

JANVIER 2025

**THE CHEESE
SCHOOL**



CHEESEMAKING COURSES



LEVEL 1

FUNDAMENTALS IN ARTISAN CHEESES

Location: MONS HQ - Ambierle (42).

COURSE OVERVIEW

Perfect for those who want to become or are in the process of becoming professional cheesemakers, or who want a refresher of the all-important basics of professional artisan cheesemaking, Artisan Cheesemaking Fundamentals is a structured hands-on small-scale course run over 5 days. It is as it says – the fundamentals you need to learn what is required to make great artisan cheese, including the latest tips and techniques for improving artisan cheesemaking outcomes.

Led by world-renowned master cheesemaker and educator Ivan Larcher, 'Artisan Cheesemaking Fundamentals' will provide you with the practical tools and scientific knowledge needed to make small-scale artisanal cheese successfully and consistently, with invaluable tools for managing production and working through the challenges of the inherently variable processes of milk quality, cheesemaking and ageing.

There are no pre-requisites for this course, but some knowledge of and experience in cheesemaking or food science is recommended.

This course is a pre-requisite for the various Advanced courses we run (unless you are already an experienced artisan cheesemaker).

WHAT IS COVERED

This course offers a whole-system perspective on artisan cheesemaking:

- Beginning on the farm, with the animals, their milk and how to assess milk quality
- Diving deep into both the science and art of cheesemaking by exploring raw and pasteurised milk theory, cheese microbiology and biochemistry, starters, coagulants and curdling mechanisms, moulding techniques, food safety and quality measurements/controls, design and equipment for artisan cheese facilities
- Understanding the importance of using pH meters and titratable acidity measurements correctly, and other readily-available techniques and tips to assist in making consistently good quality artisan cheese
- An introduction to affinage, focused on ripening cultures, climate control, rind treatment, and handling throughout the ageing process
- A tour of Maison Mons ageing facilities during which you can ask questions about facility design, equipment etc
- Multiple cheeses tastings everyday, vertical (same cheese at various ages) and horizontal (different cheeses, same family at same age).
- Opportunities throughout to ask questions of and seek guidance from Ivan about cheesemaking throughout the course.

DURATION

5 DAYS

LECTURER

IVAN LARCHER

FEES

2 200 €

Including: lunches and daily transportation from and to Roanne.

Excluding: lodging

Participants: minimum 4, maximum 8

LEVEL 2

ADVANCED CHEESEMAKING IN LACTIC AND SOFT CHEESES

Location: MONS HQ - Ambierle (42).

COURSE OVERVIEW

Overview – A deep dive into soft renneted and lactic cheesemaking in its many forms, covering the science, art and practice, taught by master cheesemaker and teacher, Ivan Larcher.
Soft cheeses – from smaller bloomy rind Camembert-styles, and washed rind Epoisses or Munster styles, to the larger spectacular Brie-styles – are a commercial artisan cheesemaker's best friend: popular with cheeselovers, great yield, relatively short ageing time but with reasonably good shelf life.

Too often, though, these cheeses are made to bland stabilised industrial recipes, lacking the character and artisan appeal that cheeselovers are seeking and willing to pay for. In this course, you will learn the ins and outs of successful artisan soft cheesemaking.

Lactic cheeses – classic French-style lactic goat's and cow's milk cheeses (the list is endless) Plain or washed rind, fromage frais, through to young/fudgy/lactic or aged for maximum meltiness/pungency. Once the techniques and tweaks of these cheeses – with their long fermentation, minimal rennet and delicate handling – are mastered, there are endless varieties of these delicious cheeses that can be made. They require relatively inexpensive equipment, have excellent yield and short ageing periods – and they'll all be different from each other.

Perfect for smaller-scale artisan cheesemakers with access to good quality milk, these cheeses cannot be produced successfully by the big cheesemakers, as they do not lend themselves to machine-based making and care.

Ivan has extensive expertise in soft and lactic cheesemaking, initially running cheese operations in France, then consulting throughout the world to design cheeses that we now see on the world stage, as well as creating his own versions, first on his farm in France and now at Long Paddock Cheese in Castlemaine - Australia.

There are no pre-requisites for this course, but it is an advanced cheesemaking course. Previous commercial cheesemaking experience and study is recommended, including having undertaken our Artisan Cheesemaking Fundamentals course.

WHAT IS COVERED

- Artisan/traditional vs stabilised bloomy rind cheeses, all the ins and outs of techniques, ingredients, equipment
- The world of lactic cheeses and the techniques, ingredients and equipment for making and ageing them successfully
- Various cheese makes, using both cow's and goat's milk in our purpose-built cheese training facility, under Ivan's supervision
- Focus on how to control the key mechanisms underlying soft and lactic cheesemaking, including management of acidification and syneresis in the vat and then in the moulds
- Choosing cultures for acidification and ripening
- Understanding how to cultivate the yeasts, moulds and bacteria for optimal soft and lactic cheese unctuousness and complex flavour
- Rind development and care, rind aspect, texture and flavour you are seeking
- Affinage for soft and lactic cheeses
- Packaging for soft and lactic cheeses
- A tour of the Maison Mons ageing facility during which you can ask questions about facility design, equipment etc
- Vertical and horizontal tastings of different soft and lactic cheeses at different ages
- Opportunities throughout the course to ask questions of and seek guidance from Ivan about cheesemaking and the business of cheese.

DURATION

5 DAYS

LECTURER

IVAN LARCHER

FEES

2 200 €

Including: lunches and daily transportation from and to Roanne.

