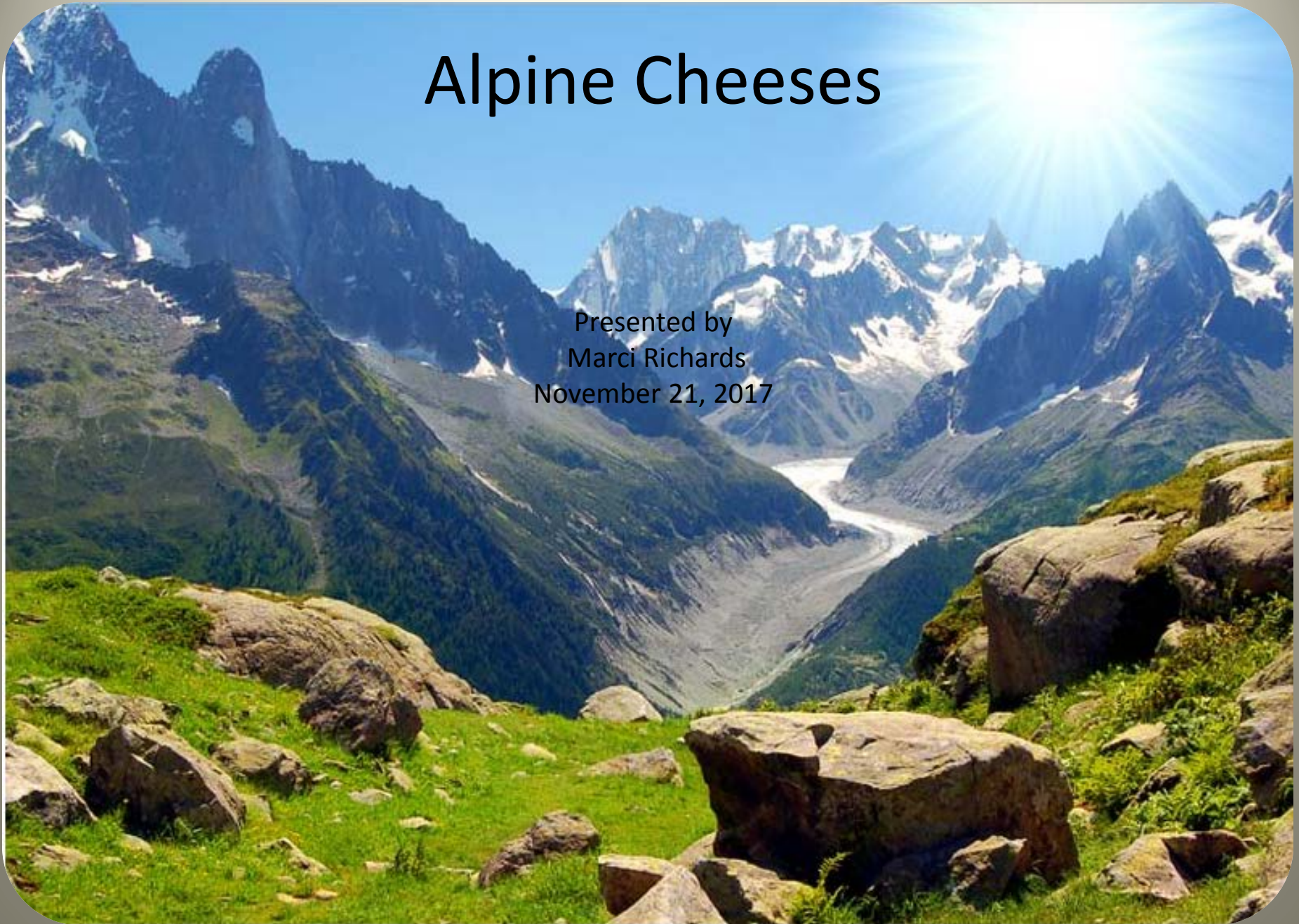


Alpine Cheeses

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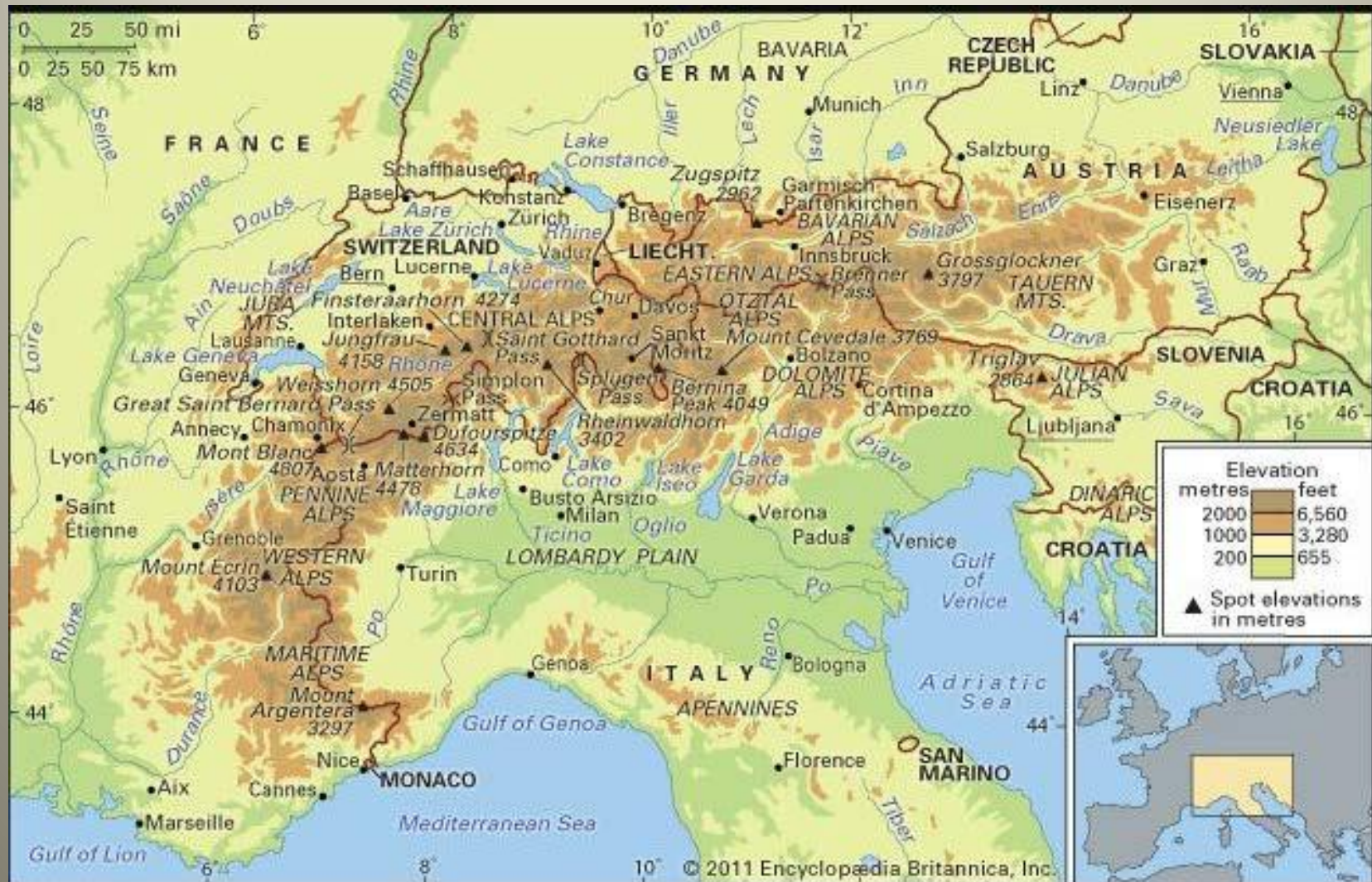








The Alps



Alpine Countries

- France
 - Italy
 - Switzerland*
 - Germany
 - Austria*
 - Slovenia
 - Croatia
 - Bosnia/Herzegovia
 - Montenegro
 - Serbia
 - Albania
- *considered a true Alpine Country

“Alps”

Meaning

- 1) mountain peak
- 2) grazing pastures (below the glaciers and peaks)

