

Mon. 09 Mar '09

People

Easy Being Cheesy

Meet Andrew Steiner of Andrew's Cheese Shop

Cheesemonger Andrew Steiner isn't one for formalities. Instead of waxing poetic about something like Hook's 12-year-old cheddar, he'll probably say the rich, slightly sweet Wisconsin cheese is "so good it's like crack." Not the most conventional description, but it's this no-fuss attitude that makes Andrew's Cheese Shop one of our favorites.



In addition to offering more than 100 cheese from 10 countries, Steiner also organizes a roster of fun classes and events. Burgeoning aficionados fill the monthly Cheese 101 course (\$25), but the casual grilled-cheese-and-beer dinners (\$35) are so popular dates are regularly added to meet demand. What's not to love? Several courses of small open-faced sandwiches (premium Wisconsin gruyere on carrot-walnut-raisin bread perhaps; or provolone picante, Parmesan and pesto on olive bread) are served with artisanal brews like Allagasch Curieux.

"Bubbles and cheese is a match made in heaven," Steiner says. Beer cuts through the fat and salt, and works especially well with cheddars, Alpine cheeses and "the smelly stuff." Here are some of his picks:

Samuel Adams Chocolate Bock (\$16 for 750ml bottle): This low-alcohol, dark beer aged over roasted cocoa nibs from Bolivia is perfect for blue cheeses.

Meantime IPA (\$9.50 for 750ml bottle): "One of the best beers in the world," good with Italian cheese like fontina or pecorino.

Fuller's Vintage Ale (\$9.50 for 16.9 ounce bottle): Individually fermented in the bottle, this English ale likes farmhouse cheddars like Lincolnshire Poacher.

Dupont Moinette Blonde (\$9 for 750ml bottle): This light Belgian ale is great with "champagne cheeses" like Brie or Camembert.

Andrew's Cheese Shop, 728 Montana Ave., Santa Monica; 310-393-3308 or andrewscheese.com. The shop isn't licensed to retail beer and wine yet, so look for these at [BevMo](#), [Wally's](#) or [Red Carpet Wines](#).