

Pasta with Mushroom Sauce

As the colder season continues to roll in, this comforting meal will be most welcome. Whole grain spiral pasta with mushroom sauce is on the menu. You'll drop some sliced Chick'n strips into the sauce before bathing the pasta with these rich flavors. A side salad and sliced apple complete the meal.

Mushroom sauces present the opportunity to try some new varieties of mushrooms, or a mix of mushrooms. Try Chanterelles, Morel, Porcini or Shiitake mushrooms.

Preparation time: 45 minutes - Servings: 2

Organize Your Ingredients!

Notes on Organizing

Organize ingredients on small plates or in bowls so they are easy to add to the recipe. Today you'll prep 2 cloves garlic: 1 chopped clove in the mushroom sauce and 1 whole clove in the salad dressing. Prep 2/3 C. chopped onion: 1/2 C. for the mushroom sauce and 2 T. for the dressing.

Plant-based Chick'n Strips

1 tsp. olive oil
18 Chick'n strips (or other plant-based choice)
1/4 C. white wine

Salad and Dressing

Fixings for a green salad

Honey Mustard Dressing:

2 T. extra-virgin olive oil
2 tsp. prepared mustard
1 tsp. honey
1 clove garlic (skin removed)
2 T. chopped onion
2 T. rice wine or white vinegar
1/4 C. low-sodium vegetable broth
pinch of salt

*But First!
Put Pasta Water
on to Boil*

Mushroom Sauce/Pasta

Mushroom Sauce:

1 tsp. good olive oil
1/2 tsp. butter
3 C. Cremini or other variety mushrooms (sliced)
1/2 C. yellow onions (chopped)
1 clove garlic (smashed and chopped)

1-1/2 C. low-sodium vegetable broth
1/2 C. white wine

1 bay leaf
1 T. balsamic vinegar
1/4 tsp. dry rosemary
1/4 tsp. dry thyme

- or -
1 tsp. fresh thyme leaves
pinch of salt

1 T. cornstarch
mixed with
1/3 C. water

1/2 C. plain, nonfat yogurt (stirred smooth)

Pasta and Final Assembly:

2 C. dry, whole grain spiral pasta

1 T. shredded Parmesan cheese
1 crisp apple (cored and sliced)
Gorgonzola or Blue Cheese crumbles

Let's Prepare, Cook, and Plate This!

Basic Assembly Instructions

Start by browning the Chick'n strips. They'll hold nicely as you make the rest of the dinner. The mushroom sauce will also hold well.

You'll add the yogurt to the mushroom sauce just before serving.

Plant-based Chicken Strips

Measure olive oil into large, deep sauté pan and brown plant-based strips. Measure and add 1/4 C. wine to browned pieces. Toss until wine disappears. Remove from pan. When cool, slice lengthwise

Mushroom Sauce:

Mushroom Sauce/Pasta

1. Brown mushrooms in olive oil and butter in same sauté pan used for Chick'n strips. Add onion and garlic and toss until onions begin to brown.
2. Add broth, wine, bay leaf and vinegar. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low and cook 5 minutes.
3. Grind dry rosemary and thyme leaves to a powder in a spice grinder. Add spices and salt.
4. Return sauce to a boil. Thicken with cornstarch mixture and cook over low heat another 5 minutes. Turn off heat and let stand.
5. Wait to add yogurt until final assembly.

Pasta:

Place whole grain spiral pasta in boiling water and cook 8-9 minutes or until tender.

Reserve 1/2 C. starchy pasta cooking water and add to the mushroom sauce. Drain and rinse pasta.

Salad and Dressing

Assemble green salads on individual salad plates.

Honey Mustard Dressing:

Blend all ingredients in a food processor until creamy smooth.

Final Assembly

Just before serving, return mushroom sauce to a boil and fold in Chick'n strips, cooked pasta and yogurt. Do not return to a boil after folding in yogurt.

Plate the Meal

Serve 2 C. Pasta and Mushroom Sauce per diner in shallow pasta bowls

Garnish pasta with Parmesan.

Serve salad and sliced apple with blue cheese crumbles on the side. Woohoo!!

What I've Learned from this Recipe

All of the mushrooms mentioned at the start of this recipe will be delicious yet slightly different in flavor once they're browned. Browning the mushrooms at the beginning of the cooking process helps them release the caramelized flavor that brings out the umami.

Let us know what you think, and ask any questions you may have! chezdon@plate6.com