

THE

SCOOP

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE FROM BERKSHIRE FOOD CO-OP
summer 2022





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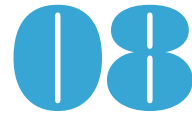
FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

Jessica reflects on her four years here and looks forward to the summer months.



FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Shopping at the Co-op is more than a chore! Phyllis explores the personal connections she's made.



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A flashback and a recipe. Anna shares memories from her days at summer camp.



PAPER OR PLASTIC?

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YOU'RE ONE IN A MELON

Co-op kiddos are enjoying the summer's delicious sweet treats!



TWELVE YEARS IS A LONG TIME...

David's tenure has led to personal discovery, and to Peru. What did he do there?



BUBBLY FOR THE WIN

Summer is for bubbles, and Anna sure knows how to pick the yummy ones.



PUMP UP THE JAM & CHEESE

A pairing like no other, jam and cheese makes appetizers better. Here are some ideas!

meet the board



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FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER:

Summer is finally here! And it's shaping up to be a busy season in the area for the first time, really, in a few years. Performances at Tanglewood are back in full swing! Not only am I excited about the music at this venue, but also for other productions taking place throughout the Berkshires—Jacob's Pillow, Shakespeare & Co., and Berkshire Busk! just to name a few. The latter of these is happening throughout downtown Great Barrington through Labor Day weekend, with the Co-op being one of the business locations. Every Saturday afternoon you will be treated to live music on our patio and while you're here, be sure to check out what's happening in the store.

There are certainly lots of lively and cultural activities to explore, but more importantly it's all about supporting our farmers' markets and farm stands that are open throughout the county and beyond. The bounty of fresh edibles is impressive—produce galore! From the berries, to the greens, tomatoes & corn, and all of the other delights that

our farmers grow, we are so fortunate to have convenient access to wholesome, local food options. How about any of the other local items that we sell? Off the Shelf Eggs (from our very own board member, Anna Houston), yogurts and all manners of raw fermented veggies, bread, coffee, cheese (and nut-based cheese!), granola, and of course our delicious house-made cuisine. Whatever it is that you choose, let us know how much you've enjoyed it. We truly appreciate your honest feedback and suggestions because, after all, we're in this together.

June marks my 4 years with the Co-op, and what a tremendous experience it's been so far. We've risen to many challenges, faced impossible odds, and have become so much more resilient and stronger through it all. We boast an incredible team of people here at the Co-op, and, if I do say so myself, probably the most cohesive in recent history. There seems to be a true sense of belonging, and we've created a place where all are valued and celebrated

for who they are. I hope that you feel it too. We all work hard each day to enrich the lives of the people around us, whether it be an Owner or shopper, a local producer, or a delivery person. I'm incredibly proud to know that we all share the common mission that this organization was founded upon.

I heard a quote recently at my niece's graduation by Zig Ziglar titled, The Three C's of Life: "Choices, chances, changes. You must make a choice to take a chance, or your life will never change." I tend to think of this wisdom often and have been applying it in all aspects of my life. However, as it relates to the Co-op, I would invite you to consider making the choice to come visit us and take a chance on trying something new. Our staff are very knowledgeable and are always happy to guide you in the right direction. You may even find that, if only in the smallest of ways, your life has changed for the better.



Jessica Bosworth
General Manager



FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT:

There is magic in each new season here in our Berkshires! We have all been waiting for sunshine and warmth, greener pastures and hillsides, our local farmers' winter efforts coming to life, and our farmers' markets re-opening. Summer seems to bring the long-awaited ability to reconnect with one another face to face as well as to offer a knuckle bump or even a hug.

There is magic that fills our Co-op too. As an Owner for many years and a grocery shopper enthusiast, I was most interested in what was on the shelves, in the coolers, the fresh produce and whether or not the hot bar would relieve of us of our cooking duties. The more I am involved—shopping, in meetings, bagging, and getting to know the staff and all of you—it has become much clearer to me that the Berkshire Food Co-op is so much more than a grocery store: we all share in something very unique and special. In and amongst our shelves is the heart, the special people who come in every day very

committed to making your time inside the Co-op (and on the patio) a wonderful experience. Our staff is amazing, welcoming, knowledgeable and committed to supporting each other and you. They provide the sunshine and warmth, greeting you by name, eager to connect and get to know you better.

