ARTICLE / RECIPE ROUNDUP

12 Mushrooms and How To Eat Them

OK, so you love mushrooms. But which ones do you use when? And what's the best recipe for that "chef's assortment" you impulsively picked up at the market? Here's what you need to know to make the most of the 12 most popular mushrooms.

Joanna LeRoy
Posted May 9, 2019

As with the wide world of cheese, one of the joys of eating mushrooms is experiencing the unique flavors of the different varieties. From meaty portabellos and shiitakes to mild oyster mushrooms and chanterelles, you'll just have to taste the rainbow of mushrooms to decide which one is your favorite. With their unique flavor profiles, mushrooms can be happily paired for different effect with steak, cream, pasta, wine, onions, in breakfast dishes with eggs, and (of course) cheese.

Here, we take a look at the defining characteristics and preparations for the most popular dozen mushrooms; read on and celebrate the glories of fungus!

Common Button/White Mushrooms

Button mushrooms have the honor of being both the most common *and* least expensive mushroom in the United States. These versatile, everyday mushrooms have a mild flavor that gets stronger when cooked and blends well with other ingredients. Sturdy enough to hold up in sauces, stir-fries, and stews, sliced and sautéed button mushrooms are also what come to mind as classic toppings for pizza and mushroom-smothered cheeseburgers.

GO TO RECIPE >

Chicken and Mushrooms in a Garlic White Wine Sauce

SKINNYTASTE

★★★★½

View Recipe

Sauteed Power Greens and Mushrooms

ERICA JULSON

★★★★☆

Steakhouse Mushrooms

FRUGAL HAUS FRAU

★★★★½

Creamy Mushrooms

LOAVES AND DISHES

★★★★½

Beef Pot Roast with Button Mushrooms

FAMILY FEEDBAG

Button Mushroom and Karafuu Spaghet…

KALUHI'S KITCHEN

Mushrooms Stuffed with Brie

THE PIONEER WOMAN

★★★★★

Cremini Mushrooms, aka "Baby Bellas"

Cremini, or brown mushrooms, are almost identical biologically to white mushrooms. You can use them interchangeably in recipes that call for white mushrooms to add a slightly earthier, more full-bodied mushroom flavor. Like white mushrooms, the hardy cremini stand up well to slow cooking soups and stews. Oh, and that name, "baby bella"? It's exactly what it sounds like: cremini mushrooms are indeed immature, or baby, portabella mushrooms. More on that after these recipes.

GO TO RECIPE >

Rosemary Chicken with Portabella Mushrooms

THE MIDNIGHT BAKER

★★★★⯪

View Recipe

Yum

Brown Butter Mushroom Pasta

DAMN DELICIOUS

★★★★⯪

Mushroom Stroganoff

VEGAN HUGGS

★★★★★

Chicken in Creamy Mushroom and Whit…

WINE SPECTATOR

★★★★★

Rich and Crispy Cracker-Stuffed Mus…

YUMMLY

★★★★☆

Best Ever Mushroom Soup

BITES OF WELLNESS

★★★★⯪

Mushroom Lentil Loaf

MAKING THYME FOR HE…

★★★☆☆

Portabella Mushrooms

Large, substantial portabella (also called portobello) mushroom caps are the meatiest of the mushrooms, good for grilling and used as a healthy substitute in traditional meat dishes. The portabella is simply a cremini mushroom that's been allowed to grow to maturity, producing a wide, flat cap about the size of your palm. On the underside, you'll see dark gills, which should be removed before cooking. *Freshness tip: look for portabellas whose gills still have pink undertones.*

The stems can be quite woody and are typically composted or used to flavor soup broth. The taste of a grilled portabella mushroom cap is best described as meaty and earthy — but the real meat-like quality comes from the chewy texture, which provides a sensation similar to biting into a medium-rare steak.

GO TO RECIPE ›

Portobello Mushroom Burger

SIMPLY RECIPES

★★★★★

View Recipe Yum

portobello
mushrooms

Mediterranean Portobello Slices

TASTE A HOLICS

Caprese Style Portobellos

PROUD ITALIAN COOK

★★★★★

Roasted Portobello Caps

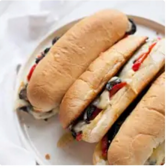
EATING WELL

★★★★★

Mexican Quinoa Stuffed Portabella M…

COOK NOURISH BLISS

★★★★★



Portabella Cheesesteaks

WHOLEFULLY

★★★★★

Roasted Portobello Mushroom Packets…

NOM NOM PALEO

★★★★☆

Morels

Hard-to-find morels are a springtime treat with a distinctive deep and earthy flavor and sponge-like appearance. If you see them fresh, buy them while you can! The short season for morels means they'll be gone in a flash. Fortunately, many recipes call for dried morels, which can easily be found online, bringing us the pleasure of morel's nutty flavor year round. Remember: morels should ALWAYS be cooked — they can make you sick if eaten raw.