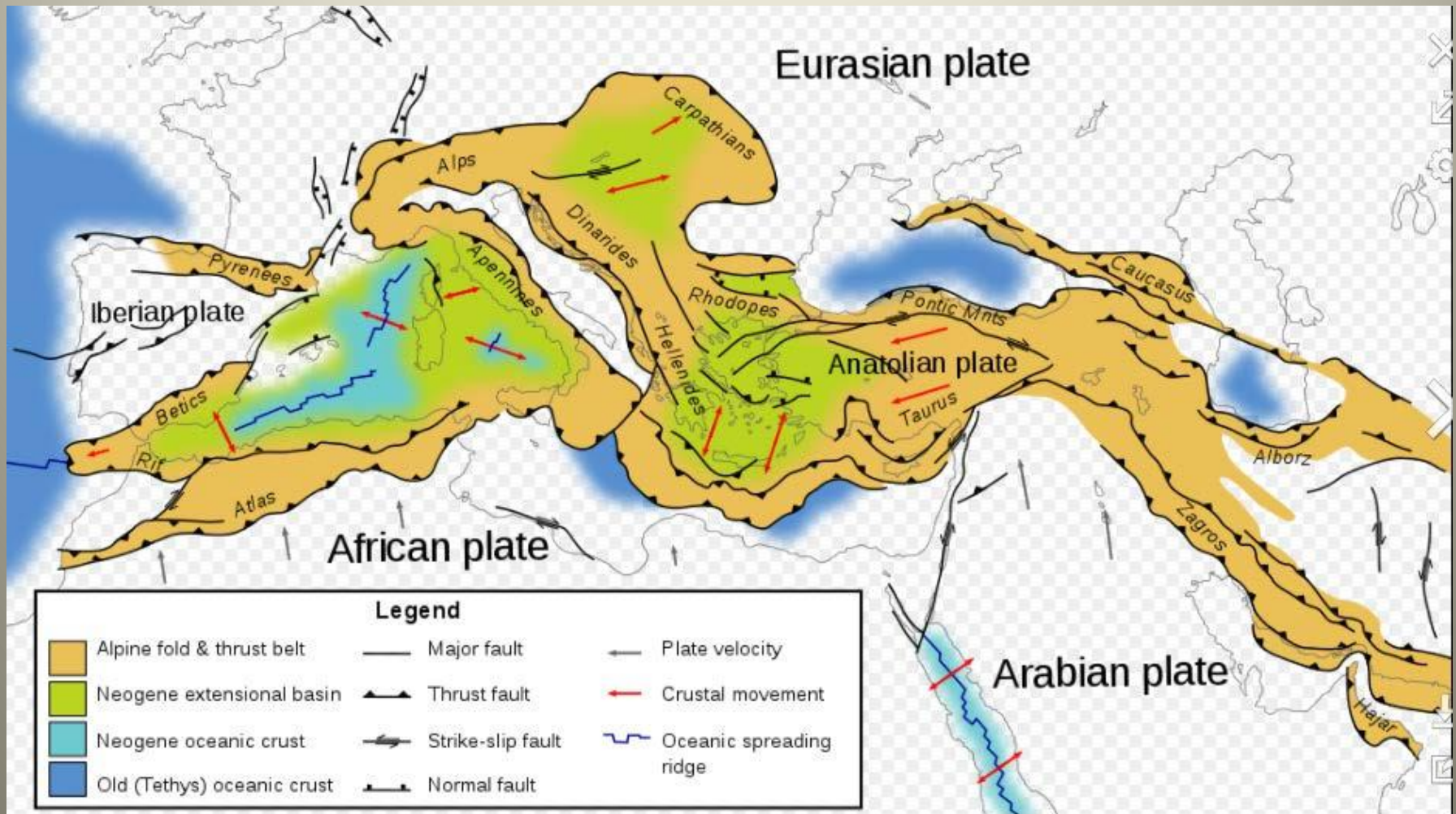
Etymology

- Latin - from the word “Alpes”derived from albus = white
- Celtic – all high mountains called Alps

