

Porcini Pate on Garlic-Rubbed Challah Bread



The dark color and rich texture of this *Boletus edulis* recipe is a good substitute for a meat pate. If using Challah bread, toast on both sides and rub one side with roasted garlic cloves (see how below). Once the mushroom mixture is added to one side of the bread it is even better when heated gently under the broiler. This pate can also be served with cocktail rye bread, crackers, and/or with fresh vegetables.

Combining Oyster mushrooms (*Pleurotus populinus*) in this recipe does not compete with the Porcini mushrooms at all since they have a mild flavor. Oyster mushrooms were first cultivated in Germany as a subsistence measure during World War I and are now grown commercially around the world for food. It is one of the more commonly sought wild mushrooms, though it can also be cultivated on straw and other media. It has the slight aroma of bitter almonds.

½ ounce dried Porcini mushrooms that have been broken into small pieces

½ cup water

½ pound fresh Oyster mushrooms, roughly chopped

3 tablespoons olive or vegetable oil

2 shallots, chopped

4 garlic cloves, finely chopped

2 tablespoons red wine

Juice of ¼ lemon

Salt and ground black pepper to taste

¼ pound mild goat cream cheese, room temperature

2/3 cup green onions, thinly chopped

1 teaspoon chipotle habanero pepper sauce

1 hard-boiled egg, roughly chopped, for garnish

1 tablespoon fresh parsley, chopped, for garnish

Break up the dried Porcini mushrooms, put in a bowl of water and soak for about 30 minutes. Once they have become soft, drain, and wash them in a colander, then pat dry; set aside. Heat salted butter in a pan and add the fresh Oyster mushrooms, shallots*, and chopped garlic, and sauté on medium heat until browned. Season with salt and pepper. Add the Porcini mushrooms and cook until the liquid has evaporated, and the Porcini are tender. Add the red wine and lemon juice and continue to cook the mixture until the red wine and lemon juice have evaporated and the mixture is brown and dry.

Put the mixture in a food processor briefly until a chunky paste is formed. Add enough goat cream cheese to blend the mixture. Add the green onions and chipotle hot pepper sauce and blend. Serve garnished with the hard-boiled egg and fresh parsley.

If you decide to toast the bread, then rub one side with roasted garlic** before spreading on the pate. If you use the pate without the toasted bread, then the pate will taste and spreads better if allowed to sit out for ½ hour before serving.

Yield: approximately 3 cups

*Depending on the size and strength of the shallots you may want to vary the quantity according to your own taste.

**To make the roasted garlic first preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Cut ¼ 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. Uncover and broil for a brief period, but don't allow them to burn. Just squeeze out the individual garlic cloves and mash and mix the garlic cloves together. Then spread on the toasted bread.