

NEW CHEESE+ ANNUAL

the word on cheese

# culture

SPECIAL EDITION SPRING 2014–SPRING 2015



## 193 PERFECT PAIRINGS

CRAFT CIDERS **SOUR BEERS** SPICED NUTS **BACON JAMS** AND MORE p. 15



DISPLAY UNTIL  
SEPTEMBER 2014

CHEESE+ 2014

0 712820 08217 0



04  
0 712820 08217 0



# CHEESE + TROPICAL FRUIT

Whether fresh or in preserved form, exotic fruit is a showstopper alongside carefully chosen cheeses

WRITTEN BY STEPHANIE SKINNER

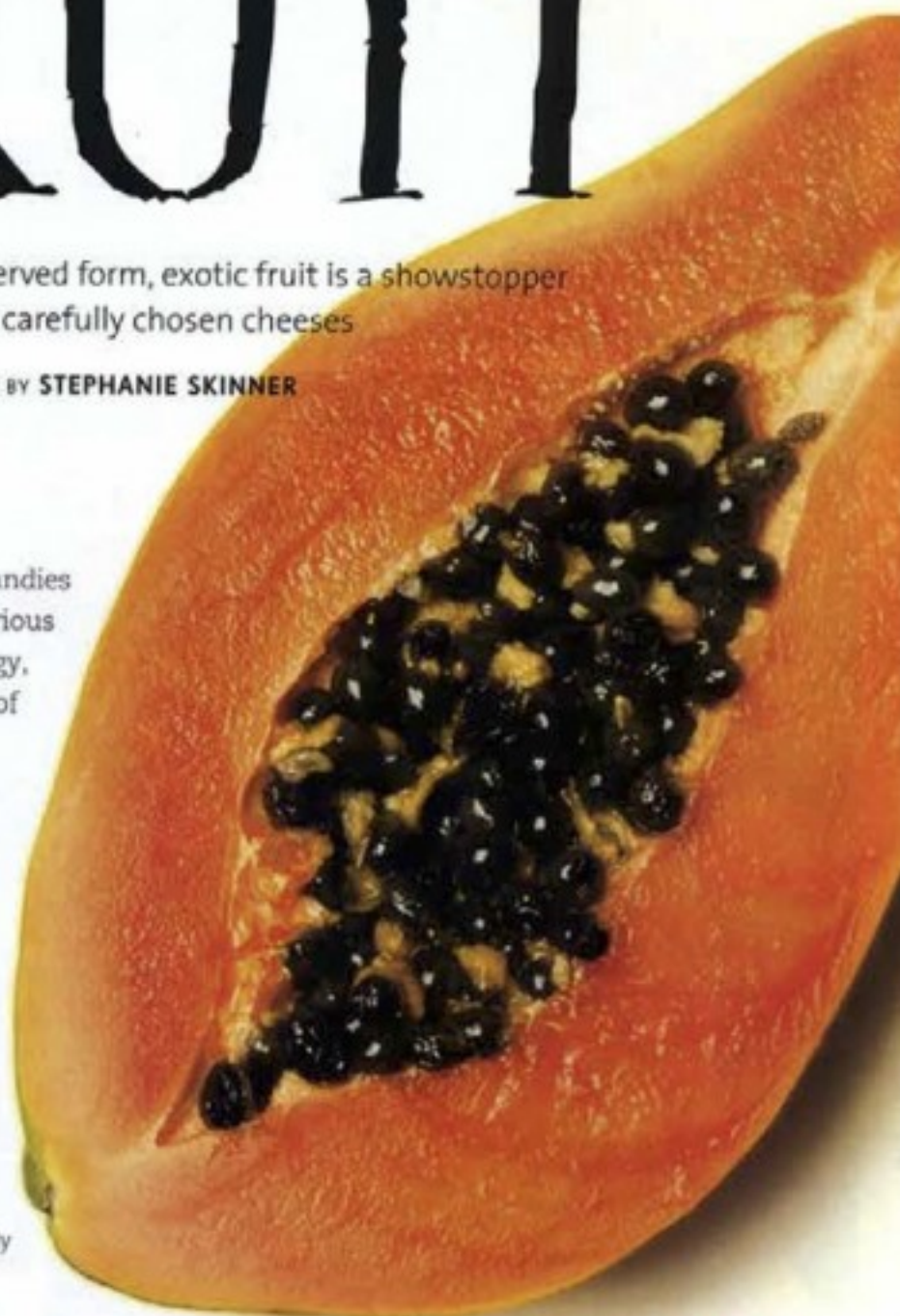
**T**here's a reason so many of our childhood candies were chemically engineered to taste like various tropical fruits: They're delicious. Sweet, tangy, tart. There is also a mind-boggling number of varieties, as many of them are grown in various locations near the equator. But what seems to unite them all is that each fruit is extremely effective at hoarding water and turning it into mouthwatering juiciness.