Excluding: lodging

Participants: minimum 4, maximum 8

LEVEL 2 ADVANCED CHEESEMAKING IN BLUE VEINED AND SEMI-HARD CHEESES

Location: MONS HQ - Ambierle (42).

COURSE OVERVIEW

A deep dive into Blue Veined cheeses and semi-hard cheesemaking in its many forms: semi-soft, semi-hard, hard cooked curd, uncooked pressed curd, including raw milk cheesemaking.

Blue cheeses - from soft to semi soft, milled curd or Continental style, double or triple cream, Blue-Veined technology brings another layer of complexity in the artisan cheese world - understanding the blue moulds and their conditions of development, cheeses textures and specific organoleptic profiles.

Hard cheeses - from semi-soft Vacherin-styles, to semi-hard tomme and Raclette-styles, to cheddars and uncooked pressed cheeses, to cooked-curd Alpine styles in all their aged glory - are the culmination of an artisan cheesemaker's craft, whether working with cow, goat or sheep milk. Ripening times and conditions are key to great flavour and texture development, but so are milk quality, cultures and stirring and pressing techniques. Relatively low yield and long lead-time to selling means you need to maximise the 'wow' potential for these cheeses, to extract their full economic benefit.

There are no pre-requisites for this course, but it is an advanced cheesemaking course. Previous commercial cheesemaking experience and study is recommended, including having undertaken our Artisan Cheesemaking Fundamentals course.

Hard Cheesemaking - WHAT IS COVERED

- Key equipment and ageing options and how to minimise cost
- Choosing cultures for acidification and ripening
- Understanding how to cultivate the yeasts, moulds and bacteria for optimal hard cheese texture and complex flavour
- Focus on how to control the key mechanisms underlying hard cheesemaking, including management of acidification and syneresis in the vat and then in the moulds
- Rennet options
- Cutting, stirring, washing and pressing techniques
- Salting and brining techniques
- Optimal rind control parameters
- Several semi-hard and hard cheese makes in our commercial cheese training facility, under Ivan's supervision
- Affinage for hard cheeses, including in the Maison Mons ageing rooms
- A tour run of Mons ageing facilities during which you can ask questions about facility design, equipment etc
- Multiple vertical and horizontal tastings of hard and semi-hard cheeses.
- Opportunities throughout to ask questions of and seek guidance from Ivan about cheesemaking throughout the course.

Blue Cheesemaking - WHAT IS COVERED

- Key equipment and ageing options for blue cheesemaking
- Choosing blue mould cultures together with appropriate starter and ageing cultures
- Understanding how to cultivate the yeasts, moulds and bacteria for optimal blue cheese texture and complex flavour
- Focus on how to control the key mechanisms underlying blue cheesemaking for optimal outcomes
- Cutting and stirring techniques for different blue cheese types
- Salting and brining techniques
- Piercing options and techniques
- Optimal rind control parameters
- Several blue cheese makes in our commercial cheese training facility, under Ivan's supervision
- Affinage for blue cheese, including in our fromagerie ageing rooms
- Sensory analysis of blue cheeses at different ages
- Opportunities throughout to ask questions of and seek guidance from Ivan about cheesemaking throughout the course.

DURATION
5 DAYS

LECTURER
IVAN LARCHER

FEES
2 200 €

*Including: lunches and daily transportation from and to Roanne.
Excluding: lodging
Participants: minimum 4, maximum 8*

LEVEL 3

EXPERTISE IN AFFINAGE AND TROUBLESHOOTING

Location: MONS HQ - Ambierle (42).

COURSE OVERVIEW

For years we've been talking and dreaming of it: a class taught by world renowned lecturers, affineur and cheesemaker, Laurent Mons and Ivan Larcher. Those who already had a class with either Laurent or Ivan, you know how deep and extensive is their knowledge. Imagine then what will be delivered if you have both of them, live and in person, for a week, deconstructing the sciences behind cheese making. It is by understanding microbiology, physics, chemistry and enzymology that a cheesemaker can identify the roots of the defects, highlighted during the ageing process.

Through practical examples and multiples tastings, this class will provide a great overview of main flavours/aesthetic/texture defects observed in soft, lactic, washed rind, blue, semi-hard, hard cheeses.

WHAT IS COVERED

- In-depth review of the families of cheese and principal parameters describing cheese composition (MFFB, Fat/DM, Calcium content, residual sugars...)
- The specific tools cheesemakers can use to assess cheese composition and consequences on cheese's moisture versus texture.
- Dairy microbiology: characteristics and roles of major micro-organisms, consequences on enzymatic transformation of cheese components and impact on organoleptic profiles.
- Equipment and setup for artisan cheese ageing, tour of Mons facilities.
- Tour of AOP Fourme de Montbrison cheesemaking & ageing facility.
- Major cheese defects, what to look for, how to assess and correct them, for each family of cheese.
- Triage techniques for cheese rind defects.
- Sensory analysis techniques, how to use spider graphs to track cheese grading and assessment.
- Multiple vertical and horizontal cheese tastings.
- Opportunities throughout the course to ask questions of and seek guidance from Laurent and Ivan about cheesemaking, cheese ripening and the business of cheese.

DURATION

5 DAYS

LECTURERS

IVAN LARCHER - LAURENT MONS

FEES

2 200 €

Including: lunches and daily transportation from and to Roanne.

Excluding: lodging

Participants : minimum 4, maximum 8