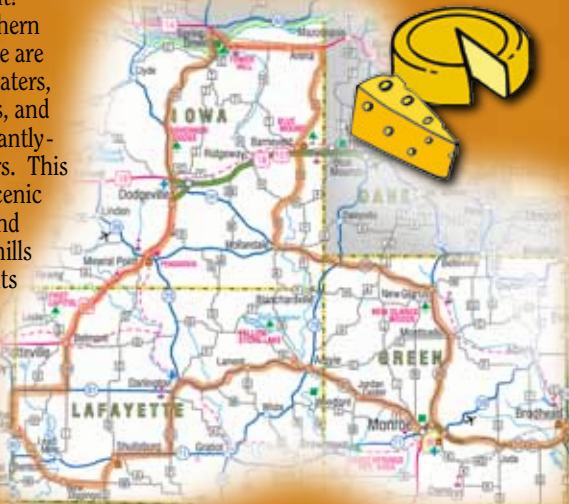


Cheese Country ~ Driving Tour

Of course the entire state of Wisconsin is famous for cheese. After football fans started wearing those yellow wedge-shaped foam hats in support of our favorite team, we became officially and affectionately known as “cheeseheads.” And we consider the nickname a compliment!

Here in southern Wisconsin we are also cheese eaters, cheese lovers, and most importantly-cheesemakers. This tour along scenic back roads and over rolling hills also highlights history, outdoor recreation, and kid-friendly stops along the way.

Another way to enjoy the scenery of Cheese Country is by taking an off-road trip on the **Cheese Country Trail** – a multi-use trail (popular with ATVs) running through Green, Lafayette, and Iowa Counties.



BRODHEAD

Begin your tour of Cheese Country in Brodhead. Climb on your bicycle and ride just north of the city on the Sugar River Trail to the replica **Clarence Covered Bridge**. Check out **Earth Rider Cycling** downtown, complete with showers for you AND your bike. In addition to an engine and caboose open for exploration, the **Brodhead Depot Museum** offers lots of local history. **Brodhead Depot Museum**, 1108 – 1st Center Ave. 608.897.4150. Take Hwy. 11/81 west to Juda.

CHEESE STOPS!

Decatur Dairy, Inc., W1668 Cty. Rd. F. 608.897.2777
Maple Leaf Cheese Factory Outlet, W2616 Hwy. 11/81
 608.934.1237

Continue west on Hwy. 11/81 to Monroe.

MONROE

Start downtown on Monroe’s Historic Courthouse Square, an eclectic shopping district surrounding the majestic 1891 Green County Courthouse. Stop in for a Limburger-with-onion-on-rye sandwich at **Baumgartner’s Cheese Store and Tavern**. Just west of the square is the **Monroe Arts Center**, featuring performing arts and an exhibition gallery. Get a taste of Monroe’s Swiss history at **Turner Hall**, just two blocks south of the square.

Alp and Dell Cheese, 657 – 2nd St. (intersection of Hwy. 69 south and Hwy. 11/81) 608.328.3355 **FREE TOUR!** Visit weekday mornings to see cheesemaking in action.

Historic Cheesemaking Center, 2108 – 7th Ave., (at Hwy. 69 south) 608.325.4636. Located in the beautifully restored Monroe Depot, the center houses memorabilia and several cheese factory replicas showcasing the cheesemaking process in the past.

Minhas Craft Brewery, 1208 – 14th Ave., 608.325.3191

Take the “taster’s tour” and witness the brewing process at the nation’s second oldest family-owned brewery. Beer, plus five fun flavors of premium sodas can be found in the Founder’s Tap Room.

MONTICELLO

Stop along Hwy. 69 and enjoy the view of **Lake Montesian**, or stroll through the **Montesian Gardens**, a community garden with blooms from spring til frost. Downtown Monticello offers several unique restaurants (try the homemade pie at **M&M Café**) and the works of local artists are featured at **Balcony Gallery**.

CHEESE STOPS!

