



Thanks to intrepid importers, patient foragers and ingenious farmers, we can now find a much wider range of exquisite European and Asian mushrooms here in South Africa. Until only fairly recently, your best chances would be to find brown or button mushrooms only. Since I am a fungi addict, I thought it was time to focus on some of my favourite recipes such as Porcini bruschetta, which is so simple but so scrumptious. Delicious served with softly scrambled eggs for breakfast, with a salad for lunch or as a canapé before dinner.

Mushrooms are a fantastic all rounder. Experimenting with different types is half the fun though and whenever I see a new varietal, I just have to taste it. That said, know your stuff! One of our very good friends managed to accidentally poison a private yacht full of celebrities during the Cannes Film Festival!

How was she to know that that particular mushroom could not be eaten raw at that particular time of year!

Tracy

eat. drink. live.

flavour files



mushrooms

Mushrooms are said to be neither animal nor plant and fall under the term 'fungus'. There is a magical quality about mushrooms that cannot be compared to any other growing organism. The anatomy of a mushroom, although stalk, cap and gills to the layman, is stipe, pileus and lamella. They produce spores, not seeds, and pollinate by expanding in order to disperse their spores. They grow rapidly, hence the term "to mushroom". There are many mushroom varieties ranging from edible to medicinal to poisonous and even containing psychedelic properties. A wide variety is used for cooking purposes, including button, brown, portabello, oyster, porcini, chanterelle and shiitake, to name just a few. Delicious black and white truffles, harvested by female pigs and truffle dogs also belong to the fungi family. Whatever you do, do not wash the mushrooms. If they do have some soil on them, gently wipe or brush them instead. Mushrooms are like sponges and will immediately absorb any water. To brown mushrooms, season with salt after frying them to avoid moisture being drawn out of the mushrooms. Mushrooms are compatible with so many food types, so add them to pasta sauces, pies, soups, risottos, casseroles, pizzas or stirfries. For delicious mushroom recipes from past recipe mailers, please visit www.nomu.co.za and simply enter "mushrooms" into the recipe search engine.

porcini carpaccio

- 4 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 large shallot, finely diced
- A grinding of **NoMU Just Salt**
- A pinch of **NoMU One for All Rub**
- 1 tbsp organic white balsamic vinegar
- ½ tsp sugar
- 1 large porcini mushroom,
- Truffle shavings, to garnish
- Parmesan shavings, to garnish
- NoMU Just Pepper**

Heat the olive oil in a heavy-based saucepan. Add the diced shallot with a pinch of salt and One for All and sweat until translucent and soft. Deglaze the pan with the balsamic vinegar and add the sugar to balance the vinegar.

Slice the mushroom as thinly as possible while keeping the cap and stalk intact and place the mushrooms in a circular shape onto a gorgeous serving platter.

Spoon the dressing over the mushrooms and garnish with cracked black pepper, sliced truffle and parmesan shavings.

WINE PAIRING: Ross Gower Pinot Noir Brut Methode Cap Classique 2006, Elgin. An assault on the senses. Pink and seductively dry with crisp hints of cranberries, cherries and raspberries. A tingling elegance to compliment an earthy dish.



cep & sage bruschetta



- 4 slices Ciabatta or Sourdough bread
- Extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tbsp butter
- Handful of fresh sage
- 4 cloves of garlic, skin on
- 200 g Cep/Porcini Mushrooms
- NoMU One for All Grinder**
- NoMU Just Salt**
- NoMU Just Pepper**

Note: Cep (pronounced sep) is French for Porcini.

In a hot griddle pan, char the bread nicely on each side then lightly rub one side with a clove of garlic, drizzle with olive oil and set aside.

Carefully slice the mushrooms ½ cm thick taking care to keep the stalk and the cap intact. Lightly bash the garlic cloves with the flat blade of your knife.

In a heavy-based pan, heat the olive oil and butter and fry the garlic and sage leaves for a few seconds before adding the mushrooms. Add a generous grinding of NoMU One for All. Sauté the mushrooms over high heat until they are browned and just cooked. Season with salt and pepper.

Place the bruschetta on warm plates and top with the mushrooms and sage leaves. Serve immediately.

Serves: 4.

chicken and mushroom pie

1 free range chicken
(poached or roasted)
200g button mushrooms
1 tbsp lemon juice
NoMU Roast Rub
NoMU Just Salt
NoMU Just Pepper
500g puff pastry
Egg wash (1 egg whisked
with 1 tbsp milk)

Velouté

60g butter
60g flour
600ml homemade
chicken stock

Note: A velouté is a béchamel
sauce made with light stock
instead of milk.

