiginjo Sake or aged tea.

One recipe we made up is dippy/soft-boiled egg with Comté soldiers. It’s a pretty fun, easy and bloody delicious breakfast.

Q. You are known for being passionate about preserving artisan cheese and raw milk cheese. How are you working to preserve it?

A. We think the best way to preserve and make people care about traditional cheese-making is through digestible education that is not intimidating or overcomplicated. Cheese for us is a vessel to tell a story. It brings people together in a primordial way and creates an understanding of culture, place and tradition. It brings people from all around the world closer together...almost like a modern-day church.

We educate people through our Studd Sibling Instagram, our website (<https://willstudd.com/the-studd-siblings/>), a monthly cheese column we write for Delicious magazine, as well as through cheese masterclasses that take place in real life (when Covid allows) and online.

Our father Will Studd has made over eight seasons of Cheese Slices, a cheese documentary series that tells the stories of artisan cheesemakers from across the globe – from Bhutan, India, Brazil and Europe.

Q. What do you think are some of the common misperceptions about artisan cheese in particular?

A. It can be overwhelming or tricky for the consumer to know what ‘artisan’ means due to the confusing/cheeky marketing of larger industrial companies, which sometimes purposefully make it difficult to identify authentic artisan cheese. Descriptors such as ‘grass fed’, ‘natural’, ‘vintage aged’ or even ‘cave aged’ can all be misleading distractions for the everyday consumer to navigate when buying cheese.

Q. Do you think there is the need now more than ever to save artisan and raw milk cheese? Or in some ways, has that need always been there?

A. Of course! The number of family-run farms and producers are reducing every year as small producers get bought out by big conglomerates or simply give up by not being able to make a living with the cost of liquid milk production. We think more than ever, artisan and raw milk cheese need saving; they will disappear if we don’t fight for them.

Q. You both were inspired to learn more about cheese by your father, Will Studd, a cheese specialist, importer, writer and TV presenter. Are you hoping to expand or build on his legacy or to create your own?

A. Ha, Dad is a legacy of his own!

We hand-select artisan cheese with him for our cheese range that we sell in America and Australia, which allows us to visit family-run farms and small producers with him. On these trips, our dad is a constant mentor for us and such a wealth of knowledge; we are so lucky to have his expertise shared and passed on to us.



Q. What’s next for both of you?

A. We are writing a cheese book at the moment. That is keeping us pretty busy! Watch for its release, which will hopefully be this year.

Save the date for “Les Rendez-vous du Comté!”

“Les Rendez-vous du Comté” is a great festival which will take place May 5- 8, 2022 throughout the Jura Mountains of France. On this occasion, 75 cheese dairies and ripening houses hosted a big event across the entire Comté AOP to share with the general public their passion for Comté-related professions. The event is designed to provide insight into the role of milk producers, cheese makers and affineurs in the production chain. Therefore, 200 activities ranging from visits to production workshops, farms or cellars to tastings and gourmet hikes will be offered. In addition, educational workshops, screenings, theatrical performances, and evening debates will be available. The objective of the rendez-vous is not only to advance a greater understanding of this sector but to bring all actors in the AOP together, much like a beautiful “family celebration.”



Transjurassienne Time!

The Jura is not only the training ground for the French Nordic ski team, which Comté is a sponsor of. Every year the annual Transjurassienne cross-country ski marathon takes place from Lamoura to Mouthe in the Jura mountains of France. It takes place the second weekend of February and goes through Les Rousses. The race initially debuted in 1980 and has been part of Worldloppet since 1981. Worldloppet currently unites 20 long-distance ski races from across Europe, America, Asia and Oceania.

The Transjurassienne is recognized as the biggest cross-country ski event in France, as it draws in over 4,000 skiers in just two days. That is why Comté stands, selling cheese, can be found along the route for hungry spectators.

The 76 kilometre course connects local villages throughout the region. Aside from this race, this area in France is renowned its freezing conditions. Temperatures have been known to hit -4 °F and lower.



Soft-boiled Egg & Comté Soldiers

Ingredients:

- 2 eggs
- 1-2 ounces Comté Cheese
- 2 English muffins,
whole-wheat

Instructions:

1. Bring a pot of boiling salted water to the boil. Gently place the eggs in the pan using a spoon.
2. Boil the eggs for 3 minutes until they are soft-boiled.
3. While the eggs boil, slice the muffins in half and toast them. Then, cut the muffins and the Comté into soldiers.
4. Remove the eggs from the pot and let them cool a few minutes. Remove their tops using a knife.
5. Enjoy dipping the soldiers into the runny egg yolk!

