

Haute Goat

July 19, 2016

Such a sad moment for France right now and for those of us who kick-started our culinary careers there. I first learned to appreciate cheese as a college student in Provence—I certainly didn't grow up with the good stuff—and I had my first encounter with a cheese course in France. At farmers' markets in Aix-en-Provence, I discovered goat cheeses as quivery as custard and others as hard as rocks. And I began to suspect that I would never exhaust the country's cheese repertoire.

But how could I have overlooked, for so many years, a French cheese as splendid as Le Mothais sur Feuille (mo-tay sur foy)? Goat cheese aged on a leaf (*sur feuille*) goes way back in the Poitou-Charentes region, according to a history submitted as part of Le Mothais sur Feuille's application for AOP status (*appellation d'origine protégée*, which is still pending). Because the land was ill-suited to farming, goats and wine grapes (for Cognac) defined the rural economy. Every family kept a few goats. One historical account describes a typical peasant dinner as soup, chestnuts and homemade goat cheese, fresh or aged depending on the season.

Enjoy Le Mothais sur Feuille with sparkling wine or, beer lovers, with a saison. I've been really enjoying Almanac Brewing's Saison Dolores. Look for Le Mothais sur Feuille at Bi-Rite Market, Little Vine, Rainbow Grocery in San Francisco; Pasta Shop in Oakland; Cheese Board in Berkeley; [Atelier by JCB](#) in Yountville; The Rind in Sacramento; Cheese Store of Silverlake, Surf and Vagabond Cheese Company in Los Angeles; and Andrew's Cheese Shop in Santa Monica.