

COMTÉ News

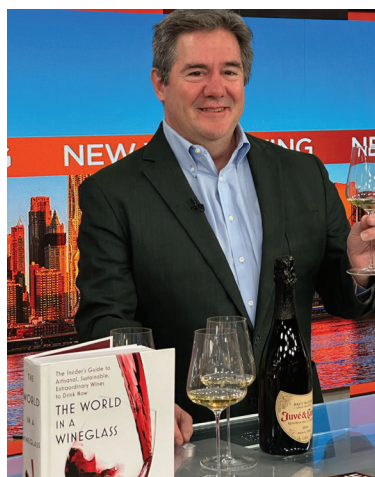


Winter/Spring
2024

COMTÉ CHEESE ASSOCIATION | WWW.COMTE-USA.COM



Comté Cheese
Association



A Conversation with Ray Isle, Executive Wine Editor, Food & Wine

Wine & Spirits Editor, Travel + Leisure and author of “The World in a Wineglass: The Insider’s Guide to Artisanal, Sustainable, Extraordinary Wines to Drink Now.” Ray is a fan of Comté.

Q: Congratulations on your new book Ray! You've stated that you were motivated to write it by wine drinkers who had a curiosity around "a vintner's environmental impact on the Earth," but was that the only factor?

A: No, that wasn't the only factor. One reason was simply that I'd never written a book and had an itch to do so at some point before declining into senescence. More to the point, I was also spurred by a desire to illustrate to people what I think is really the great divide in wine, which is between mass-market, mass-produced "beverage product" wines and wines that truly express a sense of place and a personal vision on the part of the winemaker/ grape grower/vigneron/what have you. As it happens, most of the people who fall into that category — at least the ones I respect most — are also working in ways that benefit the environment rather than screw it up further. So it was a sort of natural direction for the book to take.

Q: What do you hope the reader will take away from it? And why did you want to publish a book now?

A: I wanted to publish this particular book now, because I think there's a growing interest - particularly among younger wine drinkers - in how a wine is made, how the grapes are grown, and what that means for both the planet and for one's body. It's a shift away from the fairly reductive "it got 93 points and tastes like damson plum, ok I'll buy it" sensibility that drove a lot of fine wine purchases (as opposed to mass-market wine purchases) until recently. I hope the reader will take a few things away from the book: first, that wine is exciting, and that the producers I'm profiling are truly fascinating; I hope they're inspired to check out those wines. That's the main thing. But I also hope people come away from it with a better understanding of how terms like "organic," "sustainable," "natural" and so on apply to wine. There's a lot of confusion around those subjects. I tried to clarify things, in an engaging way, as best I could.

Q: This book appears to be geared toward wine experts and newcomers alike, why was that important to you?

A: It's vital to me that newcomers or casual wine drinkers can read this book and enjoy it. I didn't want to write a book solely for experts, though I hope that it's in-depth enough that people in the business will find it compelling. But in a sense, I wrote it for anyone who was like me when I first got into wine: deeply curious, excited, but baffled half the time.

Q: Obviously, this book is primarily about wine but are there any pairings you care to mention, like cheese?

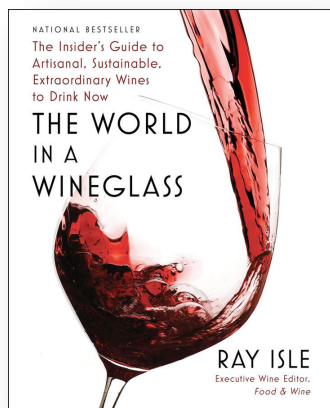
A: Wine and cheese go so well together because if there's anything on this Earth that was meant to go together, it's wine and cheese. But joking aside, the fat (and proteins, and often salt) in cheeses, goes brilliantly with the acidity and, in the case of reds, tannins in wine. They complement each other on the palate. There's also a long cultural history of wine and cheese being served together. And, not least, high quality wines and cheeses are among the most delicious things to consume that exist (I admit I am totally biased, since I love both.)

Q: We hear it took you three years to write this book, what's next?

A: What's next is a long rest! But I do hope to do another book sooner rather than later. Topic to be determined, but a good chance it will be about wine.

Q: Anything else you'd like to add?

A: Only that the Jura - the home of Comté and also of any number of amazing wines - is one of my favorite places in France. I wrote a long article about the region for Travel + Leisure a little ways back [<https://www.travelandleisure.com/food-drink/wine/jura-france-wine-region>], and researching it was one of my favorite trips I've taken in years. And yes so few people think to travel there, compared to many other French regions. It's a mystery.



"The World in a Wineglass" is available from Amazon and from independent booksellers around the country.

Meet Hayley Pingree

Winner of the 2023 Comté Scholarship!

Hayley is the founder and co-owner of The Napa Table.

Her winning essay can be found here:

<https://media.comte-usa.com/essays/23-H-Pingee-essay.pdf>

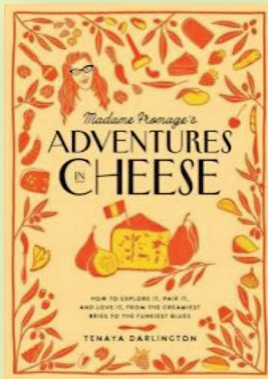


Try Hayley's Comté Pairing Idea!

According to Hayley – Here's the little gift for someone special: really great cheese + all the fixings. A hunk of Comté and Rustic Bakery's Tart Cherry, Cacao Nib and Almond Crisps!



Madame Fromage's Latest Adventure!



Tenaya Darlington (aka Madame Fromage) recently published a new book as well! "Madame Fromage's Adventures in Cheese." As she wanted to help people understand "how to explore it, pair it, and love it, from the creamiest Bries to the funkier blues."

In the book she highlights Comté a number of times saying in one instance: "One of the most popular aged French cheeses, Comté is known for being supple, sweet and savory. Made primarily from the raw milk of pasture-raised Montbéliard cows in the Franche-Comté region of eastern France, it is sold at different ages to highlight flavor notes that develop overtime." [Aside from the milk of Montbéliardes, producers also use milk from Simmental.]



**We hope you can join
as at Counter Culture
this year!**

Here are the dates, so mark your calendars:

April 9th – Philadelphia, PA

April 27th – San Diego, CA

May 14th – Seattle, WA

Sept. 24th – Chicago, IL