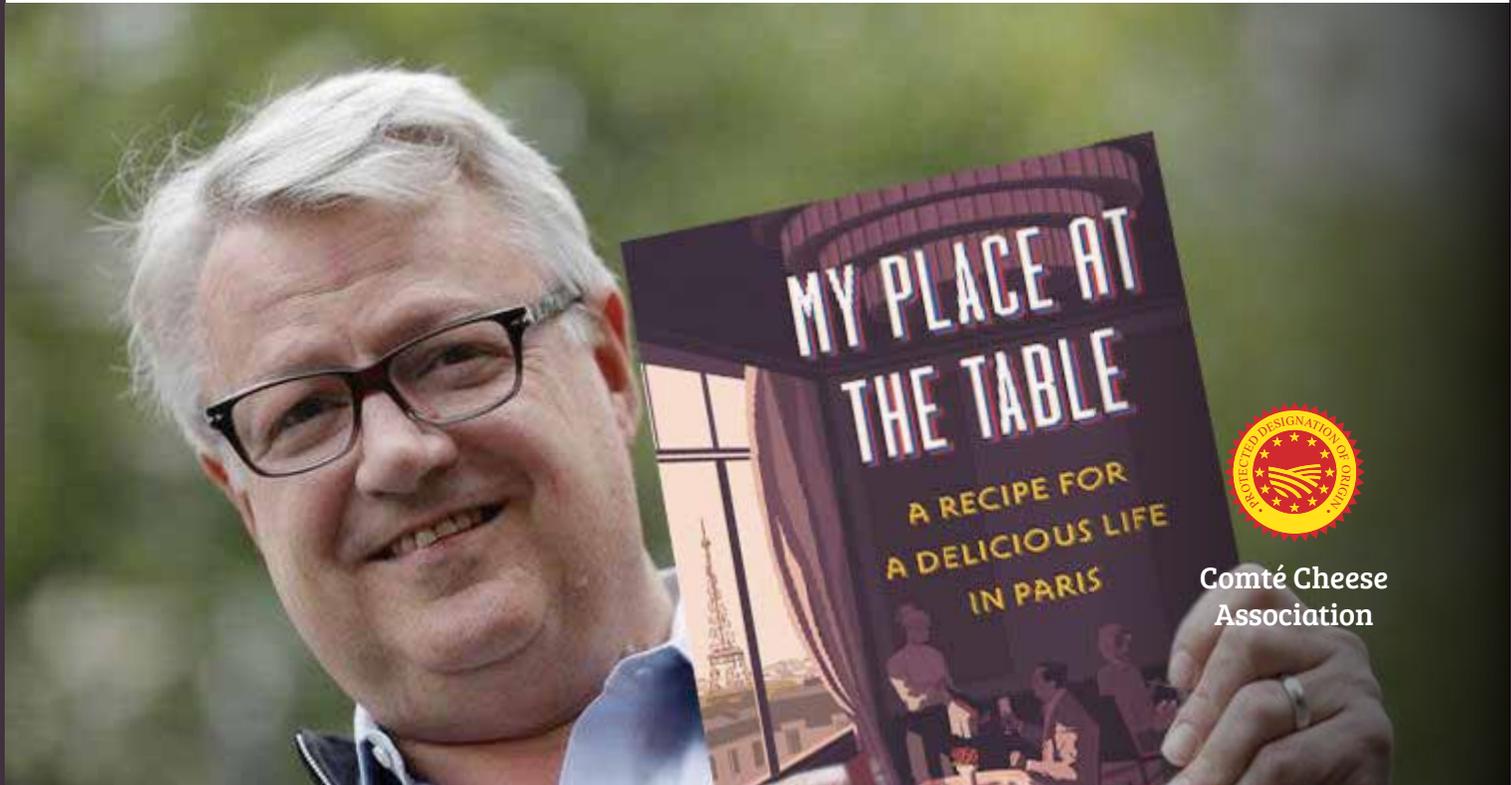


COMTÉ News



Winter 2021

COMTÉ CHEESE ASSOCIATION | WWW.COMTE-USA.COM



Comté Cheese Association

Q&A with Alexander Lobrano, Restaurant-reviewer, James Beard Award Winner and European Correspondent. Author of a recent piece on visiting the Jura for *The Wall Street Journal*.

