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Stephanie Stiavetti

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# Eat This Cheese: Lille' Coulommiers

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This little ball of cheesy joy is such a simple pleasure that it's difficult to describe. I taste many complex cheeses that hide their true intentions behind enigmatic personalities, so much so that I sometimes find myself prodding more easygoing varieties for a little bit of attitude. Where's the spark? Where's the drama? How can there be no ulterior motive? Lille' Coulommiers is special in its forthrightness. It doesn't conjure a show of smoke and mirrors, nor does it tempt you with one flavor just to bait and switch with another. To be sure, I'm a big fan of all these qualities in a cheese; some of my favorite dairies produce mysterious cheeses with flavor profiles that you have to work at discerning. Vermont Farmstead has, however, produced a lovely little exercise in stepping back and being true to yourself (from the cheese's point of view, anyways).



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Mushroomy and buttery, with a touch of vegetal funk towards the end, Lille's texture is pure velvet on your tongue. There's a luxurious layer of cow's milk fat here, but it's not overpowering like some of the other creamy cheeses I've written about here. Lille is thicker

than a brie and won't run down your knife; instead it stays right where you put it, like an obedient child, and waits patiently for your next move.

While Vermont Farmstead's cheese makers claim French influence while creating Lille', my impression is that it's somewhat American in its flavor, pushing more for a straightforward experience to the taster. It's been a long time since I've had a cheese that I could just sit and eat on a plain cracker, without teasing out layers of nuance. Instead, I'm left with a pleasant creamy experience, a little barnyardy but not overly so, and a clean finish that leaves me wanting another bite to refresh the flavor on my palate.

I don't know the last time I could just sit down and eat through a solid wedge of cheese, with nothing but a bowl of crackers and a little sea salt. Many cheeses are just too much for this endeavor. Lille', on the other hand, is a delightful silky treat, one that both cheese newbies and more advanced lovers of the cream will enjoy.

**About the author:** Stephanie Stiavetti is a writer and cookbook author in San Francisco. Her food blog, [The Culinary Life](#), is a repository for all things comfort food related, from savory dinners to transcendental desserts. She also publishes a [monthly culinary newsletter](#) full of stories, review, and helpful tips. Stephanie's cookbook, [Melt: the Art of Macaroni and Cheese](#), celebrates America's favorite dish by recreating it with specialty cheeses. Available for preorder now.