

## Sleeper Hits of 2017

*December 26, 2017*

**American cheese merchants** know they can sell triple-cream Brie without lifting a finger. But what fun is that? The best merchants take risks, bringing in new creations and unfamiliar cheeses that required some hand selling. And every year, a few of these newcomers click with customers and sprint away from the pack. I asked several top retailers from around the country about the new (or newish) cheeses that over-delivered for them this year.

“**Deer Creek The Blue Jay** from Wisconsin. It’s studded with juniper berries and extra rich. Some people frown on the juniper, but when they taste it, they almost always want a big piece. When it ripens to the texture of crème brûlée, it is exceptional. Also, **Maison de la Truffe Brie**. It’s split horizontally and smeared with a thick mascarpone truffle layer. It’s over-the-top with truffle aroma. Lastly, **Schnebelhorn**: raw Swiss cow’s milk, rich and buttery with a touch of funk. I made a fondue with 70 percent Schnebelhorn and 30 percent young Gruyère. Superb.”  
**James Ayers, Atelier Fine Foods**  
Yountville, CA



Aroma bomb: Maison de la Truffe Brie