

InsideHook

Does Wine or Beer Pair Better With Cheese?

We put the two beverage categories head-to-head so see which one tastes better with our favorite cheeses

Wine and cheese is a foolproof pairing. Classes that focus on pairing the beverage with the beloved food are abundant, and most sommeliers will have an expert suggestion on which wine to pair with a cheese course. But beer is also a friend to many foods, which is why it's strange that more people don't talk about pairing cheese with beer.

So in the spirit of journalism — and an excuse to drink some delicious beverages with copious amounts of cheese — our editorial team set up a tasting of eight different cheeses, each paired with one wine and one beer. Our tasting panel sipped, chewed and commented their way to a verdict about which beverage ultimately came out on top so we could answer that age-old question, does wine or beer pair better with cheese?



Brie: (Le Petit Brie)

The wine: Champagne (Champagne Bollinger Special Cuvee)

In the spirit of terroir, we chose a Champagne to pair with this brie, which also comes from France. Specifically, we went with Champagne Bollinger Special Cuvee, a blend of 60% pinot noir, 25% chardonnay and 15% meunier with notes of walnut and brioche. We thought that the Champagne's bubbles and brightness would equally cut through and complement the brie's creaminess.

The beer: Fruited Berliner Weisse (SingleCut Kim Hibiscus Sour)

We chose to go with SingleCut's Kim Hibiscus Sour, a fruited Berliner Weisse, for this one thinking that its lactic acid — responsible for its sour, tart flavor — would cut the richness of the brie. We also thought the fruitiness of the style, in this case thanks to the blackcurrants SingleCut brews their beer with, might call to mind some of the jams you so often see paired with brie on a cheese plate.

The winner: Wine (11-3)

Our panel thought that the wine offered “complementary flavors” and “cut the richness [of the brie] beautifully.” One comment even touted that it was the “perfect combo,” making this a reliable wine and cheese pairing for any gathering. While most people liked the beer solo, one comment explained that, “On its own it has a delicious fruity taste, but once paired with brie, it clashes in an unpleasant way.”