

## FROM THE EDITOR



# Same As It Ever Was?

When talking cheese, “tradition” is a word that comes up time and time again; Merriam-Webster defines it as “a way of thinking, behaving, or doing something that has been used by the people in a particular group, family, or society for a long time.” In terms of curds, a seriously long time: Pottery fragments suggest that milk was coagulated during the Neolithic Period (10,200 to 2,000 B.C.). The rest, as they say, is history.

There is permanence in tradition, a pride in doing things the way your ancestors did, by hand and with care. Modern British cheddarmakers continue to swathe their wares in lard and cloth (“Haute Culture,” p. 64). In Sardinia, brothers Jon and Piergiorgio Vilecco of Central Formaggi are producing pecorinos and other sheep’s milk wheels as their enterprising forefathers once did (“Inner Beauty,” p. 58). After all, well-made products have lasting appeal—just feast your eyes on the treasures in the Brass Sisters’ culinary antiques collection (“Artifact Finders,” p. 78).

But reverence for the past shouldn’t—and doesn’t—preclude innovation. Those UK cheddarmakers are also mining archived recipes for ideas and experimenting with bandaged curds made from sheep’s and goat’s milk. And while the Vileccos continue to turn out cheeses the old-fashioned way, they keep an eye toward the international market; our centerfold star, their innovative and decadent Moliterno al Tartufo, has worldly appeal.

Also in this issue: a discussion with Los Angeles food-truck pioneer and curds enthusiast Roy Choi (p. 22); a look at the new plant-based, cheeselike products hitting the market (“Say Cheese?” p. 90); and our expertly curated guide to the great places that make downtown Manhattan a turophile hot spot (“New York Slice,” p. 32). There’s much to celebrate in the following pages—but if you need a few more excuses, flip to our **Parties by culture** insert. Inside, find punches fit for a crowd and cheese plate dos and don’ts, plus playlists, recipes, and tips for winter shindigs. Shrimp and cheesy grits for Mardi Gras? Yes, please.

As 2015 comes to a close, may your days be merry and bright ... and may all your cheddars have bite. (My resolution? Cool it with the cheesy lines.) See you next year!

—Courtney Hollands, Editor-in-Chief

### *The* **HUNGRY** EDITOR DESK AWARDS

#### Little Belgians Speculoos

Delicious dipped in morning coffee—or any time, really—these traditional spiced biscuits are baked in Berkeley, Calif., by Evy Ballegeer. Especially popular around the holidays in her native Belgium, speculoos get their name from the Latin word for “mirror,” as each cookie reflects the wooden mold in which it’s made. [littlebelgians.com](http://littlebelgians.com)



#### Simply Gum

Chew on this: The gum you buy in the checkout line is rife with artificial flavors,

synthetic ingredients, and preservatives—rendering it non-biodegradable. Enter New York City-made Simply Gum, which contains only six natural ingredients and comes in six varieties. Our picks? Savory Fennel-Licorice and slightly spicy Ginger. [simplygum.com](http://simplygum.com)



## Freshness and Flavor are Served

The fresh, delicate, milky flavor of BelGioioso Burrata starts with the freshest Wisconsin milk. Made to order just hours after milking, Fresh Mozzarella is handcrafted into pouches and filled with a rich straciatella, its special creamy filling.

Handcrafted freshness and flavor are served with BelGioioso Burrata.



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\*No significant difference has been found in milk from cows treated with artificial hormones.