The 2014
GRILLED CHEESE RECIPE SHOWDOWN®

THE SWEET TASTE OF GRILLED CHEESE VICTORY

It was another stellar year for the Grilled Cheese Recipe Showdown®. As anticipated, we received a flavorful assortment of unique grilled cheese recipes, which made selecting the best of the very best a challenge for all of our judges. Nonetheless, a handful of entries rose above all the others to rightfully earn the title of champion. Within these pages are the grilled cheese sandwiches that set themselves apart. The most delicious. The most unique. The most mouthwatering masterpieces to ever come in contact with a spatula. Enjoy. And a heartfelt thank you to everyone who entered.

GrilledCheeseAcademy.com

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Congratulations

ALYSSA NELSON

BEST OF SHOW

"THE LIMBURGER LEAP"

Featuring Delicious Wisconsin Limburger & Baby Swiss
The **LIMBURGER LEAP**

It’s official. Title Town now has a grilled cheese sandwich that would make Curly Lambeau’s toes curl. Always ready for a tailgate, The Limburger Leap is stacked high with beer brats and beer-caramelized onions perfectly paired with Wisconsin limburger and baby swiss.

**INGREDIENTS**

- 1 batch beer caramelized onions (directions follow)
- 1/2 tablespoon butter
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar, packed
- 1 large sweet onion, cut in 1/4-inch-thick slices
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/2 cup bock beer
- 4 fully cooked beer brats
- 3-4 tablespoons butter, softened
- 8 slices pretzel bread, cut 3/4-inch-thick
- 3 tablespoons whole grain mustard
- 3 ounces Wisconsin limburger cheese
- 4 1-ounce slices Wisconsin baby swiss cheese, sliced

**COOKING DIRECTIONS**

In medium-sized skillet, melt butter and brown sugar over medium heat. Add onions and salt; cook until softened, about 5 minutes. Add beer and reduce heat to medium low. Cover and simmer 20 minutes. Remove lid and continue cooking at light simmer until liquid is thickened and mixture is medium to dark golden brown and onions caramelize, about 40 minutes. Remove from heat and set aside.

Butter outside of each slice of bread. Divide mustard and spread on the inside of 4 bread slices. On inside of remaining 4 slices, divide and add limburger. On top of limburger, layer 1/4 of the caramelized onions, a brat and 1 baby swiss cheese slice; top each sandwich with remaining pieces of bread, mustard-side-down.

Brown sandwiches on preheated griddle pan or in skillet over medium-low heat until each side is golden brown and cheese is melted, flipping once. Once browned, let sandwiches rest for about 1 minute. Slice in half before serving.
Preheat oven to 350°F.
Roughly peel potatoes and cut in half. Run potatoes through curly fry cutter or cut into matchsticks. Submerge in cold water, rinsing once or twice to get rid of starch. Set aside.

Heat olive oil and 1 tablespoon butter in small skillet over medium-low heat; add shallots and kosher salt. Cook over low heat until shallots start to turn golden. Add brown sugar and cook down until shallots are soft and caramelized, stirring occasionally.

Remove from heat and stir in balsamic vinegar.

Roast bacon on baking rack over a sheet tray for 15 minutes. Drizzle maple syrup over each slice and roast for an additional 5 minutes.

Preheat broiler.

Heat duck fat in saucepan to 300°F. Drain and thoroughly dry potatoes. Add potatoes to fat in small batches and fry until they start to turn opaque and crisp. Drain on paper towel. Reheat duck fat up to 375° and return potatoes to pan, frying in small batches until golden and crispy. Drain on paper towel and sprinkle with sea salt and grated parmesan.

Butter 1 side of each bread slice with 1/2 tablespoon butter and toast under broiler.

Place watercress in a bowl and drizzle with lemon juice; toss to coat.

Turn toast over and top each of 4 slices with 2-3 slices of brie cheese, 5-6 cheese curds and 1/4 cup grated gouda. Top remaining 4 toasts with 2 slices of brie cheese. Broil toast until cheese is melted. Remove from broiler and top each of 4 slices with caramelized onions, 1/4 cup watercress, 2 bacon strips and French fries.

Top with remaining toast and serve.

**INGREDIENTS**

- 2 russet potatoes
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 5 tablespoons butter, divided
- 4 shallots, thinly sliced
- Pinch of kosher salt
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar, packed
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- 8 slices thick-cut Wisconsin cherrywood smoked uncured bacon
- 1 tablespoon Wisconsin maple syrup
- 4 cups rendered duck fat
- Sea salt to taste
- 2 tablespoons Wisconsin parmesan cheese, grated
- 4 slices round sourdough bread, cut in half
- 1 cup baby kale or watercress
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 16-20 slices Wisconsin brie cheese
- 20-24 Wisconsin cheese curds
- 1 cup Wisconsin gouda cheese, grated

Are French fries French? Doesn’t matter. Because The Monsieur holds nothing back when it comes to all things flavor. It features crispy duck fat fries happily mingling with Wisconsin parmesan, brie, gouda, and cheese curds. Did we mention the eight thick-cut slices of cherrywood-smoked bacon? Bon appétit.
**COOKING DIRECTIONS**

**FOR MEAT:**
In medium saucepan combine 3 tablespoons kosher salt and 1 tablespoon brown sugar to 1 cup water. Cook over medium flame, stirring occasionally, until salt and brown sugar dissolve. Remove from flame; add remaining 1/2 cup water. Pour mixture into 9x9-inch baking pan. Cover and let sit 25 minutes.

