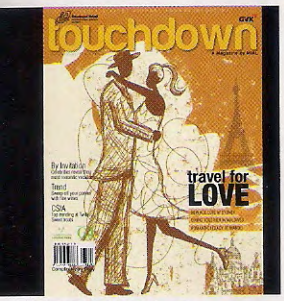

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Cheers to GOOD LOVING

Wooing your partner with fine wine and carefully paired cheese is a heady mix of detail and planning. Couple that with a perfect location and you have a sure shot at whatever you are aiming for. Putty in your hands, so to speak, according to **Nikhil Agarwal,** Director, *All Things Nice*.

I like women and women like me but that's definitely not enough when you reach the dating-and-beyond stage. After spending a large part of my life in the company of some fine women, I have learnt to understand the art of detail. The thing being, who has the goddamn time??

The mounting workload, clocking of incessant air miles and perpetual deadlines leave little room for romance. However, in my journey to find the best wines and cheese located in different pockets of the world I had an epiphany, one that allows you to mix business with pleasure.

Wine and Cheese is like Laurel & Hardy, Guns & Roses, Bill & Hillary, and other combinations that are frequently better than either independently. But be careful, you need to do the pairing properly to ensure maximum please and any cheese with any wine will not work. Regions or vineyards that produce fantastic wine usually have very high culinary standards and cheese is an integral part of the whole experience.

You don't have to know a Cabernet Sauvignon from a Chardonnay to appreciate these destinations - they offer as much peace and scenery as they do great wines. Here's a look at some destinations that are a winner every time.

Nasik, Maharashtra

We will start off with our very own Nasik. I would recommend making a trip to Sula Vineyards which has done an excellent job in creating a wonderful wine experience. Their tasting room with its breathtaking view is one of the most perfect places on the planet in evenings especially in winter season. You could head to York Winery which is further down the road for excellent wine and cheese with an even more dramatic view and then bring the evening to a close less than a kilometre further down the road at Sula's 21 room only hotel Beyond.

Akluj, Maharshtra

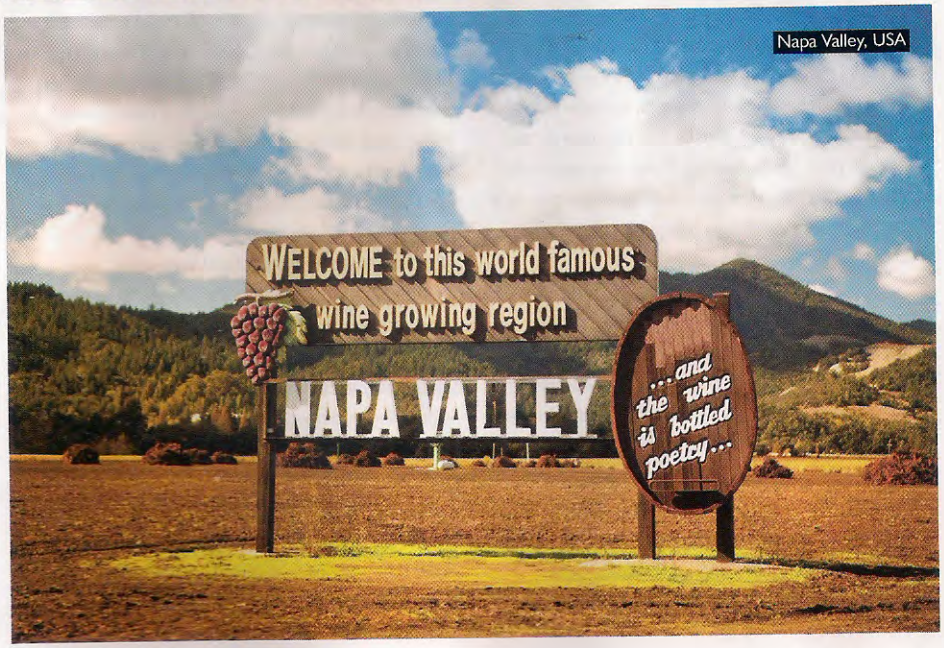
In Akluj, ahead of Pune is the state-of-the-art Fratelli Vineyards with impressive accommodation literally in the middle of nowhere. Get them to hook up a scrumptious sundowner and dinner for you and your partner in their lookout point over the vineyards which are a little away from winery/ rooms. You will have never seen anything like it.

Above wineries serve generous portions of assorted cheese as accompaniments ensuring that your taste buds ar e in heaven.

