

ARTISAN CHEESE COMPANY

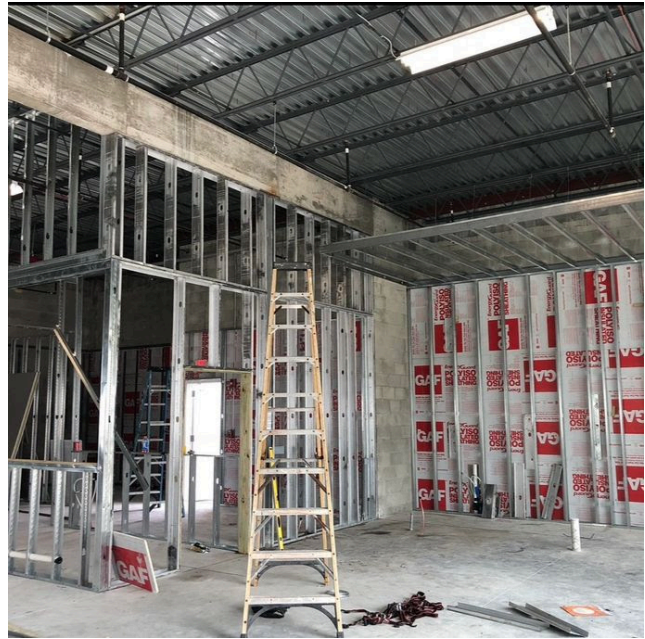


CLOSING OUR DOORS

This is the one I never wanted to have to write. Deep breath, here goes.

We are closing our doors as of May 30. If you asked me on Monday morning if I was going to send out this note, I would have said no, we were going to make it through, one more pivot. Because just a minute ago it seemed that we all were excited for the future, almost hopeful dare I say, as we planned a schedule of events over the summer that were going to be our north star. I put every egg in that idea basket. But then they scrambled. Someone jumped ship unexpectedly and the reality of how fragile it all actually is presented a cacophony of screaming red flags. It's not that person's fault. It just is. That's the straw that broke it all, but the truth is that it was a horrific year last year, and we never caught up. Never. It's not one thing, but every thing. The economy. Tariffs. Skyrocketing Inflation. Lack of staff. Lack

of customers. Hurricane aftermath. Traffic. Parking. Okay maybe not those last two, but it's Sarasota so it felt fitting.



I've done everything I could have done. I started the shop over 13 years ago, with a dream to create a first-class cheese shop. I've done that. I'm proud of what we have done. I'm grateful to the fine people who I've stood shoulder to shoulder next to over the years. Even the ones who abruptly exited, they taught me a lot. I know that we introduced cheese to the South, to Florida, and to Sarasota, that had never been down here before. Thank you to the cheesemakers who trusted us with your magic, your pure alchemy. I hope we helped in a way. I tried. I tried so hard to make it work. I love my cheese community so much. It really hurts. So much.

To my lovely, lovely customers. Thank you. I've held your babies, been to your weddings, attended celebrations of life. You've sat at my table. We have laughed. Cried. I'm so sorry to have let you down. I thought I would always be here. The small business that could. It turns out that I couldn't, not any more. We would never have made it this far without you.

Today was the day. Someone said to me that I would know. That one day I would wake up and it would be the day. Turns out Thursday, May 8, 2025 is that day. I went into the shop. Samantha and I chatted. She came to me and told me she was worried about me, and the shop. Something she said helped me understand that I couldn't make it right any more. I had a responsibility to her, to the rest of my little team, to face my reality and live in my truth. Oh Samantha, we do all so love you. I dashed off to the airport to pick up a delivery of the Gold Butter that I pre ordered from France, (the irony is not lost, but yes, it's back in stock) and sat in the parking lot talking to a trusted friend by phone. He walked me through what my next steps would be. Go tell my husband he said. Then go back to the shop and tell my staff. And then my landlord. And work out a plan from there. After the tears. If they ever stop.



We have until the end of this month

The gals and I have a loose plan as far as what to do next, but I am sure it will change. They love the shop as much as I do, and they're going to stand next to me while we sell off as much as we can. We have a lot of inventory right now. A lot of cheese! Because I just took delivery of a pallet from NY. (Remember that hope I mentioned above? I really, really wasn't expecting any of this.) We have three weeks to sell it off. We have a lot of pantry goods too. Please come in and stock up. In the meantime, if my staff finds work elsewhere, the ones remaining will work the cheese counter, until it's just me. So be gentle with me/us. Please come by and say goodbye. We will continue to make bread until we run out of flour. Sell cheese until we run out. The next few weeks will be about making enough \$ to pay our vendors, and staff. It's really important. I've never been here before and I don't have a road map of what to do next, other than write this. Many of you will receive a personal follow-on note, or phone call, to this mass email. I just wanted to get out ahead of any news you might hear. I wanted to tell it to you myself.



Events

We have a cheese class on May 30 which we are going to move up to May 23rd. We have Telling Stories on May 15, next Thursday, which we will go ahead with. The last one we will do.

The Space

If you are interested in taking over the lease on my space, please let me know and I will put you in touch with the landlord. I absolutely love my cheese shop. I designed it from the ground up. I know every inch of it. We would like to leave the equipment in place for anyone who takes over the space. The space would be perfect to continue as a cheese shop. Or as a bakery. Or a café. The Rosemary District is starting to really take off. I am so sad that I had to quit before the miracle. Maybe the last 13 years was my miracle?

Jobs

If you are hiring, please let me know so that I can let my team know. I would hire them again and again. And me, I will need a job as well, it turns out. I'll probably lie low for a while as I wrangle the operational aspects of closing a business, and all that you might imagine it means. Loss. Shame. Deep mourning. Gratitude.



I'll start to come up with some ideas on how we liquidate everything, so you will see a few more quick notes from me going forward. Again, I want to make sure I can pay my staff for as long as possible, as well as a few of our vendors. Maybe it would have been easier to have just locked the door and walked away. It's just not an option.

Please come and see us over the next couple of weeks.

My heart is broken. I am so sorry to have let you down.