We are all busy and on the go, but this summer, when visiting the Co-op, please take an extra moment to get to know us better, grab a treat or a meal and sit awhile in our cafe or out on the patio. Come out to our special events and try something new in the store. We are not just Owners, we are family and friends, at home, in our Co-op.

And finally, over the next several months, we will be taking our community to a new level—upstairs! I invite you to share with me your vision for our new community space as we solidify the design and details. Reach out anytime! My email address is pwebb@berkshire.coop.



Phyllis Webb
Board President



top: Phyllis with her family
left: Phyllis and her husband
hiking Race Brook Falls
right: asparagus straight from
Phyllis' garden



COMFORT FOOD & CULINARY INFLUENCES

I have always loved food and cooking. I have very distinct food memories from various ages and can transport myself back with one bite. I remember seeing a pot of tomato sauce bubbling away every time I visited my paternal grandmother's house in Queens, NY. While visiting, I would go out to the back yard and sit on my grandfather's lap and he would pull fresh grapes off of his vine. I remember them being very big, very sweet, and very messy as they dripped down my chin.

In CT, visiting my maternal grandmother's house, there was always a hefty amount of garlic and salt used in almost every dish. Out in the garden, I would collect basil and tomatoes with my grandfather, and I still remember washing the season's basil haul in the bath tub so we had enough room.

At home growing up, my mom would make a rotating selection of meals, one which was lovingly referred to as "regular" and consisted of pasta with ricotta and a quick homemade tomato sauce.

Whenever you hear or read an interview with a culinary professional and they are asked about their earliest memories, they often give similar answers, recalling a time they cooked in the kitchen with a member of their family making that signature recipe. Others will remember their first job in a professional kitchen and how they learned to say things like "hot behind" and "sharp" to prevent injury.

I am fortunate enough to have both of these types memories from my childhood. I grew up eating Italian dishes from both sides of my family, and in the summers I went to a camp in Vermont. It was there that the idea of being a professional chef entered my mind.

In the mornings, before the activity schedule would start, we were allowed to go to the kitchen to help if we wanted. I definitely wanted. I was working with a man named Tony Goupee who I can say with the utmost confidence impacted my life in more ways that he or I will

ever know. He taught me how to hold a knife. He taught me how to season food. He taught me how to mix large batches of oatmeal and hard boil dozens of eggs (we were cooking 3 meals a day for a camp of 150 people). Tony also gave me some of my favorite culinary advice.

While elbow deep in his famous cheese lasagna, his voice would bellow over our short 8-year-old camper heads "don't forget the corners. You'd be pretty sad if you were the camper who got that corner piece of lasagna and it didn't have enough cheese." We would all dutifully spread the shredded mozzarella, the ricotta, and the cottage cheese (yes, it has cottage cheese) over the sauce he was ladling in. The warm cooked lasagna noodles would get a drizzle of olive oil so they wouldn't stick together. The smell was intoxicating. As we washed our hands and went off to our morning swim or archery class, the bits of splashed tomato sauce on my shirt would remind me that dinner would be lasagna!

Years later, while in culinary school, these same words were echoed by a chef instructor there, though perhaps in a slightly more concise way: every flavor, every bite. This was the same instructor who had us put levels on our sandwiches to avoid sandwiches that have all the meat in the center and bites of only bread on the outside. These words are ringing through my head every single time I make something that has any sort of layers.

During the early days of the pandemic, I, like most, was in

search of comfort food. I also found myself with a different schedule than I was used to. After the great Pantry Clean 2020—as I like to refer to one specific Tuesday afternoon—I found some lasagna noodles in a previously unknown corner of my cabinet. Without a second thought, I added the necessary ingredients for Tony Goupee's lasagna to my next grocery pick-up. I was craving that familiar smell and feel. I was longing for that gooey, melted pasta dish that still holds a special place in my food memories some 30 years later.

And so, as the world is in turmoil for various reasons, perhaps my comfort food can provide you with a little comfort as well. Most people don't think of lasagna as a summer dish, but to me it goes hand in hand with the smell of fresh cut grass and sunscreen. And if you have ever known someone who went to Camp Killlooleet in Hancock, VT, invite them over for a slice of this (easily freezable, I might add) lasagna.

