



FROM OUR KITCHEN TO YOURS

The Cheese Guy

Yonkers, NY

Brent Delman, a.k.a. The Cheese Guy, makes cheeses that are artisanal, vegetarian, and kosher. His creativity also leads to delicious new cheeses, such as the Double Ale Cheddar. In the cheese-making process, the milk becomes curds (solid) and whey (liquid). For the Double Ale Cheddar, he soaks the curds in two different microbrews.

When Brent Delman tells the story of becoming a cheesemonger, he shares a poetic scene that inspired his work: sheep grazing in open pasture on the island of Sardinia, Italy. Up until then, he had been using his M.B.A. in Marketing to promote other people's food companies for years. Through this experience, he grew in his conviction that he wanted to be "hands on with producing an artisanal product."

His esteem for tradition grew as well. "As I got older, tradition became more important to me," he says, "from the tradition of handmade cheese to the tradition of keeping a kosher home. Then a lot of things came together for me on Sardinia to create an opportunity."

Not only did Brent practice traditional Italian methods with natural ingredients on Sardinia, but he also met a farmer who proved to be invaluable to The Cheese Guy. In crafting cheese, makers use rennet. The rennet is a mix of enzymes added to milk to catalyze the curding process. As is custom, the rennet comes from the lining of a calf's stomach. This method, however, does not meet kosher requirements. The farmer on Sardinia was willing to use a microbial culture as a replacement for the animal-based rennet. "Then I was able to use traditional methods and my cheeses could become



*"I was raised in Ohio with a lot of cheese influences. Our town was near Amish country, and our neighborhood was predominately Italian. I grew up eating great cheeses."
– Brent Delman*

kosher," Brent says. With the use of non-animal rennet, the cheeses also became vegetarian.

Brent perfected his craft at the Vermont Institute for Artisan Cheese, where he made lifelong connections with local dairy farmers. Today, all of The Cheese Guy's products at Down to Earth Farmers Markets start with milk from Vermont and New York State dairy farms. Vermont is also home to Brent's cheese-making kitchen, where he produces about twice a month. His crew includes a rabbi who oversees the sanitization of the kitchen to ensure all kosher requirements are met. Once approved, Brent and his team begin crafting everything from Brie to Parmesan, with many worldly influences in between.



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