Preheat the oven to 200°C.

Shred the meat of the chicken and discard the skin and bones. Quarter the mushrooms.

To make the velouté, melt the butter in a saucepan over a low heat. Remove from the heat and add the flour. Return to the heat and cook, stirring frequently until the mixture turns a pale golden colour. Add half the chicken stock and stir or whisk quickly to ensure that no lumps form. Add the rest of the stock and return to the heat. Bring to a gentle simmer and cook for 25 – 30 minutes until the sauce has thickened. Stir in the mushrooms and chicken and simmer for a further 10 minutes until heated through and the mushrooms are cooked. Add the lemon juice to taste and season with a pinch of NoMU Roast Rub, Just Salt and Just Pepper. Once the filling has cooled completely, spoon into individual ramekins or one large pie dish. Cut the pastry out to cover the pie in a lid shape, leaving 2cm extra pastry around the circumference. Brush the edges of the ramekins or pie dish with egg wash and place the pastry on top pressing down around the edges to seal. Brush the tops with the egg wash and cut an X in the centre of the pie(s) to allow the steam to escape during cooking.

Bake for 20 - 25 minutes, until the puff pastry has risen and is golden. Turn down the heat to 180°C and bake for a further 15 minutes.

Serves: Make 1 x 24cm pie or 6 individual pies.



japanese mushroom and arame salad

Marinade

5ml powdered wasabi
½ tsp water
150ml rice vinegar
60ml soy sauce
40ml sugar
200g King Oyster mushrooms
30ml sesame oil
200g mung bean sprouts
5 ml **NoMU Oriental rub**
20g arame (seaweed)
½ cucumber
½ daikon

Mix the wasabi powder with water, then in a saucepan, combine with the the rice vinegar, soy sauce and sugar, stirring while bringing to the boil. Add the mushrooms and bring slowly back to the boil. Simmer for 7 minutes. Remove mushrooms from the marinade and leave to cool. Reserve the marinade.

Soak the arame in cool water for 10 minutes. Drain thoroughly by squeezing the excess water out with your hands. Cut the cucumber in half, lengthways, and remove the seeds. Using a mandolin, slice the cucumber and the daikon into thin strips. Heat the oil in a wok and stir-fry the bean sprouts, Oriental rub, cucumber and daikon for 3 minutes. Add the arame and stir-fry for a further 3 minutes. Set aside to cool.

Stir the mushrooms into the arame salad and divide between 6 small plates. Pour a little marinade over each dish before serving.

Serves: 6

Note: Arame is dried shredded seaweed and is available at good Oriental stores.



mushroom tart with thyme, goat's cheese and pine nuts

500g butter puff pastry –
see NoMU May Recipe Mailer
250g brown mushrooms
4 tbsp butter
1 tbsp olive oil
1 whole crostin (aged goat's cheese)
5 sprigs of thyme, destalked
50g pine nuts, lightly toasted
NoMU Just Salt and
NoMU Just Pepper, to season

Makes: 4 x 12cm tarts

Preheat the oven to 200°C.

Roll out the puff pastry and cut into circles, using a side-plate or saucer to guide you. Score the edge of the pastry to create a 1cm rim and using a fork, prick the centre all over to prevent it from rising. Bake the pastry on a floured baking sheet for 10-12 minutes, until puffed and golden. Remove from oven and set aside. Remove the stalk of the mushrooms and slice the caps. Heat the butter and olive oil and sauté the mushrooms until soft and golden. Be sure to brown the slices. To do this, don't toss them around. Instead leave them to brown on each side before individually flipping them over. Remove from the pan and arrange the mushrooms on the pastry disks in a circular design, overlapping them onto one another.

Place a slice of goat's cheese onto each tart, season with salt and pepper, sprinkle with thyme and grill for 3 -4 minutes or until the cheese is soft and slightly browned.

Sprinkle with pine and serve while hot.

WINE PAIRING: L'Ormarins Terra del Capo Pinot Grigio 2007, Franschoek. Lemony fresh and loaded with minerals, green melon, and apple skin, like gossamer on the palate – playful.



porcini butter

500g butter
25g dried porcini mushrooms
1 clove garlic, crushed
½ tsp **NoMU Just Salt**
½ tsp **NoMU Just Pepper**

I can't image my kitchen without this anymore as I put it in or on just about everything: hot toast and poached eggs, omelettes, fillet of beef, mash to name a few.