Place pork belly in pan, fat side up; cover and refrigerate 24 hours.

Preheat oven to 275˚F. Remove pork from mixture and rinse with cold water. Pat dry with paper towel and rub with 1 tablespoon kosher salt, remaining 2 tablespoons brown sugar and 1/2 teaspoon pepper.

Heat 1/2 tablespoon canola oil in ovenproof cast iron skillet; add pork and brown over medium heat 2 minutes per side, starting with fatty side. Remove from heat and cover.

Bake 1 hour and 45 minutes or until fork-tender. Remove from oven and cool pork completely (about 1 hour). Cover pork with parchment paper and press a flat, heavy skillet (such as cast iron) on top of pork belly. Refrigerate with heavy object over 10 hours.

Cut pork belly into desired thickness.

**FOR ONION-FIG SPREAD:**
In medium saucepan over medium-low flame, combine onion, olive oil and remaining salt and pepper. Cook until onions begin to caramelize (about 15 minutes).

Add 1/2 cup apple juice to deglaze. Scrape any hard bits off bottom of pan with wooden spoon. Add figs and simmer 10 to 15 minutes or until tender enough to break apart with wooden spoon. Stir in honey and simmer 10 to 12 more minutes. Add additional apple juice, if desired, if too thick. Set aside.

**FOR WALNUTS:**
Preheat oven to 350˚F. On baking sheet, spread walnuts evenly in single layer and bake 5 to 7 minutes until toasted; do not let burn. Remove from oven and cool.

Pour sugar into medium saucepan and cook over medium flame. Once sugar begins to melt, continuously stir with wooden spoon. When sugar is melted and amber in color, immediately add walnuts and swiftly stir, making sure all walnuts are covered with caramelized sugar.

Remove nuts from pan and spread on baking pan lined with parchment paper, using forks to separate. Work quickly.

**CONSTRUCTING SANDWICH:**
Heat remaining 1/2 tablespoon canola oil in cast iron pan over medium flame and heat second large heavy-duty skillet over medium-low flame. In pan with oil, cook the sliced pork belly on each side until crisp. In small bowl, mix butter, mayonnaise and Wisconsin parmesan cheese, freshly grated. Spread butter mixture on 1 side of 4 slices of bread. Evenly cover opposite sides with 1 tablespoon each of onion-fig spread. Place all bread slices in skillet over medium-low flame, buttered-side-down.

Place 1/4 of sliced Wisconsin brie on top of each slice of bread in skillet. Do not allow slices to touch. Firmly press 1 tablespoon chopped candied walnuts into each brie slice. Place crisped pork belly over and sprinkle with fresh thyme. Place sliced pear over pork. Add baby arugula and sprinkle with shredded chocolate. Carefully flip the sandwich and cook, pressing lightly with a spatula until golden brown and cheese is melted, about 2-3 minutes.

Cut sandwiches in half and serve.

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**INGREDIENTS**

| 4 1/2 tablespoons kosher salt, divided | 1/3 cup sugar |
| 3 tablespoons brown sugar, packed, divided | 3 tablespoons butter, at room temperature |
| 1 1/2 cup water, divided | 2 teaspoons mayonnaise |
| 1 1-pound pork belly | 3 tablespoons Wisconsin parmesan cheese, freshly grated |
| 1 teaspoon pepper, freshly ground, divided | 4 1-inch thick slices French sourdough bread |
| 1 tablespoon canola oil, divided | 6-7 ounces Wisconsin brie cheese, sliced |
| 3/4 cup yellow onion, diced | 1 teaspoon fresh thyme |
| 2 tablespoons olive oil | 1 Bosc pear, cored and sliced |
| 1/2 cup apple juice plus additional, if desired | 1 1/2 cups baby arugula |
| 1 cup fresh or dried figs (halved) | 2 teaspoons 60% cacao bittersweet chocolate, finely shredded |
| 1 tablespoon honey | 1 tablespoon chopped candied walnuts, finely shredded |
| 1 cup walnut pieces | |
**COOKING DIRECTIONS**

In large skillet, fry bacon over medium heat until crisp. Remove to paper-towel-lined plate to soak up excess grease. Set aside. Retain grease in skillet.

