



Tested Foods

Mushrooms, Fresh, Dried and Canned, Domestic and Imported

The Italian and Chinese Dried Products Are Always in Season. "Come Back" Easily and Taste Amazingly Fresh

By Anne L. Pierce, Director, and Bertha N. Baldwin, Domestic Scientist, Tribune Institute

FRESH mushrooms, although exorbitant at some times of the year, do come down within the reach of the average pocket-book on where you buy. This they are cheaper than last— explanation being, according to our interested grocer, that the brewers are turning their dark and pathetically empty cellars into mushroom beds. One point in favor of prohibition!

As an entrée they have a most worthy place, and served on toast, in patty shells or croquettes will "make" a luncheon or dinner. Prepared in the chafing dish or on the electric grill, their odors add the joys of savory anticipation. More economically they give flavor to many meats and vegetables, cooked as a part of the dish or as a sauce to be served with it.

From a practical standpoint their nutritive value is not so important in this country, since we use them only occasionally and in small quantities, chiefly for their delicate, peculiar flavor. But they contain more protein than any vegetable (8 per cent), and soaked in butter or a cream sauce are real food.

Handle With Reverence

The white, earthy-smelling balls of goodness demand reverent handling and are not to be rudely scrubbed and peeled. The artist, cook will wipe the cap with a damp cloth or brush it gently with a soft brush, and so save labor, time and flavor. If toughness makes the outside skins unedible strip them off, beginning at the under edge, and remember that the peelings cooked with the stems will make good stock for soups.

A hint from our foreign neighbors is worth while—the stems and peelings which are not to be used immediately can be dried in the warming oven and stored in bottles or bags ready for flavoring at a later date.

Mushroom Sympathy!

Let only one who loves mushrooms dare to cook them—all others will fail to achieve the tenderness and savoriness that is possible. To our way of thinking, the best methods of cooking them are the simplest. Such distinctive foods offer an opportunity to simplify cooking. Only a Sybarite so surfeited with mushrooms that the appetite lags (and we cannot imagine such a condition) needs the elaborate timbales, au gratin or croquettes. The standard ways of broiling, stewing, sautéing and baking are not varied for the preparation of mushrooms.

Generally, it is considered that the peculiar flavor is brought out by sautéing in butter first, no mat-

The Tribune Institute

Tested Tools



Spring Styles in "Fairy Umbrellas" for the Table

For Flavor and Variety in Your Menus, Serve Mushrooms With Vegetables, Cereals and Meats as a Sauce or Main Dish



Who's Who In Foodville

TO GET into any "Who's Who" you must have individuality, high standing, and be performing some distinguished service. The foods in the Institute's "Who's Who" are no exception. Listing and discussion of an approved food means not only that the chemist says it is legal and wholesome, but the domestic scientist has cooked with it and gives you the assurance of its quality and flavor and the "kitchen release" on the best ways to make use of it.

Desk work is at a discount in the Institute. The kitchen and laboratory determine the facts and trained experts interpret them for you, the samples being bought on the open market, as far as possible, with an eye to the housekeeper's interests.

The staff is At Your Service for consultation purposes, by mail, telephone or in person.

A. L. P.

The Foods Tested

- Mushrooms, Canned (Francois Brand). Importers—La Manna Azerna & Farnum, 397 Washington St., N. Y. C.
- Mushrooms, Chinese Dried. Retailers: Kwong Sun Chong Co., 30 Mott St.; Ying, Chong & Co., 34 Mott St., N. Y. C.
- Mushrooms, Italian Dried. Retailers: Blecker Noodle Mfg. Co., 221 Blecker St., N. Y. C.; Caruso Macaroni Co., 197 Blecker St., N. Y. C.

The Plan of Work

THESE products have been subjected to a chemical test and shown to be of excellent quality and free from adulteration. Cooking tests in the Institute Laboratory have been made to determine their edibility and adaptation to special uses.

The results obtained are reported in part on this page, and any further information desired may be obtained by application to the Institute.

The Canned and Dried Brands Analyzed and Discussed

BUTTON mushrooms, canned, were tested this week in the Institute laboratories. The brand was French, showing 4.5 per cent protein and no preservatives, with the buttons clean and of attractive, uniform size. The canned product never has the flavor of the fresh or dried article.

However, there is a real place for the canned variety in cookery. Obviously, they are not suitable for entrées, in which they must stand alone on their own merits for flavor and appearance. But they make delicious sauces and add interest to such mixtures as chicken à la king, creamed meats or fish and omelets and other egg dishes.

Their great advantage, of course, is that they will stand patiently waiting on the cupboard shelves until that emergency moment comes when we look to them to save the day—they are always in season.

