



## Grand Plate

This cheese board is a superior Cheeses of France experience. With classic French cheeses, each a product of unique regional terroir, it's a fabulous tasting experience. Assemble the the cheeses for the full terroir experience, or choose one region and create your own regional Fromage Plate. The cheeses on this particular board are arranged as they might appear on a map of France. For example, the Camembert is positioned at the Northwest Normandy corner of the board and the Beaufort is at the Eastern French Alps side of the board.

Recommended tasting order: Saint-Marcellin, Brie, Camembert, Mimolette, Munster, Epoisses, Cantal, Comté, Beaufort, Bleu d' Auvergne.

### *The Cheeses*

**Saint-Marcellin** — Rhône-Alpes. A legendary farmhouse cheese made from the milk of cows that graze in the mountainous Dauphiné Province in southeastern France. Small rounds with natural rinds that turn from white to light brown as they age. Inside, the pâte is softer and mild, but rich. If you can't find it, ask for: Saint-Félicien.

**Munster (AOC)** — Alsace. An ancient washed-rind cheese that traces its roots back to monastic life in the Middle Ages. Munster is made from the milk of cows that graze in the mountains of Vosges region in Alsace, northeastern France. Its bright pinkish-orange rind turns darker and more red with age. If you can't find it, ask for: Tomme d'Alsace, or another recommended washed rind cheese from Alsace.

**Mimolette** — Nord-Pas de Calais. Produced in Flanders in the northernmost region of France, this pasteurized cow's milk cheese is pressed, cooked and shaped like a cannonball. Mimolette hardens as it ages, its interior turning a deeper orange and acquiring a mouthwatering array of fruity, nutty flavors. Best when aged 18 months or more. If you can't find it, ask for: Aged Comté

**Epoisses (AOC)** — Burgundy. This cow's milk, washed-rind cheese comes from Burgundy. Strong-smelling, with a soft, smooth and mouth-watering flavor, it is washed with wine or usually with marc spirits, which give it a distinctive aroma. The rind has an orange tinge that darkens with age. If you can't find it, ask for: Munster, Affidelice, Perriere, Soumaintrain or Trou du Cru.

**Camembert** — Normandy. Camembert is a world-renowned cow's milk cheese from the Normandy region in northwestern France. This quintessential French cheese has a soft, white, bloomy rind; luxurious ivory pâte; and buttery, grassy flavor. The taste of a ripe Camembert is reminiscent of wild mushrooms. If you can't find it, ask for: Pont-l'Evêque or Pavé d'Auge.



**Bleu d'Auvergne (AOC).** A delicious blue cheese from the Auvergne region of south-central France, Bleu d'Auvergne has a full and pungent taste, but it is not as strong as many other blue cheeses; it is less salty, with a creamier and more buttery taste with a moist texture. If you can't find it, ask for: Fourme d'Ambert.

**Brie de Nangis — Ile-de-France.** Produced just southwest of Paris, this is one of the milder, more buttery Bries. It almost disappeared from production but has seen a revival over the past few decades. Brie de Nangis is creamy and smooth and has a slightly chalky center that becomes runny with age. If you can't find it, ask for: A good quality Brie or Coulommiers.

**Cantal (AOC) — Auvergne.** A distinguished, semi-hard cheese from the central mountainous region of Auvergne, Cantal is a cheddar-like cow's milk cheese cured with salt, which brings out its full flavor. Heavy and moist, young Cantal has a sweet, milk flavor; well-aged, it has a sharper flavor. If you can't find it, ask for: Laguiole or Salers are both cheddar-like cow's milk cheeses from the same region.

**Comté (AOC) — Franche-Comté.** One of the most popular cheeses in France, Comté is produced in the rich mountain pastures of the Jura. Its firm and supple pâte, with very small holes, or "eyes," has a nutty, slightly salty yet sweet taste. Comté is produced year-round by small, cooperative dairies known as fruitières. If you can't find it, ask for: French Gruyère, Beaufort.

**Beaufort (AOC).** Famous since Roman times, Beaufort is one of the noble cheeses of the French Alps. Made from the milk of an ancient mountain breed of mahogany-colored cows, Beaufort is distinguished by its concave-shaped rind. It has a dense, concentrated, buttery consistency, a fruity aroma and rich, nutty flavors with a hint of sweetness.