Using a pestle and mortar or preferably a coffee grinder, finely grind the dry porcini mushrooms to a fine powder. To make the porcini butter, cream the butter with a wooden spoon or an electric mixture until light and fluffy, stir in the ground mushrooms and garlic and season to taste. Spoon the softened butter onto a sheet of wax paper and roll into a cylinder shape. Twist the ends to seal and place in the fridge to set.



mushroom pappardelle

1 tbsp olive oil
50ml butter
150g white button mushrooms,
destalked and quartered
150g portabellini mushrooms,
destalked and quartered
120g king oyster mushrooms
5 sprigs sage

NoMU Provencal Rub

NoMU Just Salt

NoMU Just Pepper

1 cup homemade chicken stock
500g fresh Pappardelle
(See Recipe Mailer # 19)

To Serve

Mascarpone and Truffle oil

Heat the butter and the olive oil in a heavy-based saucepan.

Add all the mushrooms, sage and Provencal Rub and sauté until soft and golden. Season well with salt and pepper. When the mushrooms are lightly golden add the chicken stock and simmer for a few minutes.

Heat a large pot of water and cook the pasta until al dente. Add the pasta to the ragu and toss through. Serve with a quenelle of mascarpone and a drizzle of truffle oil.

Serves: 4-6

WINE PAIRING: Vins d'Orance Chardonnay 2006, Coastal Region. Modern citrus butter scenting, deliciously floral. Not a rough edge anywhere.



supreme of chicken with porcini butter on cauliflower and potato puree

4 chicken supremes (breast and wing portions)
8 toothpicks

Cauliflower and Potato Purée

+ 500ml milk
4 potatoes, peeled and cubed
1 small cauliflower head, cut into florets
1 small clove garlic
1 bay leaf
5 whole peppercorns
NoMU Just Salt
milk – enough to cover
65 butter, softened
a grinding of Nutmeg (optional)

WINE PAIRING: Deetleffs Semillion 2006, Rawsonville, fat in the mouth, waxy like honey in the comb sprinkled with white spices and an undertow of apricots – made for wholesome food.

Preheat the oven to 220°C.

To make the purée place the potatoes in a saucepan and cover with milk. Add the bay leaf, peppercorns, garlic and a generous grinding of salt and gently bring to a simmer. Cook until soft and a sharp knife easily slides into the chunks. Add the cauliflower and cook for a further 10 minutes or until the cauliflower is cooked. Strain but keep the milk to one side. Remove the bay leaf, garlic and peppercorns.

Place the cooked vegetables in a blender or food processor and purée while still hot. Add the butter and blend again. If the mixture is too thick, add some of the cooking liquid. Check the seasoning and serve hot. You can place it in a clean saucepan and gently re-heat if necessary over very low heat.

Rub the prepared butter under the skin of the chicken and secure the skin to the flesh with the toothpicks. Put the chicken pieces on a roasting rack in a baking tray and bake for 20 - 25 minutes until the chicken is golden and crispy.

Serve hot with a thin slice of extra porcini butter to melt into the purée.

Serves: 4

wonton soup

Wonton filling

Vegetable or peanut oil for frying
2 small shallots, finely chopped
150g shiitake mushrooms,
finely chopped
¼ cup spring onion, finely chopped
1 piece of ginger, finely grated
1 tsp sesame oil
½ tsp **NoMU Pork Rub, Masala Rub**
or Oriental Rub
300g chicken or pork mince
1 tbsp oyster sauce
1 tsp cornstarch

24 Round wonton sheets

Soup

1 litre good quality chicken stock
1 tbsp soy sauce
1 tbsp Chinese rice wine
1 tbsp sliced ginger
1 chilli, sliced
3 spring onions, finely sliced

To make the filling, sauté the shallots until soft and lightly golden.

Add the mushrooms, spring onion, ginger, sesame oil and Pork Rub and fry until the mushrooms are cooked. Place in a mixing bowl and allow to cool before adding the chicken, oyster sauce and cornstarch. Lay out the wonton sheets on the counter. Place a teaspoon of the filling mixture onto the one side of the wonton sheet. Wet the edges with some water or egg white and fold over the other side to close. Press down firmly to seal the semi-circle. Next bring the two corners together so that they overlap slightly, pinch and twist slightly to keep them together. They should now look like an Italian tortellini. Repeat with remaining wontons. Alternatively, place the teaspoon of filling in the middle of the wrapper and twist to seal. The final result should resemble a money bag or drawstring purse.

In a large, heavy-based pot, combine the stock, soy sauce, rice wine, ginger, chilli and bring to the boil. Simmer for 10 minutes to allow the flavours to infuse. Remove the ginger and the chilli and add the wontons. They are ready when they rise to the surface.

Serve immediately in oriental bowls garnished with spring onion.