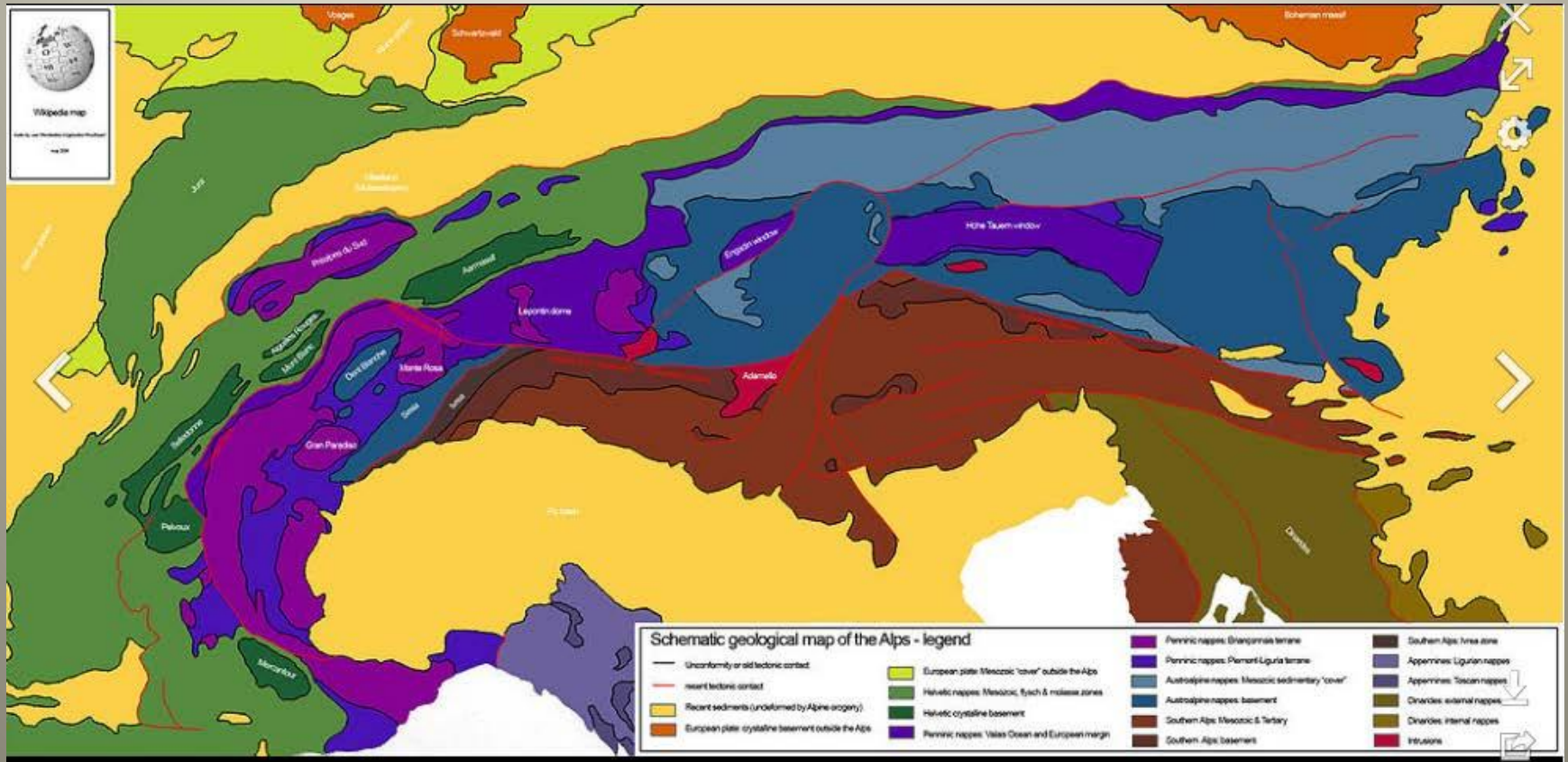
Origin of the Alps



How did the Alps get there?



Geology of the Alps



The Alps

- Small discontinuous mountain chain
- 750 miles long
- Up to 125 miles wide
- Higher Peaks: 9,000 to 15,000 feet
- Lower Peaks: 300 to 1,200 feet
- Source of many European major rivers
- Microclimates

on to the Cheese.....



“Alpine Cheese” Definition

(mountain cheese or *alpage* cheese)

- any cheese indigenous to the Alps, the European mountain range marking the borders of Switzerland, France, Austria, Italy and Germany.....

.....expanded definition...

- made in the mountains
- transhumance grazing
- typically sourced from raw cow's milk
- use centuries-old traditions and methods, making them unique from other types of cheese
- have natural or washed/smear-ripened rinds
- typically semi-firm to hard
- produced in large wheels

.....in the mountains

- spring to late fall
- Transhumance grazing
- Chalets (aka cheesemaking huts)
- Cowherds/Village Families
- Every valley and region has developed unique styles and distinct methods for making

....traditions and methods



.....traditions and methods

- Copper cauldrons
- Low salt
- No additives
- Large wheels
 - Gruyère and Comté ~40-inch diameter/65-85 lbs
 - Emmental ~44-inch diameter/up to 220 lbs