Anna Monaco
Meat & Seafood Team Member



Tony Goupee's Lasagna (as I remember it)

- 1 lb lasagna noodles, cooked, cooled, and drizzled with olive oil to prevent sticking
- 1-2 quarts of tomato sauce (depending on how saucy you like your lasagna)
- 16 oz of ricotta
- 16 oz of cottage cheese
- 1 lb plus 1 cup of shredded mozzarella (set aside the 1 cup for the topping)

Ladle a small amount of sauce in the bottom of the pan. Cover with one layer of noodles. Ladle more sauce on top of the noodles. Add 1/4 of the ricotta and spread it with a spatula. Dollop 1/4 of the cottage cheese onto the ricotta. Sprinkle with a 1/4 of the pound of mozzarella. Repeat the layers of noodles, sauce, a quarter of each cheese another 3 times. End with noodles and sauce and the remaining 1 cup of mozzarella. Bake at 350-400 until bubbly and the cheese on top begins to brown.



Tony (left) and his 2001 kitchen staff, including Anna (fourth from the left)



PAPER OR PLASTIC ?



Paper or plastic? Paper might seem better, but really the answer is neither. Here's why avoiding paper bags is important, and how to do it.

Devorah Sawyer
Marketing Manager



How often does this happen to you: you walk into the store looking for the fresh ingredients for dinner tonight, or just to stock the fridge. You browse the aisles, probably picking up items that weren't on your list, and eventually make your way to the cashier. And then it hits you—you forgot your reusable shopping bags at home!

It's easy to do, especially after that one time you remember to bring them. They come inside when you get home, and once emptied they hang on the hook to "help" you remember to bring them next time.

If you're like me, you have quite an impressive collection of bags. Some were gifts, some are really nice canvas totes, one is your Co-op Owner bag (sign up now to get one of those!), and the rest have been collected over the years from various stores. You probably even have a favorite.





Well, I'm here with what hopefully serves as more motivation to finally remember to bring your reusable shopping bags every time you shop.

Many businesses around here started charging a small fee to use paper bags after Great Barrington banned single use plastic bags. I get it; paper bags are more expensive than the plastic ones. But the Berkshire Food Co-op decided this, albeit small, fee was still not something we want to pass along to you, our shopper.

The thing is, though, paper bag production is more wasteful than that of plastic bags. According to WM (formerly known as Waste Management), paper bag production uses 40% more energy, releases 50% more pollution into the air, and produces 94% more waste water. You can read more about the impact of paper bag use & production on their website, wm.com.

Besides the environmental impact of paper bags, though, we have another tidbit to encourage you to remember your reusable bags. Did you know each paper bag costs 27¢? The one with the handles that we most commonly use at our registers. And even those 27¢ bags rip at the handles so we often double bag your groceries so they don't spill in the parking lot.

We currently spend about \$1,500 a month on paper bags. That's more than my monthly rent. Seriously—over 5,500 bags a month! 27¢ doesn't seem like a lot, and it's not when it's one charge every once in a while because you forgot your bags, but it adds up quickly. And there are better, more sustainable things we could be doing with that money.

For example, we've wanted to start a program for the hot bar and salad bar where you buy a stainless steel container and use it for carrying out your lunch, and then trade it in for a clean one the next time you're in. We'd include a discounted hot bar and salad price as incentive to take advantage of this program, and the containers would be sturdy & durable. Maybe the money we don't spend on paper bags can be used to finally start this! And we wouldn't have to use as many to-go boxes anymore, either.



So, what can you do? Maybe it's a given, but remember your reusable bags. Here are some tips to hopefully help you with that:

1. Return your bags to your car or bike as soon as you're done unloading them.
2. Set a timer for 5-15 minutes when you walk in the door. When it goes off, that's your reminder to stop what you're doing and bring your bags back to your car or bike.
3. Start keeping your bags in a really inconvenient spot. Chances are if you have to step over them to leave, you'll probably remember them.
4. Rotate your stock! Keep half your bags in your car or bike, then use the other half for your shopping trip. That way you'll have some for next time. (This is what I do.)
5. Add "bags" to your shopping list.
6. Keep a reusable bag on you! We sell a few brands like Baggu and Full Circle that pack down into small sizes to keep in your bag or on your keys

B I G

round up numbers



8,424! Believe it or not, that's the number of Co-op customers in December who rounded up to donate to the Berkshire Community Diaper Project. Here's how it worked: In December, every Co-op customer, every day, was asked if they'd like to round up their purchase total to the nearest dollar. Their "spare change" would support the worthwhile work of the BCDP. And they did—to the tune of more than \$3,800. Those dollars will buy more than 15,000 diapers for families that need them.