**FOR PIMENTO CHEESE:**
Place all cheese ingredients in large bowl and stir well to combine.

**FOR FRIED GREEN TOMATOES:**
Pat tomato slices with paper towel to dry. Pour buttermilk into bowl.

In another bowl, positioned next to buttermilk, stir cornmeal, flour and seasonings. Place bowls close to skillet with bacon grease. Heat reserved bacon grease; it’s hot enough when a pinch of cornmeal sizzles when scattered in skillet. One at a time, submerge tomato slices in buttermilk. Place each slice in bowl with cornmeal/flour mixture: turning to coat well on both sides and on edges. Drop into hot fat and fry until golden brown—about 2-3 minutes per side. Place on paper towels to soak up excess grease.

**FOR THE SANDWICH:**
Slice baguette in half lengthwise, then in half horizontally.

Place crust side down in hot bacon fat that tomatoes were fried in; fry just until toasted. Flip bread and toast on sliced side, squishing bread with spatula to flatten. Remove bread from pan.

Spread each piece of bread with pimento cheese on the sliced side. Place fried green tomato slices to cover. Place 2 bacon slices on bottom bread slice. Top with remaining cheese-layered bread slices.

Serve with pickled okra, pickled green tomatoes and watermelon.

**INGREDIENTS**

- 8 bacon slices
- **FOR PIMENTO CHEESE:**
  - 1 cup (4 ounces) Wisconsin sharp cheddar cheese, grated
  - 1 cup (4 ounces) Wisconsin aged white cheddar cheese, grated
  - 4 ounces Wisconsin cream cheese, softened
  - 2 ounces jarred pimento, diced
  - 3/4 cup mayonnaise
  - 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- **FOR FRIED GREEN TOMATOES:**
  - 2 green tomatoes, thickly sliced
  - 1 cup buttermilk
  - 1 cup stone-ground yellow cornmeal
  - 1/4 cup flour
  - 1 teaspoon garlic powder
  - 1/4 teaspoon dried thyme
  - 1/4 teaspoon dried oregano
  - 1/2 teaspoon salt
  - 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- **FOR THE SANDWICH:**
  - 1 baguette
COOKING DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 375˚F. For carnitas, rub pork chunks with salt. In medium ovenproof pot, heat oil over medium-high heat and sear pork. Add cinnamon, chili powder, bay leaf and garlic. Fill pot about 2/3 of the way full with water. Cover and bring to boil. Once boiling, place in oven, uncovered. Bake 2-3 hours until fork tender, adding more water if pot gets too dry.

Meanwhile, whisk lime juice and honey in medium bowl. Add shredded cabbage and cilantro and toss. Set aside.

Spread 1/2 tablespoon butter on 1 side of bread slices. Place 4 slices buttered-side-down in preheated skillet over medium heat. Layer over Wisconsin cheddar, pork carnitas, avocado slices, tomato slices, beans, cabbage slaw and 1 slice swiss cheese, in that order. Cover with remaining bread slices, buttered-side-up, and grill until golden brown, flipping once, until cheese is melted.

The SIESTA

Created By SARAH LEUNG Chester, NJ

Nothing can wake up your taste buds quite like The Siesta. A heavenly combination of cinnamon and chili-spiced carnitas, cilantro-lime cabbage slaw, and Wisconsin aged cheddar and swiss, this Mexican-inspired grilled cheese sandwich is an amazing combination of flavors and textures.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound boneless pork shoulder, cut into 3-inch chunks
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon oil
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 3/4 teaspoon chili powder
- 1 bay leaf
- 2 cloves garlic, sliced
- Juice of 1 small lime
- 2 teaspoons honey
- 1 1/2 cups red cabbage, shredded
- 2 tablespoons chopped cilantro
- 4 tablespoons butter
- 8 slices high-quality white bread
- 1 cup Wisconsin aged cheddar, shredded
- 1 avocado, sliced
- 1 large tomato, sliced
- 1 cup refried beans
- 4 thick slices Wisconsin swiss cheese

I chose The Siesta because of its big bold Mexican-inspired flavors and textures. It brings the flavors of Mexican cuisine to an American cheesy, classic treat. What’s not to love about that?

— Paula at Bellalimento.com

COOKING DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 375˚F. For carnitas, rub pork chunks with salt. In medium ovenproof pot, heat oil over medium-high heat and sear pork. Add cinnamon, chili powder, bay leaf and garlic. Fill pot about 2/3 of the way full with water. Cover and bring to boil. Once boiling, place in oven, uncovered. Bake 2-3 hours until fork tender, adding more water if pot gets too dry.

Meanwhile, whisk lime juice and honey in medium bowl. Add shredded cabbage and cilantro and toss. Set aside.

Spread 1/2 tablespoon butter on 1 side of bread slices. Place 4 slices buttered-side-down in preheated skillet over medium heat. Layer over Wisconsin cheddar, pork carnitas, avocado slices, tomato slices, beans, cabbage slaw and 1 slice swiss cheese, in that order. Cover with remaining bread slices, buttered-side-up, and grill until golden brown, flipping once, until cheese is melted.