Characteristics of Some Alpine Cheeses

- Consistent quality
- *Typically* a semi-firm to hard texture with a dense paste
- Natural brushed/rubbed rind
- Large sized wheels (typically 20 lbs, up to 220 lbs)
- *Usually* made from raw cow's milk
- *Typically* melt well
- Mountain cheeses often have holes or “eyes”

The “Eyes”

- the by-product of CO₂-producing bacteria called *Propionibacterium shermanii*
 - bacteria release the gas as they digest the curd early in the cheesemaking process, and as the cheese hardens the gas bubbles become permanent holes
 - thrive in low-salt, low-acid environment
 - vary in size
 - crucial to the "Swiss" flavor of these cheeses

Cultures

Alpine style cheeses use three main types of cultures:

Thermophilic

- *Streptococcus thermophilus* – (acid production)
- *Lactobacillus bulgaricus* – (acid production)
- *Lactobacillus helveticus* - (acid production/flavor/texture)
- *Lactobacillus lactis*- (acid production/flavor)

Eye Formers

- *Propionibacteria shermanii* – (flavor/gas)

Mesophilic

- *Lactococcus lactis* subsp *lactis* – (acid production)

Examples of Alpine or Mountain Cheese

Swiss

- **Emmental**
- **Gruyère**
- ***Appenzeller***
- **Tête de Moine**
- ***Sbrinz***
- ***Sattleggli***

French

- **Reblochon**
- **Beaufort**
- **Abondance**
- **Tomme de Savoie**
- **Comté**

Examples of Alpine or Mountain Cheese

Italian

- Fontina Val D'Aosta
- Asiago
- Taleggio
- Montasio
- ***Alta Badia***

Austrian

- Vorarlberger Berg Kase
- Tiroler Graukase

Others

- Challerhocker
- Hoch Ybrig
- Prattigauer
- Centovalli Ticino

Which ones melt well and why?

- Gruyère and Emmental (and the lesser known third wheel, Appenzeller) – the traditional ones used in Fondue and used in sauces and grilled cheese
- Rennet (vs acid)
- Water-to-fat ratio

How to Make “Swiss” Cheese

- Cow, goat, or sheep milk
- *Propionibacterium shermanii*
- To create a cheese low in moisture:
 - Curds are cooked at high temperatures
 - Curds are cut very small
 - Pressed with weight
- Brine soaked and kept at ~54-degrees for 1 week
- Moved to 68-74-degree room for 2 weeks.....eyes form
- Back to ~54-dgrees.....growth of *Brevibacterium linens*

The Bulge = “eyes”



Gruyère

Gruyère (pronounced "groo-YAIR") - Named for the town of Gruyères in Fribourg, Switzerland

- Firm
- pale yellow color
- rich, creamy, slightly nutty taste
- a few small eyes (fewer and smaller than other varieties)
- Whole cow's milk with more fat than Emmental
- Aged 10-12 months
- Name not protected; therefore, many imitations on the market

Gruyère



Gruyère is the most well known alpine cheese and is claimed by both France and Switzerland.

Emmental

Emmental (pronounced "EM-en-tall") - named for the Emme River Valley in Switzerland (circa 1293)

- firm
- pale yellow color
- buttery, mildly sharp, slightly nutty, almost fruity flavor
- characteristic eyes
- Whole cow's milk or part-skim
- Switzerland's oldest and most prestigious cheese
- France and Germany are big producers

Appenzeller

Appenzeller – from the Appenzell region of northeast Switzerland

- straw-colored, golden rind
- tiny holes
- strong smell, nutty or fruity flavor, mild to tangy
- Mix of morning & evening milk
- Washed in a “secret” herbal brine (“Sulz” - cider, white wine, herbs, roots, leaves, seeds, bark and/or spices)
- Matures on frames of pinewood
- “Classic” – aged 3 to 4 months
- Each dairy has a different recipe for brine

Surchoix

Surchoix is an Appenzeller that is specially aged longer than the “classic”, 4 to 6 months

- becomes granular and increasingly sweet and nutty
- the age it is released is based upon request and availability.
- ages slowly in cool cellars
- forms distinct, small eyes

Appenzeller



Alta Badia

Alta Badia - named after a small town in the Italian Alps

- semi-firm
- deep shade of yellow ,light brown rind
- nutty (toasted) and earthy, complex
- can have initial sharp taste but melts in your mouth