Napa Valley, USA

Away from India, if you are heading to the west coast in the United States, I suggest you make a trip

Bordeaux, France



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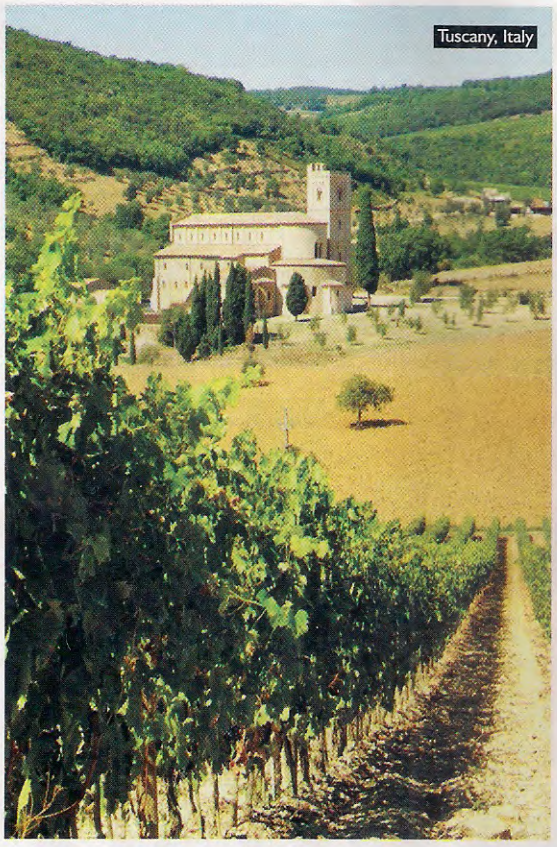
Tuscany, Italy

One cannot talk about wine and cheese and of course romance and not bring Italy into the picture. Head to Tuscany, rent a villa or park yourself in the middle of a vineyard

to Napa Valley and its surrounding areas which are littered with wineries producing excellent wine. The wineries have tasting rooms, a restaurant or two and rooms that are perfect for some alone time. They even have spas so you have an opportunity to go completely all out in pampering her.

Bordeaux, France

This is another of my favourites. The city is mesmerising with unbelievable architecture. If you are into wine, this is your mecca and every street corner has cafés and restaurants dishing out incredible cuisine, glorious French cheese with a wine list to match. You can also hire a car and drive into the adjoining vineyard regions, visit some grand Chateaux and carry a picnic basket to make a stop wherever your heart desires. Make sure you make a trip to Saint Emillion, a medieval town on the right of the river Gironde that produces top wines and is simply drop dead gorgeous.

Tuscany, Italy

One cannot talk about wine and cheese and of course romance and not bring Italy into the picture. Head to Tuscany, rent a villa or park yourself in the middle of a vineyard and take in the fantastic wines and gastronomy. Maybe after a glass or two you can tell her how much you love her in Italian? Try Castello di Quercetto, a legendary wine producing house with over a 100 years of history. I highly recommend renting one of their apartments and spending some quality time there. Open a bottle of two of their Super Tuscans and she will not be able to resist it. Additionally, you are only 25 kilometers away from the lovely city of Florence! Need I say more? Veneto is another region within Italy that produces fine wine, and with Venice, one of the worlds most romantic spots as its main city you cannot go wrong.

Barossa and Mclaren Vale, Australia

In the southern hemisphere if you are travelling to Australia, especially the Southeast of Australia make a trip to the wonderful wine growing regions of Barossa and Mclaren Vale. Try their full bodied reds from the Shiraz grape varietal paired with some local delicacies. I highly recommend visiting the Woodstock Estate in Mclaren Vale for some fabulous hospitality and a charming setting.

Marlborough, New Zealand

This conuntry is full of stunning beauty, wineries producing top class wines and world class cheese. Take a trip to Marlborough and visit the legendary Cloudy Bay winery. Also visit the charming Clos Henri winery for an old world kind of wine experience.

There is of course a lot more countries and regions to visit but this should keep you busy for a while and in your partner's good books. There are thousands of cheese and endless wines and I hope that you spend a lifetime time taking in their pleasures along with your partner.

Heady **Mix**

All Things Nice creates fantastic experiences for couples as well as Wine Baskets or *All Things Nice* hampers filled with carefully paired wines, cheeses, chocolates and more.

Nikhil Agarwal, Director, *All Things Nice* started to promote wine culture in India by way of educational training programs, consumer tasting events and introduction of quality international wine labels into the Indian market. All Things Nice has also been appointed as the Indian arm of the India Wine and Spirits Challenge held in January 2011. He is WSET - London, UK trained sommelier having an Advanced Degree in Wine and Spirits. His portfolio includes hands-on experience of over 10 years with industry giants. He spearheaded the first ever Sommelier India Wine Competition and was part of TASTE - India's largest wine exhibition. Currently based out of Mumbai, he has traveled extensively to wine producing regions in the world. (www.allthingnice.in)