GO TO RECIPE >

Morel Risotto

HUNTER, ANGLER, GARDENER, COOK

★★★★★

View Recipe

Warm Avocado Tartine with Morel Mus…

TASTING TABLE

Farm egg with Morels, Peas, Crème…

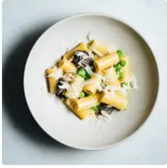
ZEN CAN COOK

Spring Garganelli with Morels and P…

TASTING TABLE

Sautéed Asparagus and Morels with…

BON APPÉTIT



Morel and Pea Rigatoni

THE TASTE SAN FRANCI…

★★★★★

Omelette with Morels & Ramps

D' ARTAGNAN

Oyster Mushrooms

Oyster mushrooms get their name from the shell-like shape of the caps, which grow on the side of trees in clustered stacks reminiscent of stadium seating. While they do have a distinctive shape, be careful when shopping not to confuse them with the long, thick-stemmed king oyster mushroom. Despite its name, the king oyster is a quite different species altogether.

Oyster mushrooms are known for their mild yet complex flavor and come in a range of colors from blue-gray to salmon to golden-brown, with slight variations in taste. Orange-hued oyster mushrooms, for example, will tend to have a light nutty flavor. All varieties taste best paired with other mild flavors — or even better, served alone, sautéed in butter. While oyster mushrooms are on the fragile side, you'll still want to remove the tougher stem before cooking and be sure to eat them while young and somewhat firm. Because of their delicate nature, they're often used in Asian soups, stir-fries, and other quick-cooking preparations.

GO TO RECIPE ›

Fried Oyster Mushroom

CHINA SICHUAN FOOD

View Recipe Yum

Oyster Mushrooms Rockafeller
FUNNYLOVE

Oyster Mushroom-green Bean Stir-fry…
ISLAND SMILE

Teriyaki King Oyster Mushroom
OMNIVORE'S COOKBOOK
★★★★★

Brown Butter Ramps and Oyster Mushr…
NERDS WITH KNIVES

Sourdough Stuffing with Oyster Mush…
WHOLE FOODS MARKET…

Mushroom Sauce
JULIA'S ALBUM
★★★★½

Shiitake Mushrooms

Shiitakes are meaty mushrooms similar to portabellas, if without their signature massive girth. These mushrooms have an intense and woodsy flavor, with smaller shiitakes offering a tender texture and larger ones providing more robust flavor. A chewier mushroom, shiitakes are a good choice to add both texture and umami to flavor-rich dishes.

If using fresh, the woody stem should be removed and saved to add to stocks. Like morels, shiitakes should never be eaten raw, so keep these off your salads unless you've sautéed them first. If fresh shiitakes aren't available, there are many recipes that call for dried shiitakes for an even more intense mushroom flavor. In fact, dried shiitakes have been noted as an excellent substitute for the much pricier wild porcini — with a deeper flavor to boot.

GO TO RECIPE ›

Potato Gnocchi with Mushrooms and Feta

COOKTORIA

★★★★½

View Recipe

Shiitake Bacon

HEALTHY. HAPPY. LIFE.

Shiitake Donburi

WELL AND FULL

★★★★★

Pickled Shiitakes

GOODFOOD

Crispy & Chewy Sesame Shiitake

IT DOESN'T TASTE LIKE C...

★★★★☆

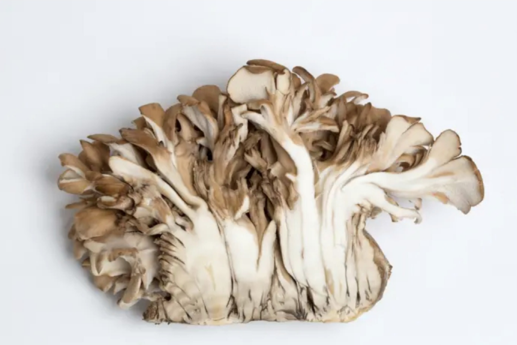
Light Shiitake Carbonara

HAPPY VEGGIE KITCHEN

Shallot and Shiitake Gravy

OH MY VEGGIES

Hen of the Woods, aka Maitake Mushrooms



One of the most delicate mushrooms, the Hen of the Woods mushroom sports a tattered head held together by a sturdier core at the base. Also known as maitake or sheepshead (but not to be confused with *chicken* of the woods), this shaggy clump of mushroom is most often prepared simply by breaking and tearing the mushroom into bits and pieces by hand. These mushrooms have an earthy, woodsy, and somewhat spicy flavor that helps makes dishes taste richer. Hen of the Woods are excellent when roasted or sautéed in butter, allowing the delicate edges to curl up and crisp.