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- 2 cloves garlic, sliced
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- 1 1/2 cups red cabbage, shredded
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COOKING DIRECTIONS

Cook macaroni al dente, according to package instructions. Drain, rinse and immediately add pasta back to same pot. Over low heat, immediately add 1 cup cheddar cheese, 1 tablespoon butter, salt, green onions and heavy cream. Mix thoroughly until cheese melts and coats macaroni. Turn off heat and set aside.

Butter 2 bread slices on both sides and set aside. In cast iron or nonstick skillet, heat 1 tablespoon butter over medium heat. When almost completely melted, place the 2 slices of buttered bread in skillet and top with 1/4 cup of grated cheddar cheese. Cover until cheese is almost entirely melted, about 2-3 minutes. Remove lid and top melted cheese with prepared macaroni and cheese; re-cover skillet for a minute or two.

Butter 1 side of remaining 2 bread slices and spread Dijon mustard on the other side. Remove lid from skillet and place bratwurst slices over macaroni and cheese and top with sauerkraut. Place Dijon mustard-side-down slices over sauerkraut and carefully flip sandwich to toast this side, adding more butter if necessary. Do not cover skillet. Flip sandwich one more time, if desired, to crisp toast.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup elbow macaroni
- 1 1/2 cups Wisconsin cheddar cheese, grated, divided
- 2 tablespoons butter, divided, plus additional for spreading on bread slices
- Pinch of salt
- 1-2 tablespoons green onions, finely diced
- Splash of heavy cream
- 4 slices hot and spicy cheese bread, such as jalapeño-cheddar bread
- Dijon mustard
- 1-2 bratwursts, cooked and sliced
- Sauerkraut
- Dijon mustard

Yes, Madison, Wisconsin has a lot to offer — including a grilled cheese sandwich that combines all of the city's unique flavors and flair. The Madisonian is a delicious ensemble of Wisconsin cheddar, bratwurst, sauerkraut, and Dijon mustard on hot and spicy cheese bread. We're sure your taste buds will enjoy their visit.
**The Amelia**

Created by **Michael Touna** Old Greenwich, CT

If you’re not a morning person, The Amelia is sure to change that. This sweet and salty French toast-inspired sandwich features Wisconsin mascarpone and brie exchanging pleasantries with prosciutto and pistachios. And with the addition of fresh blueberries and raspberries, a rich and unique mix of flavors is created.

**COOKING DIRECTIONS**

**FOR BERRY COMPOTE:**
Mix cherries, blueberries, raspberries, 2 tablespoons sugar, lemon juice and water in pan. Simmer about 15 minutes over medium-low heat. Set aside to cool.

**FOR FRENCH TOAST:**
Beat eggs, milk, remaining 2 tablespoons sugar and vanilla extract in shallow bowl. Cut pretzel bread into 4-inch-long pieces. Split the pieces for sandwiches. Then thinly slice off the tops and bottoms of bread to expose white of bread so it can absorb the batter better. Dip the bread pieces into the egg mixture, allowing each side to soak 1 minute. Melt butter in skillet over medium-low heat. Grill each side 2-3 minutes to brown. Avoid overcooking bread.

**FOR CHEESE SPREAD:**
Vigorously mix mascarpone, brie and pistachios with fork until well blended. Spread on inside of French toast slice, and allow bread to cool to room temperature. Drain any excess water and spread some of the fruit compote on top of the cheeses. Top with prosciutto slices and another slice of French toast. Sprinkle powdered sugar over.

**INGREDIENTS**

- 1/8 cup sour cherries
- 1/8 cup blueberries
- 1/8 cup raspberries
- 4 tablespoons sugar, divided
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1/4 cup water
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 cup milk
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 pretzel baguette
- Butter for cooking
- 3 tablespoons Wisconsin mascarpone cheese
- 1 tablespoon Wisconsin brie cheese
- 1 tablespoon pistachios, crushed
- 2 ounces sliced prosciutto
- Powdered sugar for garnish

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**The Zeta**

Created by **Dax Phillips** New Berlin, WI

If you love Greek cuisine, you and your palate are sure to fall hard for The Zeta. This creamy grilled cheese masterpiece is a delicious assortment of Wisconsin mozzarella, cucumbers, red bell peppers, cherry tomatoes, Kalamata olives, and all the other goodies you can expect to find in a Greek salad.

**COOKING DIRECTIONS**

Mix cucumber, tomato, red bell pepper, onion, olives and feta cheese in bowl. Place garlic, lemon juice, salt, pepper, oregano and olive oil in jar. Cover and shake until oil emulsifies. Pour over the salad and mix well.

Heat nonstick skillet over medium. Butter 1 side of each bread slice. Place 1 bread slice, buttered-side-down in skillet. Place half the mozzarella cheese on slice, top with the Greek salad. Add remaining mozzarella cheese over and top with remaining slice of bread, buttered-side-up. Some salad and mozzarella will run off into skillet. Gently lift bottom bread to check. When golden brown, carefully flip sandwich to cook on the other side, reducing heat a bit to avoid burning bread. Press sandwich with spatula. When both sides are golden brown, remove from heat, slice in half and serve. Top with pepperoncini pepper if desired.