These, too, can be sautéed in butter before being added to a sauce, thereby improving the flavor, according to the tastes of many. The liquid they are packed in need not be rejected, but will help out in the sauce.

That Foreign Flavor Explained

THE dried mushrooms seemed elusive, but when cornered proved very interesting. Dried mushrooms have nationalities, and what's more, patriotism. If you doubt it ask the macaroni manufacturer in Blecker Street or the Chinese merchant in the Oriental bazaar in Mott Street. Our first excursion in search of this food took us to Chinatown. After several vain attempts we found the Chinese version of a grocery store, where all sorts of queer and startling foods were exhibited. Some day we mean to go back and cautiously purchase some of the other unknown wonders.

The Chinese dried mushroom is a different variety from the one we know. It has white gills and a quite different flavor and texture. It is dried whole with the stems, and when soaked back to its original condition gives a fair sized mushroom, which can be served whole as an entrée, as well as being cut up into a sauce or cooked dish.

In the Institute we tried two ways of reclaiming the dried product. After washing in several waters until the water was clear, we covered them with twice as much water as we had mushrooms and let them stand over night. In the morning we drained them, reserving the water they had soaked in, removed the stems and then cooked them in the same water—the longer the bet-

ter, from forty-five minutes to several hours. The mushrooms doubled in bulk on soaking.

A second method was to wash them carefully, break off the stems and cover with an equal amount of hot water, letting them stand twenty minutes while making the white sauce. The water was drained off and the mushrooms were cut up and added to the sauce, which simmered half an hour. This shorter soaking did not increase the volume of the mushroom as much as the former method. On the whole, the longer cooking and soaking are better, but the second is possible for emergencies.

The mushrooms really need a longer cooking than the time required for a sauce, so they should be simmered a half hour at least before being added to it. For dishes demanding long, slow cooking, as stews, casseroles of meat and soups, they are excellent. When thoroughly soaked and cooked it is possible to use them whole as fresh ones—but the flavor will be somewhat different and the texture not as delicate. We thought they could not be broiled or sautéed whole, but found they could very nicely.

The Chinese mushrooms contained only 3 per cent water (as contrasted with 83 per cent for the fresh and 91 per cent for the canned). The protein (24 per cent) and fat (2 per cent) are in normal ratio, but the minerals (3 per cent) are lower, due perhaps to the difference in variety and cultivation.

Italian Dried Mushrooms

Friends with foreign tastes told us stories of wonderful concoctions made with their favorite brands of dried mushrooms. The Italian porter who takes care of the Institute kitchen watched our experiments with keen interest and struggled valiantly with his English to get over to us the superiority of his native mushroom. A Bohemian neighbor gave new lights on this absorbing problem. So we made a second pilgrimage—down to those streets south and west of Washington Square, under the shadow of the Church of Our Lady of Pompeii (Chiesa della Madonna dei Pompei).

In two shops with grand opera names we learned that no place but Italy could produce the delicate flavored dried mushroom of our quest. In huge tin boxes of fifty-five pounds each they are shipped to this country, with leaves of sage giving a curious spicy odor to the dried product. The Italian variety is sliced before drying and is so prepared that

there is no waste. It was washed until the water was clear, then an equal quantity of hot water turned over it. While it was soaking (about twenty minutes) the sauce was made, then the drained mushrooms were added and cooked for half an hour. They were tender and earthy flavored, like the fresh ones—a real find and worthy of our good caretaker's patriotic pride.

Another way is to soak them for fifteen or twenty minutes, sauté in butter for five minutes, then add just enough water, milk or sauce to half cover, and cook slowly until the liquid is absorbed (fifteen minutes). This gives a result like sautéing, for with these dried products some cooking in liquid is necessary, as well as the soaking and cooking in fat.

In the Institute the decision was in favor of the Italian sliced, dried mushroom, as a substitute when the fresh are not to be obtained. For sauces, sautéing, creamed dishes and seasoning of stews and casserole dishes they are excellent—only for broiling or baking are the Chinese superior because of their form.

The Italian dried variety shows on analysis a larger protein content, even with a larger moisture percentage—protein 34.5 per cent, fat 2.6 per cent, total minerals 5 per cent and moisture 13 per cent. This analysis approximates more nearly the water-free basis analysis of the ordinary mushroom.

A Valuable By-Product

Which ever variety is used, one crime is inexcusable—do not throw away the water the mushrooms are either soaked or cooked in. The mushrooms flavor this liquid strongly and it makes delicious sauces. It should really be used with the mushrooms themselves, but if for any reason it is not all used, make a velvety cream soup from it as follows: If as much water as mushrooms has been used, cook the strained liquid down half. Add one-half as much milk as there is mushroom stock (sometimes equal quantities, depending on the flavor). For each cup of stock and milk rub together one tablespoonful each of butter and flour, and add to the hot mixture, stirring constantly until creamy. Simmer over a low fire with added seasonings (we suggest only salt and a bit of paprika or possibly onion and celery salts) for ten to fifteen minutes, when the raw taste of the liquid should be entirely gone. Serve with a spoonful of whipped cream floating on top, and a sprig of parsley or a dash of paprika for contrasting color. Economists, take note: We made ours with evaporated milk and nobody was the wiser!

