

SPRING
CHEESE

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Certain cheeses are best eaten during certain seasons. Aromas and flavors of fresh earth and flowers, rinds wrapped in greenery, cheese that is young and fresh ... these are cheeses meant for spring.

Pair spring cheeses with a newly-released vintages of Rosé or aromatic white wines like Viognier, Chenin Blanc and Spanish Verdejo. Here's a list of some great-selling "spring" cheeses available through the KeHE specialty cheese program:

CYPRESS GROVE HUMBOLDT FOG

Humboldt Fog is the flagship cheese of Cypress Grove Chevre, located in the town of Arcata, amid the California redwoods. Named after the thick fog that is so prevalent in Humboldt County, Humboldt Fog is a soft-ripened goat's milk cheese unlike any other. It has a thin line of vegetable ash running through the center of the stark white paste. Then it is finished with a thin layer of vegetable ash under a soft, bloomy, white rind. When its young, this wonderful cheese is creamy, soft, & oozy near the rind, becoming firmer and crumbly toward the middle. As it ages, it becomes softer, creamier & oozes more. Just as the appearance changes with age; so does the flavor. Humboldt Fog begins with a mild, creamy, taste with a hint of lemon & becomes stronger and more complex as it ages. This unique cheese is great on a cheese plate, served simply with honeycomb & pears, or sliced atop a salad. Pair it with Sauvignon Blanc, Gamay Beaujolais or an Orange-Wheat Beer.

FRESH MOZZARELLA

Fresh Mozzarella is an unaged white cheese traditionally made from the milk of water buffalo in Italy. Imported Fresh Buffalo Mozzarella sports a high price tag and a short shelf life. In the US, mozzarella is typically made with cow's milk and is readily available with the specialty cheese. Fresh mozzarella has a soft, stringy texture and a mild, milky flavor. The most popular way to serve Fresh Mozzarella is sliced, with fresh tomatoes & basil, also known as a Caprese Salad.

RICOTTA

Ricotta literally means "re-cooked" and is a fresh cheese, made by cooking the whey left over from the cheese making process. In the US, it is traditionally made with cow's milk, but there are a few cheese makers using sheep or goat's milk to make Ricotta. It has a soft texture, similar to cottage cheese & has a fresh, clean flavor with a hint of milk. It is great as an ingredient for cooking in such dishes as lasagna or cheesecake, but it is also delicious served on its own with a drizzle of honey & fresh berries.

CHEVRE IN BLUE BY MONTCHEVRE

Established in 1988, Montchevre uses only the freshest goat's milk from farms in Wisconsin & Iowa to make this delicious blue cheese. This carefully aged, crumbly blue cheese combines the sharpness of good blue with the unmistakable tang of a great goat cheese. Typically great on salads, Chevre in Blue boasts enough depth to pair with dried cherries & a glass of pinot noir.

SWISS ALP PANORAMA

From high mountain pastures comes the aptly named Swiss Alp Panorama, a semi-hard cheese with a firm, smooth texture similar to Gruyere or Comte. Once the cheese is formed into wheels, it is coated in several handfuls of local herbs, gathered from the countryside. The cheese is then aged for 4 months allowing the herbs to infuse their flavors into the cheese, echoing the flavor of the wild herbs & grasses eaten by the cows before milking. Swiss Alp Panorama is a delicious cheese, perfect for a cheese board, especially when paired with crisp, young, white wines. It also melts well, making it perfect for cheese sauces, gratins, or a simple grilled cheese.

Mozzarella-Stuffed Pesto Turkey Meatballs

Ingredients

- 3 lb ground turkey
- 1 c finely chopped onion
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 egg
- 1 c Italian-style bread crumbs
- ½ c grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese
- ½ c chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
- ¼ c prepared pesto
- ¼ c milk
- 1 T salt
- 2 t fresh ground black pepper
- 1 lb fresh mozzarella, cut into small cubes
- 3 T extra virgin olive oil
- 2 – 24 oz. jars marinara sauce

Preparation

Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
Place the ground turkey, onion, garlic, egg, bread crumbs, Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, parsley, pesto, milk, salt, and black pepper in a bowl.
Mix until evenly blended, then form into 1 3/4-inch meatballs. Make a hole in the meatball with your finger and place a cheese cube in the hole.
Seal the meatball around the cheese and place on a nonstick baking sheet.
Drizzle the olive oil over the meatballs. Bake in the preheated oven until the meatballs are no longer pink in the center, about 30 minutes.
Heat the marinara sauce in a saucepan over low heat. Bring to a simmer, and place the baked meatballs in the marinara sauce for about 2 minutes.

RECIPE SOURCE: WWW.ALLRECIPE.COM