



theKitchen

## My Go-To Goat: *Chabichou Du Poitou*

THE CHEESEMONGER



I was set to write about a great new cheese I discovered (stay tuned next week) and when I went into my fridge to reanalyze the wedge, I happened upon a small, neglected piece of an old faithful. I think a friend brought it over last weekend and I didn't even know I had it in there. I tasted, and remembered that it's the cheese I can always count on tasting just right. A go-to, indeed.

I've loved Chabichou du Poitou for a long time. It's one of those cheeses that packs that this-is-a-straight-up-traditional-French-cheese punch. And sometimes, that's pretty precisely what you want.

The stats: Chabichou can be made with either raw or pasteurized goat milk, though the pasteurized is the only version that's imported to the States. The cheese is the combined work of six farmers, two affineurs and seven private and cooperative dairies in the Poitou-Charentes region of Western France. Natural rinded, inoculated with a mold called *geotrichum candidum*. The mold yields a thin, wrinkled, totally edible rind, and somehow helps make the milk itself shine. While other soft-ripened cheeses in the bloomy rinded family take on mushroomy, earthy flavors, Chabichou tastes of the milk itself: grassy, slightly funky, and minerally. As it ages, the flavors enhance. The piece I ate from my friend was nearly fudgy in texture: dense as can be, lingering on the tongue and begging for white wine.

These natural rinded French goat cheeses — they're the first style of cheese that really left me floored. They showed me that cheese is complex and ponder-able and better than almost anything sweet.

For even more information on Chabichou du Poitou, go to the [official website](#), which even boasts some goat sound effects.

If you can't find Chabichou (though you should be able to, at any fine cheese shop or specialty market) try Chevrot or Charollais. They'll both deliver on that slightly aged, slightly goaty goat cheese moment, so worth postponing your original intentions.



**Posted by Nora Singley**

Nora Singley used to be a cheesemonger and the Director of Education at Murray's Cheese Shop. Until recently she was a TV Chef on The Martha Stewart Show. She is currently a freelance food stylist and recipe developer in New York.

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