Not only does the Round Up Program support a core tenet of the Co-op—to do REAL good for the community—but it also helped the BCDP continue its work raising funds and collecting diaper donations for parents who struggle to afford them. Getting enough diapers is an "often hidden consequence of poverty and low wages. Diaper need can have a negative impact on children's health and parents' mental well-being," reports Phillip Vander Klay, Director of Policy and Government Relations, National Diaper Network.

Currently, the BCDP distributes to 21 locations in Berkshire County and, since its founding in 2014, it has distributed over 1,339,000 diapers to families in need. A whopping big number!

Our thanks to the Co-op and to you, each and every shopper, for your generosity in helping support our work. We are so grateful.

Terry Cooper
BCDP Director



BCDP founder and Board President Dr. Marie Rudden earned the Board Leadership Award from the NonProfit Center of the Berkshires



YOU'RE ONE IN A MELON!

On the cover: Co-op kiddos Walden and Jo enjoy juicy watermelon in the grass next to the Co-op
Below: Another Co-op kiddo, Isanna, luckily has her napkin tucked in to catch the drips!





Twelve Years

...and I wouldn't change a thing.

David Kelly
Center Store Manager

When I first started at the Co-op almost 12 years ago, it was supposed to be a temporary stop on my way to “bigger and better things”. I ended up finding much more of a connection and feeling of commitment than I had anticipated. I was absolutely struck by the sense of community and dedication to something I could never find living in rural upstate New York—healthy food.

I ran the cafe for my first 6 years. Having amazing ingredients in my hands to work with and be creative with felt amazing. I loved having a say in what we brought into the store, and making sure it met our standards felt powerful. Building relationships with local and national vendors was also fascinating. Within the first year, I had a feeling that I might have found my place here.

Eventually I ended up leaving the cafe to join the grocery department. This also led to much more positive involvement and dedication than I had anticipated. I quickly rose through the ranks and found myself representing the Co-op on many levels—locally, nationally, and eventually, internationally. My roles have taken me to Austin, Minneapolis, and all over New England, including Boston and Burlington.

I even had the honor of joining a delegation of representatives from only 6 co-ops across the country to visit with, work with, and learn more about our partner co-ops in the Peruvian Amazon. It was an immersive opportunity to dive deeper into the supply chain of coffee and cacao, as well as the global food chain in general. These experiences have changed the way I see the food chain from start to finish, and allows me insight to make better choices for our local community.

The employees and customers here at the Co-op have turned into extended family, and I have never felt so comfortable and appreciated. Leading a team into a new era for the Co-op back in 2019 when we moved to this building was an amazing experience, yet provided a challenge that I wasn't sure I was ready for. This experience stretched my abilities and showed me not only what I was capable of, but what our amazing team is capable of. It truly is teamwork here. Everyone wants to succeed personally and collectively. It's not just a job. We have a larger vision here that we are working towards. Supporting a cooperative mission with real impact on people's lives makes this job worthwhile.

Keep reading to see what David learned while he worked with the co-ops in the Peruvian Amazon

The Supply Chain Connects Us All...

Take a look back at David's visit to Peru in 2018 to work with Equal Exchange coffee and cacao farmers. David was one of only six people in the entire country invited to take this life-changing trip. Take a look and remind yourself of the supply chain that affects us all, and why it's so important to buy fair trade products.



looking out from cacao farms



Cacao begins as a flower with tiny pods that grow to be as large as 6-10 inches in length. This variety has a bright red skin with 30-40 beans inside. The white flesh surrounding the beans is edible.



cacao pod



cacao beans in the pod



The Oro Verde Cooperative joins 1,687 small cacao farms to share resources and negotiate better prices for all.



It's a 2 1/2 hour hike up the mountain to Leslie's cacao farm. Heavy rains render the roads impassable for vehicles, so farmers carry supplies up and harvests down the mountain on foot. The farm is simple, with no running water. Being a part of the cooperative has allowed Leslie to earn enough so his family could move into town where his children can attend school.





cacao beans drying



the view on the way up to coffee farms



coffee berry



separating the coffee berry from the bean



After the cacao beans are carried down the mountain, they come to this processing facility where they're dried, fermented and packaged for export.