GO TO RECIPE >

Maitake Mushrooms Roasted with Butter and Honey - My own

THE WELL SEASONED COOK

★★★★★

View Recipe

Maitake Wild Rice Salad

MUSHROOM COUNCIL

Fresh Gnocchi & Maitake Mushrooms w…

BLUE APRON

Pickled Maitake Mushrooms {aka Shee…

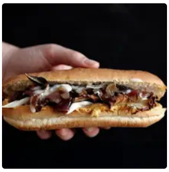
HEALTH STARTS IN THE …

Gjelina's Mushroom Toast

THE CHALKBOARD

Foil-Roasted Mushrooms with Hazelnu…

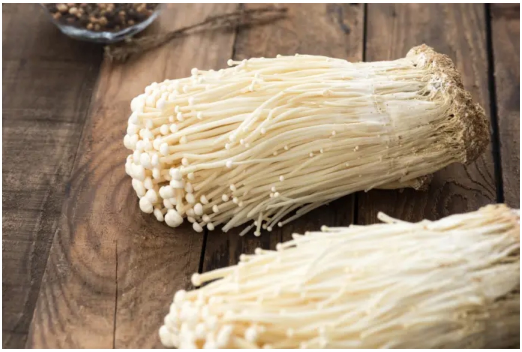
SAVEUR



Maitake Mushroom Sandwich With Fren…

ONE GREEN PLANET

Enoki Mushrooms



The enoki mushroom, sometimes labeled as enokitake, is a very mild, crunchy Asian favorite that is quickly gaining popularity in the United States. Pale, long, and skinny little mushrooms, these are often eaten quick fried in little bundles or scattered atop a hot dish as a garnish after cooking.

To prepare, cut off the connected stem end and separate the mushrooms with your fingers into smaller clumps. Enoki mushrooms are quite good for soup, where they can be put in raw to just barely cook themselves in the hot broth while adding a textural crunch to the dish. Other preparations involve a quick stir fry where the mushrooms jump in and out of the pan in a flash.

GO TO RECIPE >

Enoki Mushroom Stir Fry

A COZY KITCHEN

View Recipe Yum

Enoki Mushrooms with Garlic & Scall…

THE WOKS OF LIFE

★★★★★

Korean Tofu Soup

SEE AND SAVOUR

★★★★½

Enoki Mushrooms in Mirin and Soy Sa…

ONE GREEN PLANET

★★★★★

Enoki Mushroom Miso Soup

DISCOVE DELICIOUS

Beef Rolls With Enoki

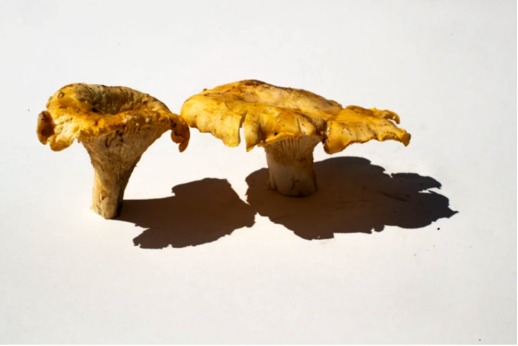
THE MISSING LOKNESS

Vegan Tonkotsu Ramen

GASTROPLANT

★★★★★

Chanterelles



Chanterelles are the belle of the ball at the wild mushroom dance. Delicate yellow or orange in color, chanterelles look like little golden horns with their inverted bell shape, and may even smell faintly of apricot. The have a gentle nutty flavor with hints of pepper and spice, making chanterelles a good substitute for morels or the even rarer hedgehog mushroom. Although firmer than the maitake or enoki mushrooms, chanterelles are still best prepared by tearing them instead of chopping. Like many of the other mushrooms here, they can have tough stems which can be removed and added to homemade stocks to make the most of this exceptional flavor.

