

Stuffed Portobello Mushrooms with Cheddar and Prosciutto

The filling can be made up to 2 days ahead and refrigerated. Rewarm the filling before stuffing the mushrooms. We do not recommend roasting the mushrooms in advance, as they become leathery once rewarmed. For time efficiency, place mushrooms in the oven after you begin to sauté the diced mushrooms. When shopping, choose dense mushrooms with a cupped shape. This recipe can be easily halved to serve 4.

1. Adjust oven rack to upper-middle position, place rimmed baking sheet on rack, and heat oven to 400 degrees. Using sharp knife, cut 1/4-inch deep slits, spaced 1/2 inch apart, in crosshatch pattern on surface (non-gill side) of 8 mushrooms. Dice remaining 4 mushroom caps and reserved stems into 1/2-inch pieces; set aside (you should have about 6 cups).
2. Brush both sides of caps with 2 tablespoons oil and sprinkle evenly with 1 teaspoon salt. Carefully place caps, gill side up, on preheated baking sheet. Roast until mushrooms have released some of their juices and begin to brown around edges, 8 to 12 minutes. Flip caps over and continue to roast until liquid has completely evaporated and caps are golden brown, 8 to 12 minutes longer. Remove mushrooms from oven and heat broiler.
3. Pulse bread in food processor until coarsely ground, about sixteen 1-second pulses (you should have about 1 1/2 cups). Heat 1 tablespoon oil and 1 tablespoon butter in 12-inch skillet over medium heat until butter is melted. Add breadcrumbs and 1/4 teaspoon salt; cook, stirring frequently, until light golden brown, 5 to 8 minutes. Transfer crumbs to small bowl and wipe out skillet with paper towels.

4. Return now-empty skillet to medium-high heat, add 1 tablespoon oil, and heat until smoking. Add half of chopped mushrooms and cook without stirring for 2 minutes. Continue cooking, stirring occasionally, until lightly browned, 4 to 6 minutes longer. Transfer to medium bowl; repeat with remaining 1 tablespoon oil and remaining mushrooms.

5. Add remaining 1 tablespoon butter, prosciutto, and onions to skillet; cook, stirring occasionally, until onions are light brown, 5 to 6 minutes. Add garlic and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Stir in sherry and cook until almost no liquid remains, 1 to 2 minutes. Reduce heat to low and stir in reserved cooked mushrooms, thyme, parsley, cheese, and cream. Continue cooking until cheese is melted and vegetables are well coated, 1 to 2 minutes. Remove pan from heat, stir in lemon juice, and season with salt and pepper to taste.

6. Flip caps, gill side up, and distribute filling evenly between mushroom caps; top each with 2 tablespoons of breadcrumb mixture. Broil mushrooms until crumbs are golden brown, 1 to 3 minutes. Serve immediately.

Mushrooms and Moisture

To extract moisture from the whole mushroom caps in our stuffed portobello recipe, we tried salting and draining them before cooking—a trick we often use with watery veggies such as eggplant and zucchini. But the method succeeded only in making the caps slimy. It turns out that the exterior of any mushroom is covered with a layer of hydrophobic (water-repellent) proteins that prevents water from going in—and keeps moisture from going out. Instead, we removed liquid by cutting slits in the caps, which allowed water to drip out and evaporate as we precooked the mushrooms in a 400-degree oven.



WATERTIGHT Whole caps have a protective coating that keeps moisture in—even when salted.



FREE-FLOWING We slit the caps to allow water to be released as the mushrooms cooked.