

Mushrooms
Herbs

Seasonal Eating

March

Four Popular Mushrooms

THIS MONTH I USED THE FEATURED PRODUCE ON THESE DAYS:

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White Button

White buttons are the most popular mushrooms representing about 90% of mushrooms consumed in the United States. They have a fairly mild taste that intensifies when cooked and can be enjoyed either cooked or raw. Try them sliced and sautéed or roasted on pizza, in pasta, quesadillas or on cheeseburgers.

Shiitake

Shiitake mushrooms are tan to dark brown and have broad, umbrella-shaped caps, wide-open veils and tan gills. They have curved stems that should be removed prior to eating and taste best when cooked. Shiitake add a rich, woody flavor and meaty texture to stir fry, pastas, soups, entrees and sides.



Crimini

Crimini, also known as baby portabellas, have a similar appearance to whites, but have a light tan to rich brown cap and a firmer texture. They also have a deeper, denser, earthier flavor than whites. Crimini mushrooms are best enjoyed when sautéed, roasted, broiled or microwaved. Their hearty, full-bodied taste makes them an excellent addition to beef, wild game and vegetable dishes.

Portabella

A larger relative of crimini, Portabella mushrooms have tan or brown caps and can measure up to six inches in diameter. They have a deep meaty flavor and substantial texture. Portabellas can be grilled, broiled or toasted and served as appetizers, entrees or side dishes, and their hearty taste makes them a flavorful vegetarian alternative. Try them grilled and served as “burgers” on toasted buns.



Spinach, Mushroom and Brown Rice Casserole

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 cups mushrooms, sliced
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon whole wheat flour
- 2 cups low-fat cottage cheese

- 1 (10-ounce) box frozen chopped spinach, thawed and drained
- 3 cups cooked brown rice
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1 1/2 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves
- 2 tablespoons grated parmesan cheese
- 2 tablespoons sunflower seeds

Heat oil in Dutch oven and sauté onion, mushrooms and garlic until tender. In a small bowl, mix egg, flour and cottage cheese. Add to sautéed vegetables along with spinach. Stir in rice, pepper, thyme and 1 tablespoon of parmesan cheese. Turn into a greased 9"x13" baking dish and top with remaining parmesan cheese and sunflower seeds. Bake at 375 degrees for at least 30 minutes.

Cheddar Chive Garlic Muffins

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1/4 cup butter
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh chives
- 1 1/2 teaspoons minced fresh garlic
- 2 cups baking mix (Pioneer is good)
- 1 cup shredded extra sharp Cheddar cheese
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 cup buttermilk

Grease a 12 cup muffin pan with olive oil. In a small saucepan, melt butter over medium heat. Add chives and garlic and cook for 2 minutes; remove from heat and set aside. In a medium bowl, combine baking mix, cheese, garlic powder, and pepper. In a separate bowl, combine buttermilk and butter mixture. Add buttermilk mixture to baking mix mixture, stirring until dry ingredients are moistened. Let batter stand for 5 minutes. Evenly spoon batter into prepared muffin pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes, until golden brown. Cool in pan for 5 minutes before removing.

Feature: Growing Herbs

Herbs are easy, carefree plants to grow. So this year, think about a space out your back door where you can plant a few herbs. Most herbs need at least a half day (6 hours) of sunlight for optimal growth and flavor. They need well-drained ordinary garden soil and have a stronger flavor and fragrance if not fertilized. You can enrich the soil with organic matter. Allow at least 1-2 feet between plants. Avoid insecticides as you will be eating some of the leaves. If you don't have space outside, plant containers to place in a sunny window. The more you harvest the more they grow so enjoy using them.

Herb Garden Top Five

Basil

Leaves have a sharp spicy flavor. Use fresh for best flavor. Preserve by freezing. Basil is especially good with tomatoes and Italian or Thai dishes. Don't store basil below 45 degrees F. or it will blacken. It also bruises easily so use a sharp knife to cut the leaves. Stir in at the end of the cooking time for best results.

Rosemary

Rosemary is best cooked and can be added at the beginning or end of cooking. It goes well with beef, pork, chicken and in breads. It also dries well. You can use the stiff branches as skewers for kebabs.

Parsley

For flavor, the flat Italian parsley is best while curly parsley is great for garnishing. Use it fresh when possible, but it can be frozen or dried. Parsley works well with just about any dish. It is a great all-purpose herb. Sprinkle in salads, over chicken and in any Italian dish.

Thyme

The leaves go well with a variety of dishes including chicken, fish, cheese, eggs and vegetables. They are usually added at the beginning of the cooking time.

Chives

Use for a mild onion flavor with a variety of dishes or as a garnish. Add at the very end of cooking or use raw.

Apricot Dijon Glazed Chicken with Rosemary

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 6 small chicken breasts, pounded to 1/4" thick
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh rosemary
- 2 carrots, diced
- 6 tablespoons apricot preserves
- 4 tablespoons Dijon style mustard
- Salt and pepper to taste

In a large frying pan, heat oil. Add chicken breasts and sauté until the chicken is cooked through turning once. Remove chicken and add garlic, rosemary and carrots. Sauté until carrots are tender. Add apricot preserves and mustard. Season with salt and pepper and return chicken to pan turning to coat with glaze a few times. Serve over or with rice.

Did You Know?

- Use 3 times as much fresh herb as dried
E.g. 1 teaspoon dried = 3 teaspoons fresh