This sign, which hangs in the facility assures that everyone is welcome "If you're different, it's no problem." Male, female, native, handicapped, gay, white, or brown. All are welcome!



beans on the way



coffee beans on the bush



David with two cacao farmers



coffee beans



drying the coffee beans

Beyond pictures and stories, what David brought home from his trip is a profound sense of how interconnected we are, from the shoppers & cashiers, Co-op staff who stock the shelves & do the ordering, to the folks at Equal Exchange and the farmers and their families half a world away whose lives have been drastically improved by the cooperatives within which they work.



BUBBLY FOR THE WIN

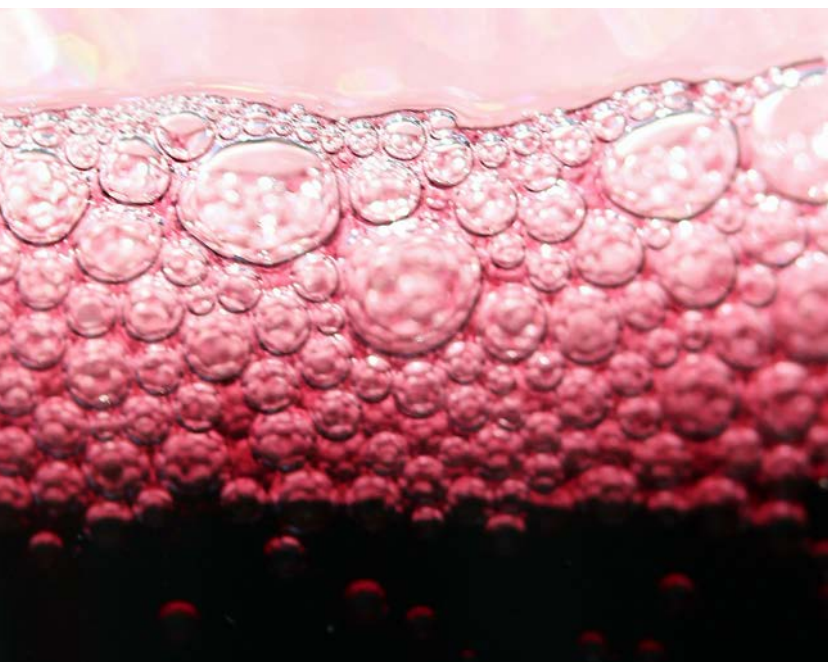
Anna Monaco
Owner, TNT Bitters Co.



Sparkling wines cover a large swath of the wine world. While they are often incorrectly all referred to as champagne, sparkling wines have a distinct context that is often either celebratory or summery. It's officially summer now, so let's pop that bubbly!

Let's start with the basics. Sparkling wine is wine that has carbon dioxide gas. This gas can be in the form of larger bubbles (think average seltzer water) or smaller bubbles (closer to Pellegrino water). These carbon dioxide molecules can either be introduced naturally by trapping them in the bottle (CO2 is a byproduct of fermentation) or by adding carbon dioxide to the wine. Sparkling wine can be made all over the world and with a range of grape varietals. The most famous type is probably the sparkling wine that comes from a particular region in France where it gets its name: Champagne.

And guess what?! The Berkshire Food Co-op now carries a



biodynamic champagne! Definitely check it out!

So what about all these other bottles of bubbly on our shelves? The other notable types of sparkling wines include Prosecco from Italy, Cava from Spain, and, one of my personal favorites, Lambrusco.

Lambrusco is the name of a grape variety as well as the sparkling wine produced by that grape primarily in the Emilia-Romagna region of Italy. This region is one of the major gastronomic Holy Lands in Italy, known for prosciutto, balsamic vinegar, and the King of Cheese himself, Parmigiano Reggiano.

Some Lambruscos are very dry. Some are very sweet. The sweeter types were the popular ones that lost traction as wine drinkers' pallets trended drier in recent decades. Regardless of the sugar levels, Lambruscos are known for their cherry and berry flavor, hint of citrus zing, and can even have a nose reminiscent of violets and dirt.

