

Morels and Crab Pate



Here is a yearly treat for Mother's Day or for anyone who loves morels stuffed with seafood and cream cheese. Dungeness crab is the best choice, but use whatever crab you like. Be sure to thoroughly wash and dry the morels after cutting them in half. They are notorious for harboring insects and debris. Unlike other mushrooms, morels don't soak up a lot of water and as a result keep their texture after being washed. Always be sure to cook your morels well since they can be toxic to some individuals when undercooked.

12 medium to large-size morels; 6 are chopped, 6 are cut in half

5 strips bacon, fried, to render 1 tablespoon bacon grease

8 ounces real crabmeat (remove any shells) or imitation crabmeat, chopped in bite-size pieces

2 tablespoons green onion, finely chopped

1 (8 ounce) package cream cheese, room temperature; can use creamed goat cheese for more flavor

¼ teaspoon ground black pepper

½ teaspoon thyme, fresh, finely chopped (stems removed)

½ teaspoon dried parsley flakes

4 teaspoons roasted garlic*, mashed

1 teaspoon Sriracha chili sauce, or to taste

Half and half added, if needed

Gently clean the mushrooms of dirt and grit by placing the mushrooms, stem sides down, in a colander, rinse, and drain for about 5 minutes. Cut in half and remove any critters or debris that might be hiding there.

Chop ½ of the morels and sauté them in some salted butter until crisp-tender then chop finely in a food processor until smooth. Cut in half the other morels and sauté them in salted butter. Allow the morels to drain on paper towels; set aside. Be sure the morels are well-cooked since undercooked morels can be toxic and make people sick.

Cook crabmeat in the bacon grease until done. Put in a food processor until texture is smooth. Remove and set aside. Then finely chop the green onion in a food processor. Remove and set aside.

Combine the chopped morels, crabmeat, and green onion, with the cream cheese in a bowl until evenly combined. Add the black pepper, thyme, parsley flakes, and roasted garlic*, and mix until blended. Add the Sriracha sauce. If needed, add more cream cheese and half and half to make the pate creamier.

Spoon mixture into a pastry bag or pastry tube. Then fill each morel half with a slightly rounded mound of the crab/morel mixture. Serve warm.

Yield: 2 servings

*To make the roasted garlic first preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Cut $\frac{1}{4}$ inch off the top of the garlic head and drizzle the exposed garlic cloves with olive oil. Place in a small baking dish, cover with tin foil, and bake about 30-40 minutes. Then just squeeze out the individual garlic cloves and mash and mix the garlic cloves together.