**INGREDIENTS**

- 1 small cucumber, peeled, seeds removed, diced
- 8 cherry tomatoes, quartered
- 1 red bell pepper, seeds removed, diced
- 1/4 cup red onion, diced
- 1/4 cup kalamata olives, pitted and sliced
- 1/2 cup (3 ounces) Wisconsin feta cheese, crumbled
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- Pinch of salt
- Pinch of cracked black pepper
- 1/2 tablespoon fresh oregano, minced
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter
- 2 slices premium white bread
- 1/2 cup (2 ounces) Wisconsin mozzarella cheese, shredded
- Pepperoncini for garnish, optional
Rustic. Wholesome. Hearty. The Charlotte seems to have all the essentials for a mouthwatering good time. Buttery Wisconsin havarti and sharp parmesan are accompanied by savory sausage, garlic-flavored Brussels sprouts, spicy red onions, and a sweet balsamic sauce. It’s country living at its tastiest.

When it comes to flavor, everything is just peachy. Layer upon layer of deliciousness make The Georgia Peach anything but ordinary. It boasts honey-glazed peaches, roasted pork tenderloin, and melted Wisconsin blue cheese housed between two toasted pieces of wheat bread. How’s that for southern hospitality?

**The Charlotte**

*Created By JESSE LINDHORST*  
Minneapolis, MN

Rustic. Wholesome. Hearty. The Charlotte seems to have all the essentials for a mouthwatering good time. Buttery Wisconsin havarti and sharp parmesan are accompanied by savory sausage, garlic-flavored Brussels sprouts, spicy red onions, and a sweet balsamic sauce. It’s country living at its tastiest.

**COOKING DIRECTIONS**

Mix balsamic vinegar and honey in small saucepan and place over high heat. Bring to boil, reduce heat to low and simmer until mixture has reduced to 1/4 cup, about 10 minutes. Set aside to cool.

Heat 1 tablespoon olive oil over medium-high in medium skillet. Add red onion slices; sauté until tender. Add remaining tablespoon olive oil, Brussels sprouts and garlic. Season with salt, pepper, rosemary and red pepper flakes. Sauté mixture until sprouts are browned and onions darken. Remove mixture to bowl and set aside.

In skillet onion mixture was cooked in, sear sausage over medium-high until browned. Remove from skillet and set aside. In same skillet, lower cooking temperature to medium and melt butter. Place 1 slice of bread in skillet. Top with half the parmesan, kielbasa sausage, and onion and Brussels sprouts mixture. Drizzle some balsamic reduction over top. Layer 3 havarti cheese slices over and top with second slice of bread. Cover skillet and grill until first side is golden brown. Carefully flip sandwich and grill until golden brown. Remove sandwich and repeat steps for second sandwich. Halve sandwiches and serve.

**INGREDIENTS**

- 1/2 cup balsamic vinegar
- 3 tablespoons honey
- 2 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 1 cup red onion slices
- 1/4 pound Brussels sprouts, stemmed and quartered
- 3 large garlic cloves, minced
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon dried rosemary, crushed
- 1/3 pound kielbasa sausage, sliced
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 4 thick slices rye bread
- 1 cup (about 3 ounces) Wisconsin parmesan cheese, grated
- 6 1-ounce slices Wisconsin havarti cheese

**The Georgia Peach**

*Created By MELANIE BAUER*  
Shaker Heights, OH

When it comes to flavor, everything is just peachy. Layer upon layer of deliciousness make The Georgia Peach anything but ordinary. It boasts honey-glazed peaches, roasted pork tenderloin, and melted Wisconsin blue cheese housed between two toasted pieces of wheat bread. How’s that for southern hospitality?

**COOKING DIRECTIONS**

Preheat oven to 350˚F. Place tenderloin on foil-lined baking sheet and season with salt and 1/2 teaspoon pepper; roast 40-45 minutes or until cooked through (145˚F on meat thermometer). Set aside.

Meanwhile, in small saucepan, mix coriander, remaining 1/2 teaspoon pepper, peaches, honey, wine, ginger and peach preserves. Bring to boil; reduce heat and simmer until thickened into a sauce.

Slice roasted tenderloin into 18 slices. For each sandwich, butter 1 side of 2 bread slices. Spread unbuttered side with peach sauce and top with 3 tenderloin slices. Sprinkle with blue cheese and top with additional sauce. Top with other bread slice, buttered-side-up. Heat skillet over medium and add sandwich. Grill until bottom slice is browned; flip to brown other side. Repeat for remaining sandwiches. Halve sandwiches and serve.

**INGREDIENTS**

- 1 1/2-pounds whole pork tenderloin
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon pepper, divided
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- 1 pound (16 ounces) frozen peach slices, thawed
- 3/4 cup honey
- 1 cup Moscato wine
- 2 teaspoons fresh ginger, grated
- 1/2 cup peach preserves
- 2/3 cup (about 4 ounces) Wisconsin blue cheese
- 12 slices whole wheat bread
As they say, everything is big in Texas. And when it comes to taste, The Laredo is no exception. With big and bold flavors, this delicious tribute to South Texas will leave your taste buds wanting more. It’s fully loaded with Wisconsin fontina, four slices of thick peppered bacon, mango, and poblano peppers, all on Texas toast.