American Swiss

- “Swiss-type” – very tasty facsimiles of Emmental and Gruyère
 - milder flavor, aged only about 4 months
- Made from pasteurized cow's milk by the large corporation doing bulk operations
- Excellent American cheesemakers who closely follow Swiss traditions.....(Alpine style)

Everton

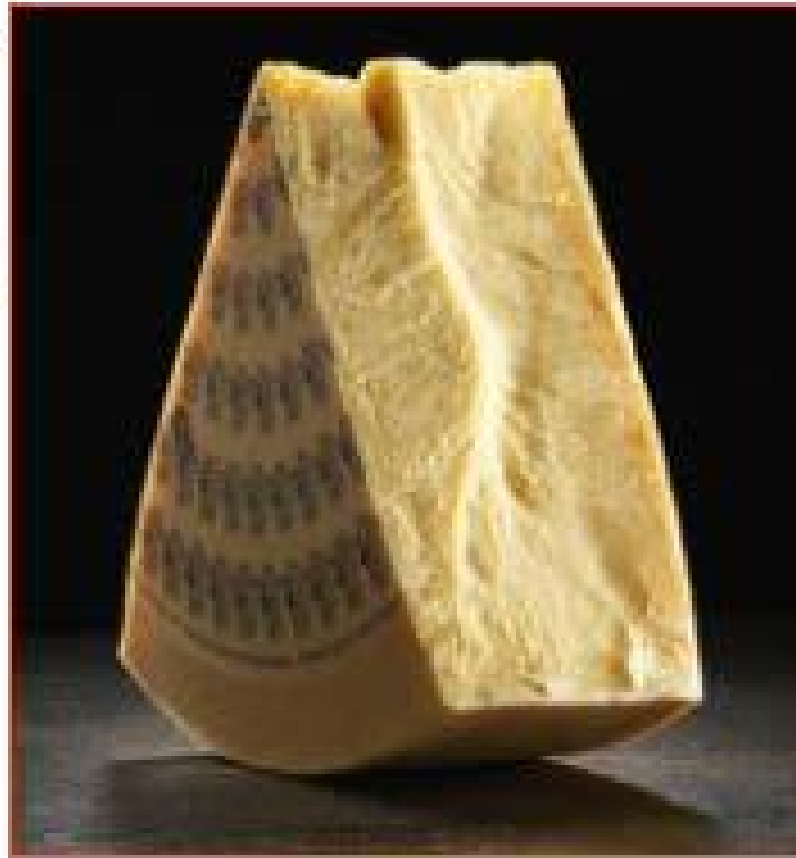
- Everton** – an Alpine-style cheese made in the Whitewater River Valley of southeast Indiana
- strong grassy notes
 - sharper than Gruyère
 - when melted, has a meaty depth to the flavor
 - Aged 18 months, with age develops salt crystals
 - Rotational grazing

Sbrinz

Sbrinz - Switzerland's oldest hard cheese

- extremely hard
 - full-flavored, nutty, spicy, strong and very tangy
 - The longer it matures (up to 8 years), the spicier it will taste
- 65 to 90 pound wheels
 - Brine bath for 18 days. The brine acts as an antiseptic, regulates the water content of the cheese, and contributes to the development of the rind and cheese's flavor
 - Aged at least 16 months, best eaten after 20 to 36 months

Sbrinz



Satteleggli

Satteleggli – made in the Alp Satteleggi: ~4,800 feet

- Hard
- mild, milky and creamy flavor when young
- sweet caramel notes with more age
- thick, oily rind and a very dense, compact paste with no holes
- Wheels range from 13 to 22 lbs.
- Wheels age 10-12 months and up to 3 years

Sattleggli - shaved





A top-down view of a round wooden cutting board with a light-colored wood grain. On the board are several pieces of Swiss cheese. In the upper left is a wedge of Appenzeller cheese, which is white with small holes. In the upper right is a wedge of Alta Badia cheese, which is pale yellow and smooth. In the lower left is a wedge of Everton cheese, which is pale yellow with small holes. In the lower right is a wedge of Sbrinz cheese, which is pale yellow with larger holes. To the right of the Sbrinz wedge are several small, irregular pieces of Satteleggli cheese, which are pale yellow and appear to be melted or broken apart. The background is a dark, textured surface.

Appenzeller
Alta Badia
Everton
Sbrinz
Satteleggli