Both of these dried products have one point in common with the canned—they policy of patiently waiting their hour of usefulness. With these on the shelves a sudden inspiration for cooking a new dish can be carried out while the idea is fresh. The price may sound high (from \$1.25 to \$2 a pound), but consider that one ounce measures a cup when dried

and one to one and a half cups when soaked. One-fourth cup dried is enough to flavor a meat or macaroni

dish. Even the stems and trimmings if cooked up in water make a basis for soup and sauces.

Laboratory Cooking of the Three Types of Mushrooms

FOR many recipes the three kinds of mushrooms are interchangeable; the fresh can be used for any and all purposes; the canned are better for sauces accompanying meats, eggs and similar dishes; the dried are good for all sauces and can be used in recipes planned for entrées.

In the Institute we carefully measured and weighed the three varieties, with the following figures, which will enable the cook to substitute one kind for another with the best results: One pound fresh equals about five or six cups prepared (caps broken into pieces, but not peeled, stems cleaned and sliced) or three to four cups cooked.

One pound Italian dried equals about sixteen cups soaked and cut ready for cooking and about the same quantity cooked. One pound Chinese dried equals about sixteen to twenty-four cupfuls prepared for cooking, depending on the length of time they are soaked, or eighteen to twenty-four cups cooked. Eight

ounces canned equals one and one-half cups and the same quantity cooked. See what a bargain the dried mushrooms are, and their flavor is really excellent, especially when sautéed with tomatoes and other vegetables, Italian style, as in the first recipe following.

In comparing the costs we found one cup cooked fresh, at 80 cents a pound, costs about 25 cents; one cup of cooked Italian dried at \$1.50 a pound costs about 10 cents; one cup of cooked Chinese dried at \$2 a pound costs about 8 to 12 cents; one cup of cooked canned at 55 cents for eight ounces cost about 36 cents.

To get one cup of cooked mushrooms use one-fourth pound fresh, one ounce dried and two-thirds of a can of the canned product (eight ounce can).

Mushrooms and Pimentos

One pound fresh mushrooms (or four ounces dried). Three-quarters cup pimento. Four tablespoonfuls butter or olive oil.

Mushroom Newburg

One pound fresh mushrooms (four ounces dried). One and a half cupfuls milk or cream. Three egg yolks. One-half teaspoonful salt. One-eighth teaspoonful paprika. Two tablespoonfuls sherry-jell.

Prepare the mushrooms as previously described, break the caps and cut the stems in pieces; sauté in butter for two minutes and add one and a quarter cupfuls of the milk; season with salt and paprika and let simmer for five minutes longer, till tender. Remove the pan from the fire and add the egg yolks which have been beaten with one-quarter cup of cold milk. Return to the fire and cook slowly, stirring constantly until it is thick and creamy. Add the sherry-jell, dissolving carefully in a portion of the sauce. Serve immediately on toast or in patty shells. Plan the Newburg for a chafing dish or electric grill supper.

Rice and Mushrooms, Italian

One cupful rice. Two cupfuls soaked dried mushrooms (two ounces).

per is to finish it in the oven in a glass baking dish or individual dishes, garnished with parsley. This is a most savory dish.

Three teaspoonfuls chopped onion. One-half teaspoonful salt. One-fourth teaspoonful paprika. One and a half tablespoonfuls chopped parsley.

Stem the mushrooms and wipe the caps carefully and break into pieces; clean the stems and cut up (or soak dried mushrooms as previously described); sauté the mushrooms in the butter, adding, after a couple of minutes, the other ingredients, and cook for five minutes or until tender. Serve immediately with toast fingers or pastry triangles if this is planned for an entrée. Or use as an accompaniment for broiled beefsteak.

Mushrooms a la Franco

We found in the Institute that the dried mushrooms were very satisfactory cooked in this fashion. It goes without saying that fresh would be still better (three-quarters of a pound). Three cupfuls dried mushrooms (three ounces). Three tablespoonfuls butter or olive oil. One and a half cupfuls tomatoes. Two tablespoonfuls chopped onion. One small bayleaf. One-quarter teaspoonful salt. One-eighth teaspoonful paprika. One tablespoonful chopped capers.

