

SALAD SEASONS

VEGETABLE-FORWARD DISHES ALL YEAR



Sheela Prakash

RIZZOLI
NEW YORK



French Onion–Stuffed Mushrooms with Bitter Greens

SERVES 4

2 tablespoons unsalted butter

1½ pounds yellow onions (about 3 medium), thinly sliced

1 tablespoon fresh thyme leaves

Kosher salt

Freshly ground black pepper

4 large portobello mushrooms

5 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided

¼ cup dry white wine

2 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon sherry vinegar, divided

4 ounces Gruyère cheese, grated (about 1 cup)

⅓ cup fresh or panko bread crumbs

1 clove garlic, grated or minced

1 teaspoon Dijon mustard

6 ounces bitter greens (about 6 packed cups), such as arugula, radicchio, frisée, dandelion greens, or a combination, torn into large bite-sized pieces, if needed

I ate a lot of stuffed portobello mushrooms during my days as a vegetarian. I was in college and single—portobellos were cheap and perfectly portioned for one. The caps are endlessly versatile. Stuff them with cheese, beans, sautéed greens, cooked grains, roasted vegetables, or even mashed squash or potatoes. Of all the iterations I’ve worked my way through, though, these French onion soup–inspired stuffed mushrooms win first prize. An abundance of jammy caramelized onions is loaded into the portobello caps before they’re topped with nutty Gruyère cheese and baked. The results are so umami-packed, they beg to be served atop a simple, vinaigrette-dressed salad for balance. A smattering of toasted bread crumbs mimics the crispy bits of the cozy, classic soup.

ARRANGE A RACK in the top third of the oven and heat the oven to 400°F.

Melt the butter in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the onions, thyme, ½ teaspoon salt, and several grinds of pepper. Cook, stirring frequently, until the onions have reduced by more than half and are very soft and deep golden brown, 28 to 30 minutes. Reduce the heat if the onions start to burn.

Meanwhile, remove and discard the stems from the mushrooms. Use a spoon to gently scrape out and discard the gills to make room for the filling. Brush the mushroom caps on both sides with 2 tablespoons olive oil and season with ½ teaspoon salt and several grinds of pepper. Place the mushrooms on a rimmed baking sheet, stem side down, and roast until they just begin to soften, about 10 minutes.

Once the onions are caramelized, pour in the wine. Scrape up any browned bits on the bottom of the pan and continue to stir until the wine has evaporated, about 1 minute. Remove the pan from the heat and stir in 1 teaspoon vinegar.

recipe continues . . .

Once the mushrooms are just softened, remove the baking sheet from the oven and flip the mushrooms over with a flat spatula. Divide the caramelized onions evenly among the mushroom caps, then sprinkle with the Gruyère.

Roast until the mushrooms are tender and the cheese just starts to melt, 5 to 7 minutes. Switch the oven to broil on high and broil until the cheese browns, 2 to 3 minutes.

Meanwhile, heat 1 tablespoon olive oil in a small skillet over medium heat until shimmering. Add the bread crumbs, garlic, a pinch of salt, and a few grinds of pepper. Toast, stirring frequently, until golden brown, 3 to 5 minutes. Transfer to a small bowl.

Whisk together the remaining 2 tablespoons olive oil, 2 tablespoons vinegar, the Dijon, a generous pinch of salt, and several grinds of pepper in a large bowl. Add the greens and toss to coat. Taste and season with additional salt and pepper as needed. Divide among individual shallow bowls or plates.

Top each serving with a stuffed mushroom and sprinkle with the toasted bread crumbs.