That's lovely, you say. What do tropical fruits have to do with cheese? So glad you asked.

Think back to the first time you tried an aged goat cheese that left you groping for a word to describe the taste ... and then you pegged it. Pineapple! Or remember when you tasted citrus in a cheddar? Didn't you kind of love that "Hawaiian pizza" you discovered

in college? There it is: tropical deliciousness applied to cheese.

Are you brave enough to go the next step and combine them in one bite? Once you have wandered into this forest, you may find the options unfolding endlessly before you.





## Mango

Mango, one of the most ubiquitous tropicals, is available nearly all year long because of its many varieties. For the purposes of this tasting, we recommend the Ataulfo variety, which is sweet, tart, and free of the fibrous nature of some of its cousins. Another bonus is that the flesh-to-pit ratio is in your favor. When mango is eaten in the same bite as a dense and rich sheep's milk cheese, such as Central Coast Creamery's Ewenique, you'll notice mango hits the palate first, but then the cheese steps forward, and the finish is a tangle of tart and creamy—almost like a creamsicle. In jam, mango shines, especially when it's incorporated with a fiery component and contrasted with salty, sharp cheddar.

**Central Coast Creamery Ewenique**  
+ Ataulfo Mango

**Grafton Village Cheese 3-Year Aged Cheddar** + Sidehill Farm Mango  
Habanero Jam

## Dragon Fruit

Pitahaya, commonly known in the United States as dragon fruit, is originally from Central America but is cultivated in far-flung locations. The flesh of pitahaya roja (red) is dramatically crimson, floral, extremely juicy, and delicate, which makes it an admirable chaperone for cheese. Along with looking absolutely smashing, a piece of bright red dragon fruit atop chalk-white, soft-ripened goat cheese startles your palate. The floral tones in dragon fruit pop against the gentle nuances in the cheese. Alternatively, you can smear some whipped goat cheese on a round of dragon fruit. It's a bit like having fruit with whipped cream, only better.

**Bucheron** + Red Dragon Fruit

**Ile de France Chèvrerousse** + Red Dragon Fruit

## Papaya

Whether you find a red- or a yellow-fleshed papaya in your local store, or are lucky enough to shimmy up a tree and snag one for yourself, you need to wait for its perfect moment of ripeness to truly experience what business it has in a cheese pairing. Look for widespread yellow coloring, soft flesh, and a faint whiff of fruit. Papaya has a floral, figgy flavor, and it's ever so slightly meaty. An aged cheddar is a handsome companion for a sliver of fresh papaya, and for an up-front flavor explosion, try a semi-firm goat cheese with a dab of papaya jam.

**Milton Creamery Flory's Truckle** + Red or Yellow Papaya

**Twig Farm Square** + Tropical Fruit Stand Papaya Coconut Jam

## Guava

Guava proves that high vitamin C content doesn't necessarily preclude playing well with lactic cheeses. The green apple variety is neither assertive nor overtly citrusy, so options abound. Choose a pairing cheese that packs a fruity flavor to complement fresh guava's bubblegummy-ness. If you're enjoying guava in a paste or preserves, melt Comté on a slice of baguette and slather your fruity fix atop. Transcend.

**Sartori BellaVitano Reserve** + Green Apple Guava

**Comté** + Rutherford & Meyer Guava Fruit Paste

