

# Richmond Hill cafe & larder

## CHEESE NOTES

### Colston Bassett Stilton

Nottinghamshire, UK

If you haven't tried our Stilton before, forget any preconceptions you may have. Made by Colston Bassett & District Dairy, this cheese is exceptional. Formed in 1912, it is one of the smallest dairies in the seven-member Stilton Makers Association still making cheese. Milk is collected from five surrounding farms and the cheeses made here are quite different to most because of the small scale of the operation and therefore the patience, time and care each cheese is given compared to those made at some larger Stilton dairies.

Cheese maker Richard Rowlett creates each Stilton using a traditional and very laborious method to set the curds, which may take over 24 hours. After cutting, salting, milling and hooping the curds, the young Stiltons are stored in specially ventilated rooms on wooden shelves where they slowly develop a characteristic brown and white crusty coat. After several months the cheeses are pierced with needles to enable oxygen to stimulate the introduced blue moulds. Timing, and the selection and amount of mould, is critical. Slowly a distinct, dark blue mould forms at the centre of the cheese, moving outwards along the tracks left by the needles and working into all the little caves and crevices in the developing cheese. This stilton has intense syrupy blue flavours that are a little reminiscent of yeasty vegemite and the pate is moist and a whisker crumbly, but never bitter and twisted like many other 'phoney' Stiltons.