**The LAREDO**

Created By **SHERRI WILLIAMS** Crestview, FL

COOKING DIRECTIONS

Heat extra virgin olive oil in medium nonstick skillet. Sauté poblano, onion and garlic with 3/4 tablespoon of Mexican blend seasoning and cook for 2-3 minutes or until onions are translucent. Set aside and cool.

Combine poblano mixture with cilantro and fontina in mixing bowl. In a separate bowl, mix butter with remaining Mexican blend seasoning.

For each sandwich, spread 1 side of each Texas toast with butter mixture. Turn slices over; top each with 1/4 the poblano cheese mixture and half the tomatillos, bacon, mango. Top with remaining poblano cheese mixture.

Top with remaining bread slice, buttered-side-up.

Repeat procedure for remaining sandwiches. Grill sandwiches in a large nonstick frying pan over medium-low heat, flipping once until golden brown on both sides and cheese melts, about 7 minutes.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 1 poblano chile, chopped
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tablespoon Mexican blend seasoning, divided
- 1 tablespoon cilantro, chopped
- 6 ounces Wisconsin fontina cheese, shredded
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened
- 4 slices Texas toast
- 2 tomatillos, thinly sliced
- 4 slices thick-cut peppered bacon, cooked and halved
- 1 mango, chopped

**The CHAO BAN**

Created By **PAMELA VACHON** Astoria, NY

Who said grilled cheese sandwiches and Southeast Asia have nothing in common? The Chao Ban is a one of a kind masterpiece that combines the flavors and textures of Vietnamese street food with some Midwestern “tastibility.” It features Wisconsin fontina, roasted pork loin, shredded matchstick carrots, and julienned radishes, all between a baguette.

COOKING DIRECTIONS

In small saucepan over medium heat, combine vinegar, water and sugar for pickling mixture. Bring to boil; stir just until sugar is dissolved. Remove from heat and cool slightly.

Place carrots, radishes and scallions in small bowl. Pour pickling liquid over vegetables and let stand 30 minutes.

Split baguettes into halves and brush insides and outsides with canola/sesame oil mixture.

Heat grill pan over medium heat. Place baguette halves, split-side-down in pan and cook 1 minute, until toasted. Flip halves; place 2 cheese slices on each bottom half. Cook another minute until outside of baguettes are toasted and cheese melts. Remove from heat.

Drain vegetables from pickling liquid.

Assemble sandwiches: On bottom of each baguette half, place 2 slices roast pork, half mayonnaise mixture, half the pickled vegetables, half the cucumber slices and half the cilantro sprigs. Finish with baguette top.

INGREDIENTS

- 1/3 cup apple cider vinegar
- 1/4 cup water
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1/4 cup carrots, shredded or cut in matchsticks
- 1/4 cup radishes, julienned
- 1/4 cup scallions, sliced
- 2 sandwich-size baguettes
- 2 tablespoons canola oil mixed with 1 teaspoon toasted sesame oil
- 4 1/2-inch-thick slices roast pork loin
- 4 tablespoons mayonnaise mixed with 1 teaspoon sriracha
- 1/4 cup cucumbers, sliced
- Few sprigs fresh cilantro, including stems
**Wisconsin Baby Swiss**

**Featured on:** THE LIMBURGER LEAP

**Description:**
Why is it called Baby Swiss? For starters, it’s not aged as long as traditional Swiss and contains smaller holes or eyes (as cheesemakers like to refer to them). What’s more, it’s usually produced in smaller sizes. In Wisconsin, cheesemakers traditionally produce Baby Swiss using whole milk. This gives the cheese a creamier texture and more buttery flavor, making it ideal for melting.

**Flavor:**
Mild, buttery, creamy, and slightly sweet. Simply put, it’s addictive.

**Goes well with:**
Apples, pears, grapes, strawberries, ham, corned beef, fruity white wine, and aged red wine.

**Pairs with:**
Chardonnay, Lager, Stout, Weiss Beer, and White Zinfandel.

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**Wisconsin Blue**

**Featured on:** THE GEORGIA PEACH

**Description:**
When biting into a piece of Wisconsin Blue, prepare for a rush of flavor and aroma. Named for its blue veins, Blue cheese ranges from firm and crumbly to slightly creamy in texture. Blue cheese is aged longer than 60 days for a bolder and more expressive flavor experience.