Edelweiss Creamery, W6117 Cty. C, 608.938.4094

Silver-Lewis Cheese, W3075 Cty. EE, 608.938.4813

Swiss Heritage Cheese, Inc., 114 E. Coates Ave., 608.938.4455

NEW GLARUS - “America’s Little Switzerland”

Swiss immigrants admired the hilly region and decided to call it home in the 1840’s. Take a glimpse into the lives of those early settlers at the **Swiss Historical Village Museum**. The entire village of New Glarus is a showcase of Swiss architecture and heritage. You’ll find several restaurants with ethnic specialties. Try fondue at the **Glarner Stube**, the **New Glarus Hotel**, or the **Chalet Landhaus Restaurant**. Taste many varieties of locally made cheese, including Braun Suisse Kase (made exclusively from the milk of Brown Swiss cows) downtown at **Maple Leaf Cheese and Chocolate**.

FUN FOR KIDS!

Swiss Historical Village Museum, 612 – 7th Ave., 608.527.2317

New Glarus Chamber of Commerce, 418 Railroad St., 608.527.2095

Travel on Hwy. 39 west out of New Glarus.

HOLLANDALE

FREE TOUR! Nick Engelbert’s Grandview, located ½ mile west of Hollandale on Hwy. 39, is a tribute to the artistic efforts of a man who created more than 40 concrete folk art sculptures in his yard. The quirky “monkey tree” is a tribute to the Engelbert family.

Travel on Cty. K north from Hollandale, turn left on Langberry Rd.

BARNEVELD

You’ll know you’re in the right place when you see lush hillsides covered with grape vines.

In addition to wine tasting and tours, **Botham Vineyards** has an expansive terrace perfect for picnic. They’ll help you pair a bottle of wine with some award winning locally made cheese. Continue north on Cty. K, turn right on Mounds Park Rd.

SCENIC VIEW! Climb the observation towers at **Blue Mound State Park** for fantastic panoramic views of the area.

Continue north on Cty. K, turn left on Hwy. 14.

ARENA

A giant mouse on the front lawn marks the home of **Arena Cheese**. Step inside to view the cheesemaking process and munch some squeaky fresh cheese curds. Further west on Hwy. 14, you’ll discover two farm markets. **Heck’s Market Place** is famous for their Fall display of more than 8,000 pumpkins. **Peck’s Farm Market** offers loads of fresh produce, baked goods, and preserves. Kids love the petting zoo out in back, with all sizes and types of animals ranging from giant llamas to the tiniest of pygmy goats.



SPRING GREEN

Spring Green is an artisan's haven, with numerous shops and studios. Check out the **Wisconsin Artists Showcase** on S. Washington Street, located in a restored 1900s Wisconsin cheese warehouse. If you're hungry, locals heartily recommend the "Ms. Ruthie" sandwich at **The Shed**, named in honor of a bartender employed there for nearly 3 decades. Work off those calories on the long, steep climb up to the smelter house at nearby **Tower Hill State Park**. There

you will discover how lead was melted, poured down the 180-foot tower to the cool water below, and formed into lead shot in the mid-1800s.

SCENIC VIEW! Take Hwy. 23 just south of Spring Green.

Great view of the "Point of Infinity" at nearby **House on the Rock**.

FUN FOR KIDS! Climb aboard the 1952 Boeing C-97 (Strato-Cruiser) at the **Don Q Inn** and check out the instrument panel in the cockpit or imagine trying to get a good night's sleep on the "bunk beds." The plane was used to transport troops and cargo during the Korean War. Look closely for the signature of actress Farah Fawcett, who autographed the plane when it was used for a car commercial.

DODGEVILLE – namesake Henry Dodge, first Governor of the Wisconsin Territory.

Built in 1859, the **Iowa County Courthouse** is the oldest continuously operating courthouse in the state. Satisfy your sweet tooth just down the street with a square ice cream cone at **Corner Drug Store**, and stock up on cheese and other "goodies" at **Schurman's Wisconsin Cheese Country, Inc.** You can even stop in to check your email in the lobby at the **Dodgeville Chamber of Commerce**, 338 N. Iowa St.

MINERAL POINT – "The place where Wisconsin began"

Mineral Point is home to numerous artisan studios and galleries, plus an assortment of other shops featuring coffees, gifts, books, toys, and cheese. Stop for some traditional homemade Cornish fare or enjoy a sandwich at **Pointer Cafe**.

CHEESE STOP!

Hook's Cheese, 320 Commerce St., 608.987.3259

Mineral Point Opera House, 139 High Street, 608.987.2642

Current movies every weekend, plus special events throughout the year.

