



SIDE DISH

One Cheesy Evening

Remember back when a good party required little more than a keg full of the cheapest domestic beer you could find and... no wait, that was it. Life was simple and more than likely consistently blurry. Bet you never thought an advanced knowledge of curdled milk and fermented grapes would be all that stood between you and your claim to culture, but alas, we all have to grow up sometime. Cheese, wine and the harmonious combination of the two are a must if you're going to masquerade as a full-fledged adult. You're alone and scared, but fret not: There are people who care. Some of them joined forces recently to encourage us in our withdrawal from Kraft Singles. DiBruno Brothers, Moore Brothers and Sussex Wine Merchants hosted a wine-and-cheese event at the "so-hip-we-hide-ourselves" **Bistro St. Tropez** (2400 Market St.) to show people the endless possibilities. On the menu were five cheeses, properly fitted with five complimentary wines. DiBruno Brothers offered a sampling of the service they provide in their stores, explaining that three cheeses are sufficient for an intimate gathering of fewer than 20 people: one each from goat's milk (DiBruno's served a lovely Valencay), cow's milk (such as Camembert) and sheep's milk (Roquefort is the classic example). Ideally, they should range from crumbly to hard. On the wine side, it was generally agreed that the smartest pairings include wines and cheeses from the same region, since the soil and geography instill both with subtle similarities. Hence, you would naturally pair Grana cheese with a nice Pinot Grigio from Lombardy, since they both hail from Italy's Po Valley. (Naturally!) And as to the inevitable question of wineglass-swirling, Moore Brothers assured skeptics that there's more to it than upper body conditioning. The evening ended with shavings of Parmigiano-Reggiano coupled with aged balsamic, and suggestions to stop by the cheese store before your next party. No intimate gathering in your future? Not a problem. Who needs friends when one has Grana and Grigio? (*Roopa Gona*)

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