

Cheese Party Checklist

By Kimberly French

- Prepare for Your Cheese Party
 - To select the cheeses to serve, start with those you know and like.
 - Pair your cheese choices with the appropriate wines.
 - Make certain that you have at least one ice bucket and/or wine chiller available.
 - Invest in a good hard cheese and soft cheese knife.
 - Get several special cheese knives.
 - Have bottled water handy to refresh the palate between wines and cheeses.
 - Go shopping for wine and cheese.
- Presentation
 - Make sure you clearly label each cheese.
 - Make sure you provide plenty of toothpicks.
 - For used picks, set out a plate with an orange on it and stick a toothpick on top with the label "Used Picks" on it.
 - Provide lots of cute cocktail napkins.
 - Have small plates with cocktail forks ready.
 - Use pretty plates with a chic design or miniature wooden trays.
 - Pre-cut the cheeses into chunks or slices.
 - If you opt to have guests cut the cheese themselves, set out a sharp knife or cheese slicer and a wooden cutting board.
 - Set out individual cheese plates with a sampling of every cheese with fruits, jams, honey, and/or nuts.
 - Include a sampling of different meats together with the cheeses.
 - Choose breads and crackers that enhance the flavor of the cheeses.
 - Avoid breads made with any herbs or fruit.
- Cheese Seletion
 - Brie - soft, creamy, and savory mild French cheese.
 - Parmigiano Reggiano - hard cheese with a distinctive sharp and nutty flavor.
 - Gouda - semi-soft cheese with a mild, nutty flavor.
 - Aged or Mature Cheddar - has a strong, sharp taste.

- Gruyere - hard cheese that is slightly grainy.