**How did you get into reviewing restaurants and becoming a European correspondent?
What is the hardest part of the job?**

I've been obsessed by food ever since I was a child, and I first became aware of restaurant reviews when I was working as an editorial assistant at Random House in New York City. The food-loving editor I worked for published a brilliant book called "The Restaurants of New York" by an excellent writer named Seymour Britchky (1931-2004), and this book made me aware of the *métier* of restaurant critic for the first-time, along with eagerly reading Craig Claiborne's reviews in the *New York Times*.

Continued on page 3

The Easiest, Cheesiest Holiday Fondue Recipe



Fondue is clearly back this winter. Comté Fondue was featured by Dr. OZ in a December episode of his nationally syndicated TV program!

<https://www.doctoroz.com/the-dish/easiest-cheesiest-holiday-fondue-recipe>

- 1 1/2 pounds Comté, grated
- 1 garlic clove, smashed
- 1 cup white wine
- 1 heaping tbsp cornstarch
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- 1/4 tsp nutmeg, grated to taste
- Kosher salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- 1 fondue pot

Instructions:

Place all of the ingredients into a medium sauce pot and heat over medium low heat, stirring until the cheese begins to melt. After about 7 or 8 minutes, the cheese should become creamy and smooth. Pour the cheese into the fondue pot and keep warm. Serve with cubed bread and veggies.



Interview with Erin Harris

We have the pleasure of working with Erin Harris, known publicly as "The Cheese Poet." Based in Canada, she has created several delicious recipes using Comté and helped us with our Instagram giveaway. Erin is a Red Seal certified Chef, Cheese Specialist, and Food Writer. She has also competed on Chopped Canada twice, and written a cookbook entitled *The Essential Fondue Cookbook*. Currently, Erin oversees Business Development for Aux Terroirs, a national distributor of fine cheese, and is a Professor at George Brown College.

How did you decide to write a book on fondue?

I was asked to write the book by the publisher, Rockridge Press! It was a neat opportunity to learn more about the publishing world.

Why do you think people like fondue so much?

If you're a cheese lover, it's impossible to turn down a pot of melty cheese with an array of dippers! Fondue is a great way to connect around the table with some of your favourite people, too.

What did you learn while writing this book?

There are endless flavour combinations and dippers

Erin uses Comté in her French Fondue and French Onion Fondue recipes. She likes to use Comté because "Comté shows off flavours of wild herbs and roasted nuts with a strong savoury profile."

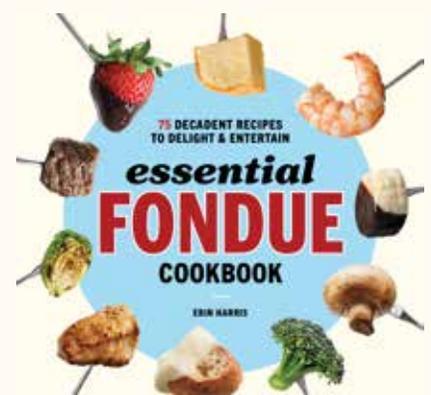
to switch up your fondue, and Fondue makes a great party meal because it can easily be adapted to a theme!

And what do you hope people will take away from it?

Fondue is intended to be a fun and interactive, stress-free meal.

Is there anything else you would you like to add?

Pull your fondue pot out of storage, and plan a fondue meal! You will be glad you did. The book is available from any major book retailer, as well as online.



Q. What is the hardest part of the job?

A: When I moved to Paris, it was to work for a famous fashion publisher, and since I had little interest in fashion--I only took the job to get to Paris, I pounced on every food-related assignment I could find and eventually made it my primary subject when I became European Correspondent for the late lamented GOURMET Magazine for ten years.

