

Our local cheese and wine pairing

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Food & Drink

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Albury is a small, family-run biodynamic vineyard located in the beautiful Surrey Hills. Nick Wenman and his team produce the highest quality and award-winning organic English wines, many of which are available in local pubs and restaurants.

We chose a selection of cheeses that are produced within VantagePoint's geographical area: High Weald Dairy and Bookham Harrisons, both in Sussex, and Norbury Park Farm which is the only cheesemaker in Surrey. We compared them with a different wine from Albury Vineyard. Here are our findings...

The cheeses...

- Sussex Charmer* - Bookham Harrisons
- Tremains Organic* - High Weald Dairy
- Ashdown Foresters* - High Weald Dairy
- Sussex St Giles* - High Weald Dairy
- Duddleswell Organic* - High Weald Dairy
- Twineham Grange* - Bookham Harrisons
- Brighton Blue* - High Weald Dairy
- Norbury Blue* - Norbury Park Farm
- Smoked Foresters* - High Weald Dairy

Albury Estate Classic Cuvée 2018
Paired with award-winning *Sussex Charmer* and *Tremains Organic*

This sparkling wine, made from Chardonnay and Seyval Blanc, has enough acidity to pair well with cheese, smoked fish or an outdoor winter picnic! *Sussex Charmer* combined the creaminess of a mature farmhouse cheddar with the zing of an Italian style hard cheese and winner of several awards. Quite nutty, with salt crystals and a lovely strong taste. *Tremains* is an organic hard style cheese and named after the farm where it's made. It has a medium flavour and is more creamy and mellow. The saltiness of both proved a great accompaniment to the sparkling wine.
Tough call but top marks for Sussex Charmer.

Lansdowne Sparkling Rosé
Paired with *Ashdown Foresters* and *Sussex St Giles*

This wine is grown in Lansdowne, a small vineyard near Shere managed by the Albury team. It was released for the first time this year and is made from Pinot Precoce, an early ripening Pinot Noir. It's a delightfully pale rosé sparkling wine, abundantly aromatic and slightly fruity. It fitted well with these two cheeses. *Ashdown* being a firm un-pressed cheese with a creamy 'squidgy' texture yet some robustness. The *St Giles* a more continental style creamy cheese, quite rich but an excellent flavour. Similar to, but better than *Port Salut*. A light cheese needed to accompany this delicious wine.
Top call here was Sussex St Giles

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28

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Albury Bianco Vermouth

Paired with *Duddleswell Organic* and *Twineham Grange*

Hand crafted from distilled Sauvignon wine, blended with selected botanical infusions of herbs spices and citrus peel - a delightful accompaniment to our next pair of cheeses. *Duddleswell* is a hard style cheddar cheese, organically produced with sheep milk and matured for over 5 months. It has a rich flavour, slightly sweet and nutty. The *Twineham Grange* is made using traditional Italian methods but with vegetarian rennet, and is the only cheese of its type approved by the Vegetarian Society. It was like a slightly milder, sweet parmesan and very delicious.
Both paired well but our preferred choice was Twineham Grange

Albury Rosso Vermouth

Paired with *Brighton Blue* and *Norbury Blue*

Another surprise was this new addition. A delicious amalgamation of cinnamon, nutmeg, orange peel, lemon balm, wormwood and other botanicals, this vermouth gives a distinctive tongue-smacking bitterness. Anything eaten with this would have to be bold. Award-winning *Brighton Blue*, a semi soft cheese with a mellow blue flavour and slightly salty finish complemented the vermouth well, as did the *Norbury Blue*. This is produced nearby and is entirely handmade with milk from a closed herd of Friesian cows fed on GM fodder. It had creaminess together with a quite intense flavour.
A hard choice but in the end we gave top marks for Brighton Blue

Mystery wine

Paired with *Smoked Foresters*

This *Foresters* is a young firm un-pressed cheese, with a creamy texture and is naturally smoked over oak shavings. The team at Albury thought it would be hard to match as smoked cheeses can often over-power the taste of the wine. But the lightness of the smoke in this very delicious cheese actually enabled it to pair particularly well with the *Classic Cuvée* and both the vermouths.

Our thanks to the team at Albury Vineyard for their hospitality and help with this article. We would highly recommend visiting the vineyard when allowed - both inside and outside areas are available - allowing socially distanced tastings - and would highly recommend the new *Rosso Vermouth* as a Christmas tipple, ideal for drinking on its own or in a cocktail.

Albury Vineyard are kindly offering VantagePoint readers a 10% discount on all orders over £30 until 31st December - please quote VP10 when ordering. alburyvineyard.com

Please see our competitions online at vantagepoint.uk for details on how to win yourself a bottle of *Rosso Vermouth* or a cheese hamper from High Weald Dairy or a *Sussex Charmer* gift box from Bookham Harrisons Dairy.

Thanks also to the farms for their lovely cheeses: bookhamharrisons.co.uk, highwealddairy.co.uk, norburyblue.co.uk

Full tasting notes available at vantagepoint.uk

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29

Farnham & Villages V