Drain the mushrooms and fry them in the butter with the onion for two or three minutes. Add the tomato, bayleaf, salt and paprika and simmer twenty minutes, mashing the tomato to a pulp. If necessary to add more liquid use the water the mushrooms were soaked in. Before serving add the chopped capers. This is not a thick sauce, but rather seasoned mushrooms, and is to be served as an entrée or as an accompaniment to meat or rice.

Mushrooms and Meat

Three-quarters cupful canned mushrooms, quartered. One cupful cooked meat, in cubes. One-half teaspoonful prepared mustard. One-half teaspoonful Worcestershire sauce. One cupful brown sauce: One cupful meat stock, two tablespoonfuls fat, three tablespoonfuls flour, salt, pepper. Make the brown sauce by melting the fat, adding the flour and browning it, then adding the stock (in the Institute we used one bouillon cube to one cup of water), stirring con-

stantly until the sauce is thick and creamy. To this add mushroom stock, seasonings and meat. Turn into buttered ramekins or baking dish, cover with crumbs and brown in the oven. The more delicate meats are excellent served in this fashion, such as veal and lamb, left from a roast.

Southern Mushroom Sauce

Three-quarters cupful canned mushrooms sliced. Two tablespoonfuls butter. One tablespoonful chopped onion. Two and a half tablespoonfuls green pepper, chopped. One tablespoonful ketchup. Three olives, chopped. One tablespoonful sherry-jell. Salt and paprika. One cupful brown sauce; one cupful meat stock, two tablespoonfuls fat, three tablespoonfuls flour.

To Make the Brown Sauce

Melt the fat and cook until brown, add the flour slowly, stirring until it is smooth and thick (we used part meat stock and part mushroom liquor for the liquid). Fry the onion and green pepper in the butter and add to the sauce together with the other ingredients (except the sherry-jell) and simmer ten minutes. Before serving add the sherry-jell (you may first dissolve it in one-quarter cupful hot water). Serve the sauce with broiled steak or fillet of beef.

Creamed Dried Mushrooms

Two cupfuls dried mushrooms (two ounces). Three-quarters cupful milk or cream. Two tablespoonfuls butter. Two tablespoonfuls flour. One-quarter teaspoonful salt. Few grains of pepper. Cook the mushrooms for twenty minutes in the water in which they were soaked, then add the milk and cook ten minutes longer. Rub the butter and flour together and stir into the hot liquid, stirring constantly until thick and smooth. Season and let simmer five minutes, when the sauce should be thoroughly cooked and seasoned. (Fresh mushrooms can be cooked the same way in practically the same time.) Other seasonings can be used to vary the flavor—paprika, Worcestershire sauce, celery salt or catsup, for instance.

(Tested and endorsed by The Tribune Institute)

Housecleaning Inspiration

By Florence R. Brobeck

"First with brooms, then with dusters; then on ladders and steps and chairs, with a brush and a pail of whitewash, 'till he had dust in his throat and eyes, splashes of whitewash all over his black fur, and an aching back and weary arms."

—Mole's Housecleaning in "The Wind in the Willows."

Kenneth Grahame. Mole's housecleaning, as any one can see, was a strenuous and unpleasant affair. Spring was in the air above his modest home, and the warm sunshine streamed through his dust-streaked windows.

Just as he reached the weary back and aching arm stage he heard the call of a bird and caught a glimpse of its winged journeying into the world. It was too much for the drudging Mole. He stepped out of that muddled-up house, slammed the door, and didn't even look it, and started out on a journey which remade his entire life!

Modern housekeeping, with its daily use of vacuum cleaner, oil soaps and general going-over the house, eliminates such an annual struggle as the spring housecleaning that harassed Mole's soul and gives you more time to indulge in a spring "cleaning" for your spirits with

sun and winds and birds and all outdoors in general.

HOUSECLEANINGS are no more especially housecleanings of the brush and pail sort. In their place has come the spring painting up and "prinking" spree wherein even the most passive of housekeepers dream of new furniture, another lampshade or two for the living room, and perhaps a change of draperies for the entire house. And what chance of accomplishing any of these with summer vacation plans in the air, new spring clothes needed for the family and taxes due?

No chance at all unless you are willing to be a Mrs. Handy Man for a few days. A Mrs. Handy Man can do just what the old-fashioned handy man used to do—and more. She can refinish (properly, mind you) old furniture and the floors, she can dye inexpensive cottons and silks (for draperies and other things) to rival imported fabrics, she can make lamp shades so easily and cheaply that she will wonder why she hasn't always made her own! It doesn't require a special knack for doing things, or an expensive kit of tools—just a few pointers. A corner of your kitchen, basement or attic in which to work, and the feeling surging in you to revive and invigorate your house for another year.

(Details of Painting, Dyeing, Lampshade Making to follow.)

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