**Flavor:**
Pleasantly sharp, with earthy flavors. Some varieties are salty, with hints of pepper.

**Goes well with:**
Crackers, apples, pears, grapes, honey, walnuts, cashews, and almonds.

**Pairs with:**
Cabernet Sauvignon, Madeira, Pinot Noir, Port, Porter, Riesling, Scotch, Stout, Syrah, and Zinfandel.

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**Wisconsin Brie**

**Featured on:**
THE MONSIEUR
THE BARDO
THE AMELIA

**Description:**
A delicious French-style cheese, Brie has found a new home with Wisconsin cheesemakers. Brie is soft and creamy, with a bloomy edible rind, which is the result of a special white mold applied to the cheese’s surface, causing it to ripen from the outside in. In Wisconsin, Brie is also produced with added flavors such as herbs and black pepper.

**Flavor:**
Soft, creamy, rich, and memorable, with a hint of earthy mushroom flavors.

**Goes well with:**
Crackers, apples, melons, grapes, berries, sun-dried tomatoes, and nuts.

**Pairs with:**
Beaujolais, Champagne, Chardonnay, Ciders & Fruit Beers, Madeira, Pale Ale, Pinot Noir, and Port.
Wisconsin Cheddar

**Featured on:**
- The Siesta
- The Dixie
- The Madisonian

**Description:**
Wisconsin leads the nation in producing this captivating cheese. Profoundly aromatic and complex, Cheddar can be aged up to ten years. Aging increases sharpness and allows different flavors and textures to develop. Cheddar’s natural color is creamy white, but it is often turned bright orange with the addition of annatto—a tasteless, odorless vegetable coloring.

**Flavor:**
Rich, nutty, and smooth when young, it becomes increasingly sharp, complex, and crumbly with age.

**Goes Well With:**
Crackers, sausages, apples, pears, dried fruits, & nuts.

**Pairs With:**
Brandy, Champagne, Ciders & Fruit Beers, Madeira, Merlot, Pale Ale, Pinot Gris, Port, Porter, Riesling, Sauvignon Blanc, Scotch, and Syrah.

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Wisconsin Cheese Curds

**Featured on:**
- The Monsieur

**Description:**
You haven’t truly lived until you’ve finished off an entire bag of Wisconsin Cheese Curds all by your lonesome. So what are Cheese Curds? They’re simply fresh cheese—most commonly Cheddar—in its natural, random shape and form before being processed into blocks and aged. And yes, they are tasty.

**Flavor:**
A mild taste with a slightly rubbery texture. Fresh Cheese Curds should squeak when eaten.

**Goes Well With:**
Sausage, fruit, and crackers or simply enjoy them on their own.

**Pairs With:**
If it’s cold, thirst-quenching, and served in a glass, it probably goes well with Cheese Curds. So enjoy them with whatever you desire.

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Wisconsin Cream Cheese

**Featured on:**
- The Dixie

**Description:**
Cream Cheese, an American original, became popular around 1880 when factories spread from the Northeast to the rest of the country. Wisconsin cheesemakers produce Cream Cheese in many flavors, including berry, herb, smoked salmon, and roasted garlic. Smooth and creamy, it makes for the perfect spread on bagels, sandwiches, and wraps.

**Flavor:**
Rich, nutty, and slightly sweet.

**Goes Well With:**
Fresh fruit, jams and jellies, fruit and nut breads, and bagels.

**Pairs With:**
Chardonnay, Chianti, Ciders & Fruit Beers, and Riesling.
**Wisconsin Cheese Index**

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**Wisconsin FETA**

**Featured on:** THE ZETA

**Description:**
Feta cheese is a tasty ingredient crafty chefs use to spice up many dishes. Wisconsin cheesemakers make excellent Feta using cow’s milk. Fresh Feta is packaged in brine to help preserve the cheese. To reduce the salt content of Feta, rinse the cheese in cold water or milk prior to serving. There are many varieties of Feta, including herbs and dill, tomato, basil, black pepper, and garlic, to name just a few.

**Flavor:**
Almost always salty and tangy, Feta is mild and creamy when young, becoming peppery and complex with age.

**Goes Well With:**
Pita bread, vegetables, and olives.

**Pairs With:**
Pilsner, Pinot Gris, Riesling, Sauvignon Blanc, and Weiss Beer.

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**Wisconsin FONTINA**

**Featured on:** THE LAREDO, THE CHAO BAN

**Description:**
Fontina is considered to be one of the most versatile cheeses in the world. While it originated in Italy, Fontina is produced in different variations throughout the world. In Wisconsin, cheesemakers produce Italian, Swedish, and Danish styles of this cheese. Fontina is commonly melted into food, but also deserves a place on either your dessert or dinner tray.

**Flavor:**
Danish and Swedish styles are slightly tart and nutty, with light, earthy flavors. Italian styles taste mild, earthy, and buttery.

**Goes Well With:**
Crusty bread, prosciutto, Genoa salami, peaches, melons, figs, and nectarines.

**Pairs With:**
Bock and Pinot Noir.

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**Wisconsin GOUDA**

**Featured on:** THE MONSIEUR

**Description:**
Wisconsin cheesemakers proudly carry on the tradition of making fine Gouda, a cheese first produced more than 800 years ago in Holland. Both the age and flavor of Gouda can be determined by the color of the wax casing: red wax suggests mild, yellow or clear wax suggests aged or flavored, and black or brown wax suggests smoked. Wisconsin produces Gouda in many varieties: plain, caraway, smoked, reduced fat, and endless—a version that is easier to slice.

