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Food: My Most Memorable Bites Of 2009

Smoked Gouda and Porter Fondue @ Artisan in Paso Robles, CA: Our go-to appetizer at our go-to restaurant whenever we're in Paso Robles wine country. Owned and operated by the Kobayashi brothers - one's the manager, the other head chef - they were the

best thing to hit this small town in 2006 and quickly took over the food scene. Their menu is fresh and innovative without breaking the bank. I don't really "get" fondue (though I LOVE cheese), but theirs' is irresistible. The beer and cheese melting together into savory, rich, gooey goodness. Served with garlic toast, grilled andouille sausage and sauteed broccolini, you can choose how bad you really want to be. Not the first time we had this dish and it won't be the last either.