Serves: 6

TIP: Wonton wrappers can be bought at Asian markets. You can make the wontons ahead of time. Dust with a little flour and freeze flat on a baking tray, once frozen they can be placed into bags and back into the freezer. Alternatively, buy ready-made wontons !



mushroom chawamnushi



- 30g fresh shiitake mushrooms, sliced
- 30ml peanut or vegetable oil
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 ¼ cups chicken stock
- ½ tsp dashi
- 1 tsp sake
- 1 tsp soy sauce

To garnish

Oyster mushrooms.

TIP: If you do not have an Oriental steamer you can use a conventional one.

Chawamnushi is a silky smooth Japanese custard steamed in a cup or rice bowl.

Sauté the sliced mushrooms and arrange them to form a flat layer at the bottom of 4 x 125ml oriental bowls.

Crack the eggs into a bowl and whisk lightly. Add the stock, sake, dashi and soy sauce. Stir to combine thoroughly. Divide the egg mixture into each bowl over the mushrooms. Bring a pot of water to the boil, place an oriental steamer on the rim of the pot and place the ramekins into the steamer. Cover and allow to steam for 10-15 minutes. Garnish with the crispy oyster mushrooms and serve immediately. **Makes: 4**

To make the crispy oyster mushrooms, place on a baking tray and drizzle with olive, peanut or vegetable oil. Place in a pre-heated oven (200°C) and roast until well browned and crispy.

Note: Dashi is Japanese stock, which becomes the base of many Japanese dishes, such as soup, dipping sauce, and nimono (simmered dishes).

potstickers

- 24 Wonton sheets
- 1 quantity filling – see wonton recipe above
- Peanut or vegetable oil for frying
- 250ml good quality chicken stock

Dipping sauce

- 4 tbsp light soy sauce
- 3 tbsp rice vinegar
- ½ tsp chili oil or paste
- 1 tsp brown sugar, or to taste
- ½ clove garlic, peeled and chopped
- 1 tsp minced ginger
- 5 ml lime juice
- 1 tbsp coriander, finely chopped

These can be made with chicken, pork, prawns or duck. Use the same filling recipe for the wontons above, using the filling of your choice.

Lay out the wonton sheets on the counter. Place a teaspoon of the filling mixture onto the one side of the wonton sheet. Wet the edges with some water or egg white and fold over the other side to close. Press the edge down firmly and then, using your thumb and forefinger crimp the edge to create a “fan”.

Heat a little olive oil in a non-stick pan and fry the wontons on one side until golden brown and crispy. Add the hot stock and immediately place the lid on the pan. Steam for 5 minutes and serve immediately with dipping sauce.

To make the dipping sauce, combine all ingredients and stir through, allow to stand for ½ hour to allow the flavours to infuse.

Serve with Potstickers.

Makes: 24



classic mushroom soup

- 50g butter
- 1 large onion, diced
- 250g Portabello mushrooms, sliced
- 250g white button mushrooms, sliced
- 250g brown button mushrooms, sliced
- 1 tsp **NoMU One For All**
- 3 cloves garlic, peeled
- Leaves from 6 sprigs thyme
- 1 bay leaves
- Finely grated zest of 2 lemons
- 2 tsp mustard powder
- 2 tbsp cornflour
- 1 litre homemade chicken stock
- 1 cup milk
- 1 cup cream
- NoMU Just Salt** and **NoMU Just Pepper**

Heat the butter in a large saucepan and fry the onion until translucent and soft.

Add the sliced mushrooms, NoMU One For All, garlic, herbs, zest and mustard powder. Cook until mushrooms are soft and then sprinkle with cornflour and stir through well. Using a blender or food processor, blend until smooth. Return the soup mixture to the pot over a medium heat and gradually add the stock, milk and the cream. Stir constantly for 15-20 minutes.

To serve, garnish with a few sautéed King oyster mushrooms and serve with crusty artisan bread straight out of the oven!

Makes: Serves 6

TIP: For a wilder, meatier flavour you can add a handful of dried porcini mushrooms that have been soaked in warm water or stock. A splash of brandy will also be delicious!

back to basics



CONTRIBUTOR OF THE MONTH

Sumien Brink is one of South Africa's most seasoned and sought-after publishing experts on all things to do with design and décor. However, now also as the creative and editorial director of South Africa's TASTE Magazine, Sumien's seamless good taste can apply to food and wine too!

Sumien has been incredibly kind with her characteristically busy schedule to spoil us with her preferred favourite wines to go with Tracy's recipes for the month. To learn more about TASTE Magazine as well as Sumien's previous, iconic local Décor title, VISI, please visit www.visi.co.za

