



For:

CALIFORNIA ARTISAN CHEESE FESTIVAL

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**THE CALIFORNIA ARTISAN CHEESE FESTIVAL
ANNOUNCES TWO NEW SATURDAY NIGHT EVENTS**

*Tickets now on sale for the 11th annual California Artisan Cheese Festival,
featuring new events such as Saturday night's
Cheese & Cocktail Celebration and two Wine and Dine Cheesemaker Dinners*

PETALUMA, Calif.—January 31, 2017—Tickets are now on sale for California's premier cheese celebration, the 11th annual [California Artisan Cheese Festival](http://www.artisancheesefestival.com), March 24-26, 2017. This year's weekend-long Festival will take place in and around the Sheraton Sonoma County in Petaluma, as well as various local farms, restaurants, creameries and tasting rooms. The Festival brings together artisan cheesemakers, farmers, educators, authors, chefs, brewers, and winemakers from all over California for three days of cheese tasting, education and celebration.

In addition to the long-time staple events such as the Friday Artisan Producer Tours, the Saturday Seminars, and Sunday's Bubble & Brunch and Marketplace, there are several brand new events being introduced this year. Several of these new and exciting events take place Saturday night, March 25, 2017, and include two Wine and Dine Cheesemaker Dinners at restaurants in Sonoma, and a Cheese & Cocktail Celebration, taking place at the Sheraton Sonoma County in Petaluma. Details about these new events are as follows:

Cheese & Cocktails

In honor of the Bay Area's blossoming local distillery scene and the cheesemakers who love them, this year marks the California Artisan Cheese Festival's first ever Cheese & Cocktail Celebration! For two hours on Saturday night, March 25, cheesemakers will be showcasing some of their favorite cheeses while local craft distilleries will be sampling their best spirits as both straight pours and also mixing them into cocktails. This is the perfect opportunity for guests to taste new spirits, and compare and pair some of California's best artisan cheeses and spirits. *Tickets \$40; The Sheraton Sonoma County; 5-7 p.m.*

Participating cheesemakers and spirits producers to date include:

Cheesemakers:

Achadinha Cheese Company (Petaluma)
Beehive Cheese (Uintah, Utah)
Bellwether Farms (Petaluma)
Central Coast Creamery (Paso Robles)
Chevoo (Healdsburg)
Cowgirl Creamery (Point Reyes Station)
Cypress Grove Chevre (Arcata)
Ferndale Farmstead (Ferndale, Washington)
Fiscalini Cheese Co. (Modesto)
Laura Chenel's Chevre (Sonoma)
Marin French Cheese Company (Marin)
Nicasio Valley Cheese Co. (Nicasio)
Nicolau Farms (Modesto)
Orland Farmstead Creamery (Orland)
Pedrozco Dairy and Cheese Co. (Orland)
Pt. Reyes Farmstead Cheese Company (Point Reyes Station)
Two Rock Valley Goat Cheese (Petaluma)
Valley Ford Cheese Company (Valley Ford)
Willapa Hills Cheese (Doty, Washington)
Winters Cheese Company (Winters)

Spirits Producers:

Alley 6 Craft Distillery (Healdsburg)
Siddiqui Rum (Windsor)
Sonoma Coast Spirits (Petaluma)
Sonoma County Distilling Company (Rohnert Park)
Spirit Works Distillery (Sebastopol)
Tamar Distillery (Redwood Valley)
Venus Spirits (Santa Cruz)

Wine and Dine with the Cheesemakers

Another new element this year is the opportunity to experience an intimate evening with some of California's most talented cheesemakers at one of two high-end cheesemaker dinners taking place Saturday night of the California Artisan Cheese Festival. Guests are invited to join these once-in-a-lifetime, multi-course feasts, each crafted by one of the region's best chefs, and featuring local cheesemakers whose cheeses will each be featured in their own course. The cheesemakers will also be in attendance to mingle with attendees and discuss their cheeses. Each three-hour dinner will take place in a quintessential Wine Country location, and each course will also be paired with a different local beer, wine or cider. Locations, chefs, participating cheesemakers, and other details are as follows:

