

WHAT'S IN SEASON //

Say (Goat) Cheese!

Creamy, fatty, with a delicate tang, versatile goat cheese is a cook's dream.

For me, goat cheese, like cilantro and Brussels sprouts, was once filed under the category of "acquired taste." I don't know when it careened from acquired to addictive, but I do know that, come April, it's time to get my fix. That's when milk flowing from new-mom does is transformed into that creamy, mildly tangy elixir called fresh goat cheese, the curds ladled from the whey, set into molds, then, within days, set onto our tables.



And how lucky are we that these new moms are our neighbors! Many reside just up the road in Bedford Hills, at Rainbeau Ridge farm. Others are more rural, lolling about at Poughkeepsie's Sprout Creek Farm. But it's about quality, not zip code, and these farms' awards flow as steady as

their milk. Discover why on their websites or at your favorite cheesemonger. Alternatively, Chef Matt Safarowic will be happy to convince you.

Fresh goat cheese rambles all over his menu at **Butterfield 8** (147 Mamaroneck Ave., White Plains 914-358-4881; butterfield-8whiteplains.com). Feel like pizza? His pairs clouds of cheese blanketing caramelized onion and baby arugula. Or pasta? His gnocchi pouches hold goat-cheese pearls, all wrapped up in brown butter, roasted figs, and candied walnuts. Less decadent is a golden beet and haricots verts salad dressed with citrus and sporting a goat-cheese-topped focaccia crouton. "It may have a prominent flavor," Safarowic says of the cheese, "but it goes with everything, from pizza to desserts." How admirable: something so inclusive, that gets along well with others. Those mama goats would be proud.

Goat Cheese Gnocchi

Courtesy of Matt Safarowic, *Butterfield 8*
(Serves 6)

3 lb fresh goat cheese
3 eggs
1 lb all-purpose flour
2 oz salt
1 oz freshly ground black pepper

In large bowl, whip goat cheese until smooth. Add eggs and stir until combined. Fold in flour, salt, and pepper, and gently stir mixture, being careful not to overwork dough.

On a lightly floured surface, measure and cut 4-oz portions of dough, and roll each into a log (add a sprinkle of flour to keep from sticking). Cut each log into 1/4-inch pieces, place onto floured plate or pan, and put into freezer for at least 20 minutes.

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Remove gnocchi from freezer and place into boiling water. When gnocchi float to top, count 45 seconds and remove onto plate.

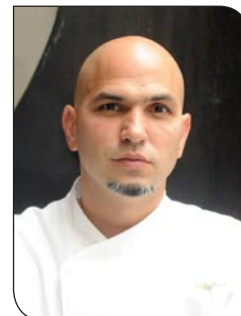
NOTE: To serve with brown butter sauce: Over medium flame, melt 8 oz butter in saucepan. Whisk butter so that it cooks evenly, adding minced herbs if desired. When butter has nutty scent and turns deep golden brown, pour over gnocchi.

// Diane Weintraub Pohl

COFFEE WITH THE CHEF //

Michael Psilakis

MP Taverna
1 Bridge St, Irvington
(914) 231-7854; michaelpsilakis.com/
mp-taverna/mp-taverna-irvington



Dish I Do the Best...My favorite things to cook are whole anything—whole lamb, whole fish.

If Not a Chef, I'd Be a...poet.

Last Book Read...It's been a long time! A cook book for sure. Probably Heston Blumenthal's *The Big Fat Duck Cookbook*.

I Never Eat...There is nothing I don't like, believe it or not.

Favorite Place to Dine Out...my home.

Favorite TV Show...Last year, I filmed *No Kitchen Required* for BBC America. It was a culinary adventure competition show that filmed myself and two other chefs hunting and foraging ingredients to prepare locally inspired meals in various remote locations (there were 10).

The Strangest Request from a Diner...I was once asked by a dinner for chicken "medium rare."

Favorite Form of Exercise...Exercise, who has time for that?

The Worst Kitchen Accident Was...I had a chef who once accidentally reached into the fryer to grab something!

The Worst Incident That Occurred in the Restaurant Was...It would have to be Hurricane Sandy, which closed my restaurant for six weeks. We had to redo the whole thing...kitchen, floors, furniture, everything.

The Most I've Paid for a Meal...I paid \$2,000 once for a meal. We were in Italy on our honeymoon. And it was worth it!

Most Famous Person I Ever Cooked For...President Obama.

My Dream Project Is...To open a restaurant in Greece.

// John Bruno Turiano

// Alyssa Zack with John Bruno Turiano