



# The Cheesemaker's Vision

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## Generations

### To Ripen or Not to Ripen: That Is the Question!

When we decide to ripen a cheese, how do we do it and for how long? The master cheesemaker has to work with a living and constantly changing process.



### Ripening, the Final Step

In previous issues, we saw that cheese is essentially made by coagulating milk and draining the curds that form. The cheese can then be eaten without being ripened. This is how fresh and curd cheeses are made. These types of cheese are generally very mild and are most often used to make more complex dishes –from salads to desserts and, of course, poutine. However, for cheeses with more characteristic flavor, more subtle aromas, or sharper bite, ripening is necessary. The two main methods are surface-ripening and interior-ripening.



### Surface- or Interior-Ripening

Surface-ripening is a faster, yet less stable method. Enzymes are applied to the outside of the cheese to work their way from the surface to the center. This method yields a bloomy rind with a fuzzy white surface (like a Brie), or the beautiful, smooth, shiny yellow surface of cheeses like the *Le Fin Renard*. It takes a few weeks to obtain the desired characteristics, and they change fairly quickly. Unless otherwise indicated, the rind is edible. Whether you eat it or not is simply a matter of personal taste!

## Ripening

Interior-ripening is a slower, but much more stable method. Some cheeses can even be ripened for years before they are consumed. The enzymes act throughout the cheese, which is generally coated in wax. The enzymes release gas, which creates bubbles in the interior of the cheese. Cheeses with such holes (like Swiss) are soft and good for melting, which makes them perfect for fondues and raclettes.

Cheeses without holes (like Cheddar) have a stringier texture and are perfect for grating.

### What About Blue Cheeses?

Blues – a favorite among varsity cheese aficionados – are the result of a blend of both surface- and interior-ripening. Mold is injected by needle, causing the reaction that makes this cheese so delicious.



## Blue Cheeses



## Le fin Renard



### Spotlight on Bergeron

Le Fin Renard is one of our most highly acclaimed cheeses. This refined cheese boasts a lovely mouthfeel and is a fine choice for celebrations and special occasions. Renowned for raclette, delicious grated, remarkable on hamburgers, tasty in omelets, and unbelievable grated on berries, our Fin Renard has more than one trick up its sleeve.

## Acclaimed Cheese



### Spotlight on Cooking

If any unappetizing mold appears on your cheese, don't just throw it out! Instead, wash it carefully with salty water and a small brush. That way you won't waste any of your wonderful wedge.

## Spotlight on Health

### Spotlight on Health

A distinctive feature of French cuisine, cheese is both delicious and nutritious. It's a veritable powerhouse of "full calories": cheese provides useful nutrients and micronutrients, unlike some foods like pastries and sugary drinks, which provide "empty calories" of little nutritional value.

Cheese is a source of calcium that is considered particularly bioavailable. It also helps provide minerals such as phosphorus, magnesium, potassium, and sodium, which it contains in varying quantities depending on the type of cheese. What's more, cheese is rich in proteins. These proteins, which come mainly from milk casein, are composed of all the essential amino acids.

These are nutrients that the body cannot synthesize so we can only get them through dietary sources.

Cheese also puts the bite on cavities! Did you know that eating a piece of cheese after a meal or as a snack can protect your teeth, especially if you just ate something sweet? Cheese (such as Cheddar, Swiss, Blue, Mozzarella, and –*Le Bergeron!*) contains calcium, protein, fat, and phosphorus, which help protect against acid and contribute to healthy teeth.



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