Q. What have you learned about cheese since you've been in France?

A: My first cheese lesson in France was a visit to the famous Androuet cheese shop in the rue d'Amsterdam in Paris with my family when I was fifteen. Coming from a country where cheese in those days usually meant "Swiss," cheddar, Monterey Jack and maybe Edam or Gouda, I was amazed by the variety of French cheeses and their distinctively different tastes, textures and fragrances. Since cheese is such an intense expression of terroir, or a specific place, almost every trip I make in France still involves discovering a new cheese. Otherwise, perhaps the single most important lesson I've learned about cheese during the more than thirty years I've lived in France was the one offered to me by a fromager in a Paris cheese shop the week I arrived. I wondered out loud why cheese in France has so much more taste than it did then in the United States, and he explained to me that the best French cheeses are made with unpasteurized milk, because it's the natural bacteria in the milk that allows the cheese to ripen and achieve its full flavor.

Q. Do you eat more cheese now? What is your favorite cheese?

A: I am an avid cheese-eater, and my four favorite French cheeses are Comté, Saint Marcellin, Epoisses and Roquefort

Q. Have any restaurant reviews ever come back to haunt you?

A: Cooking is a performance art, like dancing, singing, and acting, so it can be inconsistent. When you go into print extolling

a restaurant, people forget that this is not a guarantee of perfection. Chefs have good and bad days like all of us, and are very much at the mercy of the produce they receive. Cooking is also a very emotional activity, and this comes through on the plate, too.

Q. You've written "Hungry for Paris" and "Hungry for France," what's next?

A: My new book MY PLACE AT THE TABLE, a gastronomic-coming-of-age story about how a kid from suburban Connecticut becomes an important food writer in Paris, will be published by Houghton Mifflin on June 1, 2021. To purchase it go to <https://www.amazon.com/My-Place-Table-Recipe-Delicious/dp/1328588831>

Q. What restaurant has the best chariot of cheese?

A: Among my favorite chariots are those at Restaurant Alain Ducasse au Plaza Athénée and Guy Savoy in Paris, Michel Sarran in Toulouse, La Bouitte in Saint Martin de Belleville in the Savoie.

Q. Do you have a favorite cheese shop in the U.S.?

A: I love the Artisan Cheese Company in Sarasota, Florida, Formaggio Kitchen in Cambridge and Boston, MA, and the Village Cheese Shop in Mattituck, NY on the North Fork of Long Island.



**Comté ("con – TAY") cheese
ID General information:**

Origin: Jura Mountains (Massif du Jura), France

Milk Type: Raw cow's milk

Cheese Style: Artisanal, pressed, cooked, with natural brushed rind.

French AOC (Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée) since 1958 and European Union Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) Certification.

- Delimited area of production: Doubs, Jura, Ain, elevation 650-5000 ft.
- Milk must be produced by local cows of the Montbéliarde (95%) and Simmental (5%) breeds. There are approximately 150,000 Comté cows.
- Minimum of 2.5 acres of natural pasture for each animal.
- Cattle feed must be natural and free of fermented products and GMOs.
- Each fromagerie must collect milk from dairy farms within a 16-mile diameter maximum.
- Milk must be made into cheese within 24 hours maximum of the earliest milking.
- Only natural starters must be used to transform the milk into curds.
- Wheels must be aged on spruce boards. Minimum aging is 4 months, generally 6-18 months and sometimes even longer.

Comté Instagram Giveaway!!

We continue sponsor "Cutting the Curd" on Heritage Radio Network (HRN). However, this year we took that support even further by launching our first Instagram giveaway with HRN and Erin Harris (aka TheCheesePoet), for the chance to win fondue gift package! Complete with Comté of course!

To generate enthusiasm for this initiative, we developed an IGTV spot which celebrates all the reasons to love the mountains of the Jura and Comté! To see it, go to <https://www.instagram.com/tu/CLpG8Fhpy9j/>

