

# 2025 WISCONSIN CHEESE TRENDS

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POWERED BY INNOVA MARKET INSIGHTS





**The 2025 Wisconsin Cheese Trends Report provides a forward-looking analysis of the innovations, flavor trends, and consumer preferences shaping the future of the cheese industry.**

**Cheesemakers in Wisconsin, “The State of Cheese™,” don’t just make cheese—they craft a heritage of excellence, connecting passion, quality, and artistry in every bite. Blending tradition with innovation, this report offers insights into the evolving cheese landscape, highlighting emerging flavors and shifting consumer values.**

## TREND 1

# Global Cheese Renaissance

International and artisanal cheeses are experiencing significant growth, driven by consumer demand for bold and unique flavors. According to a recent survey,

**40% of respondents are impressed by rich flavors that enhance their food and beverage experiences.**

This shift in consumer preferences is reflected in the impressive retail sales growth of specific cheeses: Paneer saw a 34% increase, Burrata jumped 32.1% and Queso Quesadilla rose 22.8%, (in the 52 weeks ending 12/1/2024, Circana). These trends highlight the global influences shaping modern palates.

## A TASTE OF THE WORLD, CRAFTED IN WISCONSIN

With rising interest in these diverse cheeses, consumers are eager to explore new tastes and cuisines from around the world. **Wisconsin crafts 50% of the nation's specialty cheese** and frequently highlights these international varieties, blending tradition with innovation. In 2025, we expect to see continued interest in heat and spice, with consumers using Wisconsin Cheeses to elevate recipes authentically.



## TASTE THE TREND

### Double Gloucester from [Golden Age Cheese](#)

*Where excellence meets uniqueness in every artisan creation, this ancestor of modern-day Cheddar, has a full body, smooth texture, and nutty taste.*

### Paneer from [Specialty Cheese Company](#)

*This fresh cheese common in South Asian cuisine, is a World Championship Cheese Contest winner.*





## TREND 2

# Classic Comforts on Center Stage

In 2024, Parmesan led the way in specialty cheese sales, followed closely by cheddar, reaffirming the timeless appeal of these classic varieties. The enduring popularity of these cheeses reveals a broader consumer desire to celebrate familiar flavors and heritage-inspired products, even as they expand their culinary horizons. Recent surveys reveal that

**65% of consumers want more classic, traditional items on store shelves, while 64% are eager to try new products that incorporate old-world recipes.**

There is significant potential to explore creative new expressions of classic varieties.

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### TIMELESS CLASSICS, MODERN TWISTS

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The opportunity to blend tradition with innovation is vast, as consumers continue to seek foods that connect them to the past while delivering modern flavor experiences. Aged cheddar, the top-awarded Wisconsin Cheese category, exemplifies this trend, with gouda and feta also receiving significant recognition. Wisconsin cheesemakers are at the forefront, experimenting with refined aging techniques and creative flavor infusions to elevate these classics.

## TASTE THE TREND

### Roelli Red Rock

*A bold spin on traditional cheddar, with veins of blue offering the perfect balance between Cheddar's tang and Blue's earthiness.*

### Landmark Creamery's Herbs de Provence Fontina

*A contemporary twist on a comforting classic - hand-rubbed with herbs and wildflowers.*



### TREND 3

## Nurturing Meaningful Connections

There is a greater appreciation for connection and grounding.

**As one in three consumers say, social connections are a key aspect which helps them to 'feel well'**

Food becomes more than sustenance—it is the glue that binds relationships.

### PASSION FOR CHEESE MEETS THE POWER OF COMMUNITY

A perfect example of this trend is Cheeselandia, a virtual community that brings together people through their shared love of Wisconsin cheese. Here, members find more than just culinary inspiration—they discover a vibrant, immersive environment to connect with fellow enthusiasts. From virtual “School of Cheese” sessions to exclusive parties featuring Wisconsin’s finest cheeses, Cheeselandia turns the act of cooking and tasting into a communal celebration. Members are not only bonding over food but building lasting friendships that make each tasting and conversation more meaningful. It’s proof that when food fosters connection, it can create unforgettable moments and a sense of belonging.



### TASTE THE TREND

#### Deer Creek Vat 17

*Named the top choice by Cheeselandians for cheese boards, this complex, award-winning cheddar adds a delightful tangy nuttiness to any spread. Crafted by a Wisconsin-licensed cheese grader in collaboration with a Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker, this cheese is a true testament to the extraordinary results that come from meaningful connections*

#### Marieke Gouda

*Cheeselandians report that this gouda is a frequent crowd-pleaser. All Marieke® Gouda, more than 15 flavors, is made using fresh raw milk from their own family farm. Each wheel is crafted with the finest Old World techniques and aged to perfection for at least 60 days on Dutch Pine Planks.*





## TREND 4

# From Star Ingredients to Star Experiences

As the demand for added value becomes a baseline expectation, food and beverage brands are shifting focus from singular star ingredients to the holistic quality of their products.

**In 2025, consumers prioritize freshness, health benefits, naturalness, nutritional content, price, and shelf life**

Crafting a narrative around these qualities will help consumers feel more connected with the product.

## THE ROLE OF ARTISANSHIP

Authenticity and craftsmanship are storytelling elements that can speak to consumer preferences in 2025. Wisconsin Cheese embodies this trend through its unmatched commitment to artisanship. With every cheesemaker licensed to ensure top-tier quality and the prestigious **Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker® Program** symbolizing expertise akin to a Ph.D., Wisconsin cheeses deliver more than flavor—they deliver heritage, passion, and trust. When you see the **Master's Mark®**, you're experiencing a tradition of excellence that spans generations.



The Master's Mark® symbol.

## TASTE THE TREND

### [Uplands Pleasant Ridge Reserve](#)

*Crafted by Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker Andy Hatch, this cheese is a prime example of how artisanship and quality come together, being the most awarded cheese in America.*

### [Sartori Merlot BellaVitano](#)

*The mind behind this cheese is one of only three female Wisconsin Master Cheesemakers, Pam Hodgson.*

*Fun Fact: Both of these cheeses were recently featured on Bravo's Top Chef Season 21!*





## TASTE THE TREND

### BelGioioso Fresh Mozzarella Ciliegine

*Fresh mozzarella is a dream of a cheese with a delicate, milky flavor and slightly elastic texture and the cherry size makes them delectably snackable.*

### Roth Havarti

*A consistently delicious and versatile cheese great for melting in recipes or snacking at any time.*



## TREND 5

# Mood-Boosting Bites

For consumers, the top health goal is feeling mentally and emotionally well, with vitality and energy following closely behind.

**61% of consumers globally say that feeling well means 'feeling mentally happy/positive'**

## ELEVATING EVERYDAY EATS

More than just a delicious indulgence, cheese offers mood-boosting benefits. Rich in calcium, protein, essential amino acids and tyrosine (which increases dopamine availability that, in turn, may enhance cognitive performance), it can support serotonin production and promote relaxation and emotional well-being ([National Dairy Council, 2023](#)). In 2025, expect snackable cheese varieties, to take center stage as accessible mood-enhancing treats. Look for the **Proudly Wisconsin Cheese®** badge in grocery stores nationwide to discover high-quality options that combine indulgence with wellness.