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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Feast on a Fromage Plate for the Holidays  
— Cheese Expert Max McCalman's Tips on Entertaining with Style —**

**PORTLAND, Maine (November 21st, 2007)** — Make your holiday get together memorable and a little *Je ne sais quoi* with the addition of a scrumptious Fromage Plate. Presentation of a mouth-watering, visually arresting selection of unique cheeses from France is an easy way to entertain with style this holiday season. France produces a broad variety of cheeses made from goat, sheep and cow's milk. Brie, Camembert, Comté and Roquefort are just a few of the most recognized names in fromage but there are literally hundreds of French cheeses to choose from, making it easy to find a crowd-pleasing selection for the most discerning of guests.

“The Fromage Plate is a celebration of the remarkable diversity of French cheeses—the abundant variety of flavors, textures, colors and aromas that characterize the ‘taste of place,’ or

‘terroir,’ unique to each region in France,” said acclaimed cheese expert and James Beard winner Max McCalman, author of *The Cheese Plate*, the definitive book on the art of creating the perfect cheese course, and of *Cheese, a Connoisseur’s Guide to the World’s Best*. “It’s easy to create your own distinctive combination and pairings for the holidays,” said McCalman. “Making a Fromage Plate is a great way to express your personality and style, and it makes a wonderful conversation piece. Parlez-Vous Fromage anyone?”

According to McCalman, specialty cheese shops, major grocery stores, as well as many on-line cheese purveyors offer wonderful selections of superb French cheeses all year round, but will also have special seasonal selections for the holidays. “Just make sure you buy only what you need for a short time, because it’s best to serve cheese at its peak of freshness. Also, don’t be shy in asking for a taste or for a fresh cut. Fromagers love cheese and want to share their passion for cheese with you so ask away!”

### **Max McCalman’s Simple Steps to the Perfect Fromage Plate**

Presentation — Remove cheese from the refrigerator about one hour before serving. Offer diverse flavors by varying the type of milk content in the cheese, from goat’s milk to sheep’s milk to cow’s milk. Also mix the textures from soft to hard and experiment with different shapes. Showcase three to six cheeses, around 2 ounces per cheese per person. Arrange the cheeses in a clockwise fashion starting with the mildest cheese at 6 o’clock and continue clockwise around the cheeseboard proceeding through the more pungent and complex cheese and ending with the blues. “Remember, it’s all about quality not quantity,” said McCalman.

Pairings — According to McCalman, wine is a favorite pairing for cheese. “Pair a mild cheese with a lighter, milder wine and a more robust, stronger cheese with a bolder wine,” said McCalman. “Cheese is so wonderful you can also create Fromage Plates that go with coffee, cognac, beer or even sake!” continued McCalman.

If you accompany the cheese with food, McCalman suggests simple fair like fruit, nuts, plain crackers, baguettes, or toast points. “Remember, the cheese is the star,” said McCalman. “Food is just a vehicle from transporting the cheese to your mouth!”

### **About The Cheeses of France**

Visit [www.cheesesoffrance.com](http://www.cheesesoffrance.com) to see Max McCalman's picks for special holiday Fromage Plates, ideas for seasonal Fromage Plates, everyday favorites and unique pairing ideas with wine, liquor, coffee and more. Max offers expert tips on the art of creating the ultimate Fromage Plate experience.

Please contact Jennifer Reamer at [jreamer@swardlick.com](mailto:jreamer@swardlick.com) for Fromage Plate photography or additional information.

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