



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**March 13, 2023**

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**[The 2023 California Cheese Trail Cheese Tourism Map is here!](#)  
[Plus, the new "State of the Cheese" cheesemaker stats](#)**

**PETALUMA, CA** – From Eureka to San Diego, from the Central Valley to the Sonoma-Marín Coast, the newly-updated 2023 **California Cheese Trail** printed tourism map features 45 artisan cheesemakers in 23 counties who welcome visitors to their farms, cheesemaking facilities and retail shops, offer farm tours, cheesemaking classes and events.

Artisan cheesemakers featured on the map handcraft an estimated 250+ varieties of cheeses from cow, goat, sheep and water buffalo milk, winning national awards and gaining international acclaim for their unique styles, flavors and regenerative farming practices. In addition to these cheesemakers, the CheeseTrail.org interactive map also features 32 California cheesemakers which are not currently open to the public. All told, there are 77 cheesemakers in 30 (~52%) of California's 58 counties.

As a mission-based initiative promoting cheesemakers and family farmers, Cheese Trail services are free to all California cheesemakers and consumers. "If you love cheese, cheesemakers and farmers, the California Cheese Trail is an incredible resource to get the inside scoop about unique cheeses, the people who make them and where to purchase," says founder Vivien Straus, former VP Marketing of Straus Family Creamery and longtime small-farm advocate.

Of the cheesemakers featured on the printed map, 44 are family owned and operated, and the other is operated by a State university. The majority are also 'farmstead', meaning that they make cheeses with milk from their own herds.

Cheesemakers newly added in the 2023 printed map include:

- **Copeland Family Farms** (Siskiyou County) - Raw milk cheese (cow), and 'farmshare' program for the community.

- **Shooting Star Creamery** (SLO County) - California's youngest cheesemaker, making sheep, cow and sheep-cow mixed milk cheeses.
- **Claravale Farm** (San Benito County) - Farmstead, raw milk cheese (cow), perhaps best known for their glass bottled raw cows milk.

Meanwhile, some cheesemakers are no longer open to the public:

- **Cowgirl Creamery:** While still making cheese in Petaluma, they've closed their retail shops at the San Francisco Ferry Building as well as their flagship location in Point Reyes Station (Sonoma & Marin Counties)
- **Two Rock Valley Goat Cheese** (Sonoma County): Closure
- **Pedrozo Dairy and Cheese Co.** (Glenn County): Closure
- **Orland Farmstead Creamery** (Glenn County): Closure

Anecdotally, many of California's ~80 cheesemakers attribute 20%-80% of their retail sales to the Cheese Trail's printed map, mobile apps and website, and many have now opened to the public, offering on-site retail shops, tours and classes.

"The Cheese Trail has really helped folks discover our cheese and butter making classes," said Sheana Davis, co-owner of The Epicurean Connection, in the town of Sonoma, CA. "It's played a huge role in supporting our entire artisan cheese community."

The Cheese Trail project began as a brainstorming session between Vivien Straus and Sue Conley (co-founder, Cowgirl Creamery), about how to support family farmers and cheesemakers. Soon thereafter, Straus convened the very first stakeholder meeting, where more than 30 very enthusiastic cheesemakers and nonprofit leaders crowded into her living room.

The first Cheese Trail map, printed in 2011, sparked an explosion of interest in California cheesemakers; one cheesemaker reported a 25% increase in retail sales within just two months. Today, the Cheese Trail includes: the **Map** (12 printings, 500,000+ distributed), **Website** (2+ million lifetime page views), **mobile apps**, international **media relations** (including features in *National Geographic*, *the New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *USA Today* and *Condé Nast Traveler*), and **mail order holiday cheeses collections**.

In 2022, Vivien brought her brother Michael onboard to expand the Cheese Trail, building upon their long track record of successful collaborations, including as the marketing team that launched *Straus Family Creamery* and, in recent years, resurrecting their family homestead, [Straus Home Ranch](#) on Tomales Bay.

“In the coming months, we’ll be announcing some exciting and unique new features and services which we believe will help drive more visibility and sales for California’s artisan cheesemakers,” added Vivien Straus, with more than a hint of excitement in her eyes.

**Major sponsors of the 2023 printed map include:** The California Milk Advisory Board, the Marin Convention & Visitors Bureau, and the Sonoma Ag & Open Space District, with advertising support from Lagunitas Brewing Company, California Artisan Cheese Guild, Petaluma Market, The Palace Market, artisan cheesemakers and advocates.

**Individuals:** Request a free print map, explore the interactive map or download a digital version at [www.CheeseTrail.org](http://www.CheeseTrail.org).

**Bulk Map Requests:** The map is also available in bulk for retailers, wineries, visitor bureaus, hotels, farmers markets and other partners to distribute to their visitors and patrons - email: [info@CheeseTrail.org](mailto:info@CheeseTrail.org) with requested quantity and shipping address. We offer free shipping to all California cheesemakers. Please inquire regarding free delivery in the SF Bay Area. Maps will also be available at the upcoming Artisan Cheese Festival in Santa Rosa, March 24-26, 2023.

**Journalists:** Contact us for photos, tour itineraries, cheesemaker contacts, cheese classes, events and activities. Also, see the attached California Cheese Trail's ***State of the Cheese 2023*** for additional cheesemaker statistics.

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