GO TO RECIPE >

Fricassee of Chanterelles

BON APPÉTIT

View Recipe Yum'd

Chanterelle Tacos

TURNTABLE KITCHEN

CHANTERELLE RISOTTO

FLOURISHING FOODIE

★★★★★

Leek and Chanterelle Tart

MYRECIPES

Geschnetzeltes with Chanterelle Mus…

THE GIRL LOVES TO EAT

★★★★☆

Sautéed Chanterelle Mushrooms with…

SAVEUR

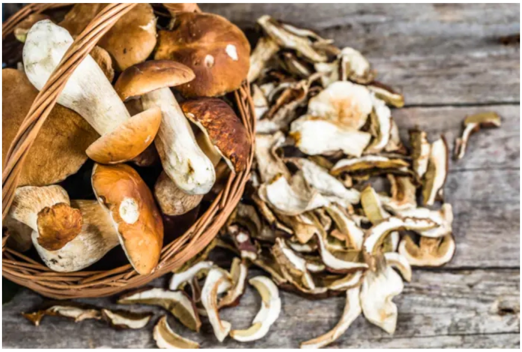
★★★★★

Herby Barley Salad with Butter-Bast…

BON APPÉTIT

★★★★★

Porcini Mushrooms



Porcini mushrooms are some of the most highly prized in the culinary world, known for their bold, nutty flavor. Porcinis impart a deep, pure mushroom flavor to any dish, and are classically used in many Italian recipes. Their hearty flavor and meaty bite work well with pasta and grains, thick soups, and in flavorful gravies.

Porcinis are bulbous, both in cap and stem, with a classic mushroom-brown hue. They may be easier to find dried; if they're cost-prohibitive to buy, you can substitute dried shiitakes easily in the recipes below.

GO TO RECIPE >

Prosciutto And Porcini Lasagne

DELICIOUS.

View Recipe

Porcini Popovers

EPICURIOUS

Artichoke Porcini Tartlets

CAMILLE STYLES

Porcini Mushroom Soup

101 COOKBOOKS

★★★★★

Porcini and Rosemary Crusted Lamb L…

TASTEFOOD

★★★★★

The Country Cooking of Italy's Pota…

SERIOUS EATS

Polish Christmas Eve Porcini Dumpli…

EVERYDAY HEALTHY REC…

Truffles and Truffle Oil

Only the truffle, one of the most expensive gourmet foods in the world, can give the porcini a run for its money (or yours). This hard, bulbous mushroom grows underground; historically dogs and pigs have been used to help truffle hunters sniff them out in the wild. The two main varieties are the white or "Alba" truffle from the Piedmont region of Italy and the black "Perigord" truffle grown in France, Italy, and Spain.

Despite being so hard that they are typically served shaved, truffles are among the most perishable of mushrooms, with peak flavor lasting only 3-4 days. Truffles have a very strong, almost musky flavor associated with the finest of dining; however, you can more affordably boost your day-to-day cooking by using a small amount of truffle oil as with many of the elegant recipes that follow.

GO TO RECIPE >

Truffle Gnocchi Mac and Cheese

CHEZ US

View Recipe Yum

Smashburger Truffle Mushroom Swiss

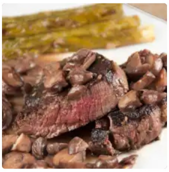
COPYKAT RECIPES

Truffled Mushroom Pizza

WILLIAMS SONOMA - TA...

Mushroom Risotto with Truffle Mousse

PLATINGS AND PAIRINGS



Filet Mignon with Truffled Mushroom...

WISHES AND DISHES

Truffle flavoured Paneer

LOVE IS IN MY TUMMY

Roast Magret Duck Breasts with Shav...

EPICURIOUS

Straw Mushrooms

Straw mushrooms, sometimes called paddy straw mushrooms, are easily recognizable for their small, pointy shape and dark caps. Most often purchased canned here in the States, these bite-size 'shrooms are frequently seen in stir fry dishes and classic Thai soups such as Tom Yum and Tom Kha Gai. If you do use canned straw mushrooms, remember that they've already been partially cooked during canning, so they're well suited for quick cooking weeknight recipes.

GO TO RECIPE >

Moo Goo Gai Pan - Mushroom Chicken Stir Fry

THE WOKS OF LIFE

View Recipe

Spinach and Mushroom Stir Fry

ANG SARAP

Tom Yum Soup

CHEF JET TILA

★★★★★

Thai Chicken Coconut Soup (Tom Kah…

ANDREA MEYERS

Braised Tofu

ANG SARAP

★★★★½

Curry and Comfort

Thai Meatball and Vegetable Stir Fry

KITCHEN SIMMER

Buddha's Delight (Jai)

CHOWHOUND.COM

Can't Decide? Mix 'Em Up!

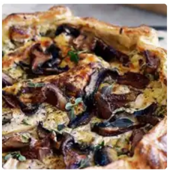
Can't choose just one? Me neither. Here are just a few ideas for when one kind of mushroom just isn't enough!

GO TO RECIPE >

Beer-battered Mushrooms With Curry Salt

GOODFOOD

View Recipe



Mushroom And Ricotta Galette

GOURMET TRAVELLER

★★★★☆

Wild Mushroom and Gruyère Tart wit…

EPICURIOUS

Creamy Chicken & Mushrooms

EATING WELL

*Want to know more about mushrooms? Read **Mushrooms 101***

Mushrooms Guide