**Flavor:**
Light, buttery, and nutty.

**Goes Well With:**
Crackers, apples, pears, peaches, apricots, cherries, and nuts.

**Pairs With:**
Beaujolais, Bock, Brandy, Brown Ale, Champagne, Chardonnay, Lager, Pale Ale, Pinot Gris, Porter, Riesling, Scotch, and Stout.
**Wisconsin Havarti**

*Featured on: The Charlotte*

**DESCRIPTION**
A smooth and supple cheese originally from Denmark, Havarti has been perfected and enhanced by Wisconsin cheesemakers. A special Wisconsin-style Havarti was developed at the University of Wisconsin–Madison and is firmer in texture and more buttery in flavor than other varieties. Havarti is delicious when plain. However, some prefer flavored varieties such as jalapeño, pesto, caraway, or dill.

**FLAVOR**
Buttery, creamy, and slightly acidic.

**GOES WELL WITH**
Crackers, plums, grapes, and almonds.

**PAIRS WITH**
Beaujolais, Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinot Noir, Merlot, Sauvignon Blanc, Zinfandel, Pilsner, and Stout.

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**Wisconsin Limburger**

*Featured on: The Limburger Leap*

**DESCRIPTION**
One of the world’s most famously pungent cheeses, this bold Belgian cheese does nothing but intensify with age. Limburger was created to complement the highly flavored game and meats commonly eaten in Belgium and Germany. Today, a single cheese plant in Monroe, Wisconsin, produces all the surface-ripened Limburger made in the United States.

**FLAVOR**
Earthy and pungent. Intensity increases with age.

**GOES WELL WITH**
Pumpernickel and other dark or whole-grain breads, pretzels, pickled vegetables, and mustard.

**PAIRS WITH**
Bock, Lager, and Porter.

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**Wisconsin Mascarpone**

*Featured on: The Amelia*

**DESCRIPTION**
Smooth and thick, soft and creamy, Mascarpone is a fresh cheese meant to be eaten soon after it’s produced. However, Wisconsin Mascarpone enjoys a longer shelf life than imported varieties. Originating in the Lombardy region of Italy, it was traditionally made only during the fall and winter months as a dessert cheese. In Wisconsin, Mascarpone is available year-round and has many applications.

**FLAVOR**
Rich, buttery, and slightly sweet. Yes, it’s hard to resist.

**GOES WELL WITH**
Berries, fresh figs, shortbread, ladyfingers, and sweet wheat crackers.

**PAIRS WITH**
Champagne, Ciders & Fruit Beers, Pinot Gris, Port, Riesling, Sauvignon Blanc, and Stout.
**Wisconsin Mozzarella**

**Description:** Every year, Wisconsin cheesemakers produce more than 850 million pounds of Mozzarella, a cheese that ranks second only to Cheddar in popularity in the United States. An Italian favorite, this cheese gained popularity in America following World War II, as vets returned home with a craving for the delicious pizzas they ate while overseas. Mozzarella has a lower moisture content than Fresh Mozzarella, giving it a much longer shelf life.

**Flavor:** Mild, delicate, and milky.

**Goes Well With:** Tomatoes, cured meats, pesto, black olives, and roasted red peppers.

**Pairs With:** If you love Mozzarella, you'll love it even more with a glass of Beaujolais, chardonnay, or a pilsner beer.

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**Wisconsin Parmesan**

**Description:** Widely considered to be the king of Italian-style cheeses, Parmesan is added to many dishes to enhance flavor. Parmesan's flavor intensifies with age. While commonly grated and melted into food, Parmesan also works well as a table cheese. Wisconsin cheesemakers lead the U.S. in production of award-winning Parmesans.

**Flavor:** Buttery, sweet, and nutty. Intensifies with age.

**Goes Well With:** Crackers, grapes, figs, plums, honey, walnuts, olives, and balsamic vinegar.

**Pairs With:** Brandy, Chardonnay, Chianti, Madeira, Merlot, Pinot Gris, Riesling, Sauvignon Blanc, and Scotch.

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**Wisconsin Swiss**

**Description:** No, the moon is not made out of Swiss cheese. However, its surface does bear a striking resemblance to that of this crater-filled, ivory-white cheese. The tradition of making Swiss cheese in 200-pound wheels began in the Middle Ages when cheesemakers were taxed on the number of pieces they produced rather than total weight. Wisconsin cheesemakers carry on this tradition today as they continue to produce excellent cheese with perfectly formed eyes.

**Flavor:** Mellow, buttery, and nutty.

**Goes Well With:** Crackers, apples, pears, grapes, figs, honey, pistachios, and olives.

**Pairs With:** Cabernet Sauvignon, Lager, Merlot, Pale Ale, Pinot Gris, and Weiss Beer.
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