They pair very well with food as the bubbles don't overpower the bites, and they also stand up nicely to bitter flavors. Unlike typical Champagne or Prosecco which are both white in color, Lambrusco can be white, rose, or red, though it is most widely known for its deep red almost purple color.

For a while, Lambrusco was definitely overshadowed by its cousin Prosecco, but mark my words: 2022 is the year of Lambrusco! It has a light, effervescence and a low amount of alcohol that makes it perfect for any time of day. Open a bottle for brunch and keep going with it through cocktail hour! You can even stretch a bottle and add some other things to make a delicious and low ABV cocktail! Check out my suggestion for a drink to cool those hot summer days sitting in the garden

So what are you waiting for? Grab a bottle of any kind of bubbly and pop that cork. Happy summer sipping!

Blackberry Summer Sipper

- 1/2 cup fresh blackberries, cut in half
- 1 Tbs maple syrup, honey syrup, or simple syrup (recipe included below)
- 1/2 cup Pelligrino water or another sparkling water with small bubbles
- 1/2 cup Labrusca White Lambrusco
- 5 dashes TNT Bitters Alibi Citrus + Aromatic Bitters
- Orange twist to garnish

Place the berries and syrup in a cup and muddle. Add the bitters. Fill the cup with ice. Pour the sparkling water over the ice and give just a little stir. Top with the Lambrusco.

To make honey or simple syrup, take equal parts honey or sugar to water and heat in a small pot until the honey or sugar dissolves. Store this for up to 1 week in the fridge. If you add a small amount of vodka to the syrup, it can last up to a month!

Pump up the Jam and Cheese

In search of an appetizer for easy entertaining? Pairing jam and cheese offers endless possibilities.

By Mandy Makinen

In the tradition of foods that hit that harmonious spot between sweet and salty comes an idea so easy, so elegant, yet based on two staples most Americans have on hand: cheese and jam. This may sound like an unlikely duet, but after you sample a few of these pairings you might just change your tune.

These combinations work for an elegant cheese plate, served with crackers or slices of baguette, but some pairings are also nice for a jazzed-up grilled cheese sandwich. While most jams and jellies are made with fruits, savory preserves like pepper jelly, tomato jam and red onion marmalade are also excellent natural pairs for a variety of cheeses. Look for these specialty items in the jams and jellies aisle, but be sure to check out the cheese department for unique spreads as well.



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A strong combination

Generally speaking, strongly flavored cheeses pair well with assertively flavored jams, and the opposite is also true: Mild cheeses marry well with delicately flavored jams. If you neglect this rule, you run the risk of one flavor dominating, thus losing some of that magic that happens when good flavors complement each other. Try these assertive combinations:

Bold pairings

Blue cheese or Gouda with marmalade, black currant, peach, plum, or red onion jam

Aged cheddar with apple jelly, apple butter, huckleberry or tomato jam

Manchego cheese with blueberry jam or its traditional Spanish pairing, quince jelly (membrillo)



Easy, breezy brie

Similar to goat cheese, the mild flavor and luxurious mouthfeel of brie cheese pairs well with nearly any sweet or savory jam. When in doubt, go with red fruits:

Brie and red fruits

Brie and strawberry jam is a perennial favorite with or without a glass of Champagne

Brie and cherry preserves — try them baked together in puff pastry

Brie with red currant jelly is perfect on a fresh baguette

Go for the goat

Fresh goat cheese, or *chevre*, seems like it was made for jam — a spreadable, smooth cheese with just enough tang to keep it on the savory side. In a pinch, nearly all jams pair with goat cheese, here are a few favorites:

Goat cheese combos

Goat cheese and fig jam (add caramelized onions and you've got the makings of a sandwich)

Goat cheese with cranberry sauce or jelly is excellent on a turkey sandwich

Goat cheese and marmalade (orange, lemon or grapefruit)

Cheesy dessert ideas

Mascarpone, a rich and smooth fresh Italian cheese, is delicious with just about any jam. It's less tangy and more spreadable than cream cheese and has a mild, creamy flavor. Here are some suggestions for pairing this delectable cheese:

Elegant desserts

Mascarpone with blueberry jam and fresh baguette or brioche buns

Mascarpone with strawberry jam and shortbread cookies

Mascarpone with lemon curd and oat crackers

You can experiment with new combinations using whatever cheeses and preserves you have on hand at home until you find the combo that hits all the right notes.

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