Mineral Point Railroad Museum, 11 Commerce St., 608.987.2769

Oldest depot in Wisconsin, featuring many railroad artifacts. Open 10am-4pm, Thursday through Sunday.

Orchard Lawn/Gundry House Museum

2 blocks east of the Water Tower on Madison St., 608.987.2884

Guided tours June – September.

Take Highway 151 south from Mineral Point to Belmont.

The First Capitol is located on County Road G.

BELMONT - first capitol for the Wisconsin Territory in 1836

Take a drive through this tiny hamlet "First Capitol" for a firsthand look at where a hardy group of fledgling legislators founded territorial Wisconsin's government. Lawmakers huddled in the cold in the fall and winter of 1836 to build the framework of law and order that would evolve into the state of Wisconsin 12 years later. Stop in at **Montchevre Cheese** and try fresh goat cheese, goat brie, or chevre in blue.

CHEESE STOP!

Montchevre-Betin, 330 Penn Street, Belmont, 608.762.5878

Take Hwy. 126 to to Hwy. 81. Go east to Hwy. 80. Travel south on Hwy. 80 to Cuba City.

CHEESE STOP!

Gile Cheese, 116 N. Main Street, Cuba City 608.744.3456, named Tri-State's #1 Cheese Store, making 31 varieties of specialty cheeses.

From Cuba City take Cty. H east to Cty. J. Travel on Cty. J south through Benton to Cty. W and east to New Diggings.

NEW DIGGINGS

In 1824, the lead rush was on, and prospectors traveled up the Fever River from Galena, Illinois - the "old" diggings-to seek riches at the "new" diggings. Hard to believe, but in its heyday, New Diggings had more people than Chicago! Relax outside on the porch at **Anton's Bar**, and discover what "supersize" really means when they grill up a Macho Burger for you.

St. Augustine's Church

Everything stands just as it did when Father Mazzuchelli gave mass, from the imported Italian sculptures, to the stained glass windows. Look closely at the right side of the altar for the secret passageway built into it for quick escapes in case of Indian attacks. Open Sundays May 31 through September, 1-4 p.m. or by appointment by calling 608.744.3438 or 854.2396.

Take Cty. W east to Cty. O. Take Cty. O north to Shullsburg.

SHULLSBURG – namesake Jessie Shull, a fur trader and lead miner

Founded in 1827, Father Samuel Mazzuchelli platted the community and named the streets Friendship, Charity, Justice, Judgement, Mercy and Hope. The **Water Street**

Business District is home to a diverse and eclectic group of shops, restaurants, and lodging establishments.

FUN FOR KIDS! Gravity Hill

Drive south from Shullsburg past the water tower and check out this eyebrow-raising phenomena about one mile south on Cty. Hwy. U. Stop your southbound vehicle next to the curve/25 mph sign. Put the vehicle in neutral, and roll backward UP the hill. Honest! (This is a public highway so watch for other vehicles) Take Hwy. 11 east, turn left on Hwy. 23 north to Darlington.

DARLINGTON

Lafayette County Courthouse, 627 Washington Street, 608.776.4171. Built in 1905, it holds the record as Wisconsin's oldest active courthouse and features a rotunda made of Tiffany glass. Open weekdays 8 am – 4:30 pm.

Lafayette County Historical Society

Museum, 525 Main St., 608.776.8340. The museum is noted for their original collection of paintings by Laverne Kammerude, depicting farm scenes and rural life in southwestern Wisconsin from 1910 – 1940. Open daily 1-4 pm, Memorial Day – Labor Day.

CHEESE STOP!

If you are interested in touring a cheese factory, local cheese producer **Brunkow Cheese**, 17975 Hwy. F, will show you how cheese is made.

Take Highway 81 east toward Argyle. Turn left on County N and follow to Lake Road. Turn left on Lake Road to Yellowstone Lake.

ARGYLE

Visit Yellowstone Lake State Park, with fishing, swimming, and boating on the lake. Stop in for an ice cream cone at the Dairy Bar – a seasonal restaurant owned by Lafayette County Dairy Promotion.

Partridge Hall/Star Theatre, 200 South State Street 608.543.3960 Unusual bell-shaped trim distinguishes this building (National Register of Historic Places) that once served as the town meeting place. Now a restaurant and antique store.

Return to Monroe on Hwy. 81.