Dinner with the Cheesemakers at Park 121

Chef Bruce Riezenman is hosting an amazing multi-course Cheesemaker Dinner at Park 121 at Cornerstone in Sonoma, featuring a different artisan cheesemaker's cheese in every course. Chef Riezenman of Park 121 has been cooking and sourcing locally in Sonoma County for 25 years, is one of the Wine Country's foremost authorities on entertaining, and a sought-after instructor of food

and wine pairing. The local cheesemakers that will be joining guests for dinner while Chef Riezenman utilizes their cheeses in each course include: Chevoo; Cowgirl Creamery; Moonside Creamery; Pedrozo Dairy & Cheese; and Point Reyes Farmstead. In addition to every course featuring a different cheesemaker, each will also be paired with a local wine, beer or cider. Park 121 is located at Cornerstone Sonoma, which features a wide array of unique design and gift shops, art and sculpture galleries, premium tasting rooms, and a gourmet restaurant with outdoor dining set amidst the beautiful Sonoma Valley landscape. Guests are encouraged to arrive early to Cornerstone and wander through the unique and artistic gardens. Cornerstone is also home to the Sunset Magazine Outdoor Kitchen and Test Gardens.

Tickets \$150 per person, including beverage pairing, tax and gratuity; 6:30 – 9:30 p.m. Park 121 at Cornerstone, 23584 Arnold Dr., Sonoma, CA 95476

Dinner with the Cheesemakers at Suite D

Sondra Bernstein, chef and owner of the girl & the fig restaurant which is turning 20 this year, has long been an advocate and supporter of the California artisan cheese scene, so it is fitting for the California Artisan Cheese Festival to host a Cheesemaker Dinner at her newest event space - Suite D. This unique location will be the setting for a once-in-a-lifetime multi-course dinner showcasing some of the area's best artisan cheesemakers and their cheeses, including: Bellwether Farms; Cypress Grove; Fiscalini Cheese Company; Nicasio Valley Cheese Company; and Orland Farmstead. In addition to each course highlighting a different cheesemaker, a local wine, beer or cider will also be paired with each course to complement the dish.

Tickets \$150 per person, including beverage pairing, tax and gratuity; 6:30 – 9:30 p.m. Suite D, 21800 Schellville Rd., Sonoma, CA 95476

Throughout the weekend, guests will have the opportunity to experience new, limited-production and rare artisan cheeses while supporting California farmers and cheesemakers in their ongoing effort to advance sustainability. Tickets to most of the Festival's events are still available, including the Artisan Producer Tours exploring Northern California farms from Marin County to Sacramento; Sunday's Bubbles and Brunch with the Cheese Twins, Charlie and Michael Kalish; and the grand finale: Sunday's Artisan Cheese Tasting and Marketplace. Tickets for all events can be purchased at www.artisancheesefestival.com.

Those interested can also follow updates by "liking" the Artisan Cheese Festival on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/artisancheesefestival) and following the event on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/artisancheesefestival). All events are priced separately and the [Sheraton Sonoma County – Petaluma](https://www.sheratonsonoma.com) is offering special discounted rates on rooms for festival-goers.

Generous sponsors of the Artisan Cheese Festival include American AgCredit, Beehive Cheese Company, Bellwether Farms, Central Coast Creamery, Chevoo, Cowgirl Creamery, Creminelli Fine Meats, *Culture Magazine*, Cypress Grove Chevre, Donald and Maureen Green Foundation, Essentia Water, Exchange Bank, *Edible Marin and Wine Country*, *Edible East Bay*, Face Rock Creamery, Ferndale Farmstead, Fiscalini Cheese Company, Formaticum, John Boos/Boos Boards, Lagunitas Brewing Company, Laura Chenel's Chevre, Marin French Cheese Company, Mike Hudson Distributing, Nicasio Valley Cheese Co., Nugget Market, Oliver's Markets, Pennyroyal Farm, Pisenti & Brinker LLP, Point Reyes Farmstead Cheese Company, Pure Luxury Transportation, Real California Milk, Rustic Bakery, Seismic Brewing Company, Sheraton Sonoma County, Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District, Valley Fig Growers, Valley Ford Cheese and Creamery and Willapa Hills Cheese.

About California Artisan Cheese Festival

A 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization, California Artisan Cheese Festival strives to increase cheese appreciation, educate consumers about artisan cheeses, support the cheesemaking community and its sustainability and celebrate the creations of California's many farmers and cheesemakers. The festival began in March 2007 as the first-ever, weekend-long celebration and exploration of handcrafted cheeses, foods, wines and beers from California and beyond. In keeping with its dedication to the community, the Artisan Cheese Festival donates 10% of all ticket proceeds to Sonoma Land Trust, Marin Agricultural Land Trust, Petaluma Future Farmers of America, California Artisan Cheese Guild and Redwood Empire Food Bank. To date the Artisan Cheese Festival has contributed more than \$90,000 to these non-profit organizations that work to support the artisan cheesemaking community and its infrastructure in California. For more information, visit www.artisancheesefestival.com.

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ATTN EDITORS: Photos available upon request