



No Bag Limit. No License required.

The Search for Wild Mushrooms

By Chef Al

Mushroom Charlie guided us on a morning fungi safari providing tasty morsels that added the finishing touch to a wonderful medium rare rib eye steak at dinner. Charlie strongly suggested adherence to a few simple guidelines.

Tips for Beginners

- * Learn to identify a few edible species like Chanterelle, Hedgehog, Lobster, Puffball and Oyster mushrooms. If you can't identify it, don't eat it. Avoid white mushrooms with gills beneath the cap. Death Cap also known as Destroying Angel Wart grow in this area and are poisonous.
- * Accompany a mentor during your first adventures. "Mushrooms of the Upper Midwest" by Teresa Marone is a helpful pocket size book with photos and descriptions that can be carried into the field.
- * Learn to recognize mushroom habitat. Most species have a symbiotic relation with trees.

<i>Mushroom</i>	<i>Habitat (trees)</i>
Slippery Jack	Conifers (pines)
Oyster	Aspen (popple)
Honey & Black Trumpet	Oak
Hedgehog	Hemlock
Chanterelle	Deciduous, coniferous forest & pine plantations

- * Hunt on public land or get permission from owner(s) if you venture onto private property.
- * Respect the environment.
- * Harvest only what you need.

Equipment

You don't need decoys, expensive firearms or a box full of lures to capture mushrooms. Some basic stuff includes:

1. Specially made mushroom knife or a kitchen knife.
2. Mushroom brush or a stain brush from a hardware store with one half of the bristles removed.
3. Gathering basket (Salvation Army Easter basket)
4. Plastic or paper bags to separate your catch by species
5. Walking stick to maintain balance & expose mushrooms from the duff on the forest floor without bending over. (pick up stick as you start out)
6. Insect spray and or a hat with a head net.
7. Camera and binoculars. Not necessary but helpful .(Phone works)

Preparing Mushrooms

You have a basket full of edible shrooms, so what now?

* Remove any sign of insect damage.

*Brush away dirt or material from the forest floor.

*In most cases, slice mushrooms unless they are very small.

Cooking Mushrooms

1. Heat a skillet, add butter or olive oil & allow it to heat.
2. Add mushrooms, sauté until tender and enjoy.
 - Mushrooms are culinary sponges and will absorb any flavors you put with them. Onions are a good companion.
 - Make soup with cream or any non-dairy products like tapioca, flour, water, chicken stock and cornstarch. Use a non dairy base if you choose to freeze the soup.

Preserving Mushrooms

Dry, can, pickle and or freeze.

Mushrooms and the Native American Life

The Ojibwa people used mushrooms as food and medicine. The Chaga found in northern Wisconsin is brewed in a tea to fight the affects of many diseases including cancer, tuberculosis, liver diseases and gastritis. "Native Harvests" by E. Barrie Kavasch contains several recipes for mushrooms including the one below.

Pickled Mushrooms

Ingredients

- 1 C water
- 1 C cider vinegar
- 1 small diced onion
- 1 tsp. crumbled bay leaves
- 1 T pickling spice
- 4 C steamed wild mushrooms, drained

Procedure

1. Simmer all ingredients except mushrooms in a covered pot for 5 minutes.
2. Allow liquid to cool and strain through a fine sieve or cheesecloth.
3. Place mushrooms in a glass jar, cover w/ liquid & refrigerate 24 hour before eating.
4. Will keep 7-10 days in the refrigerator.

Note

1. Suggest making a small batch in view of the relatively short storage time.

The Experience

Learn to identify mushrooms and team up with a mentor during your early experiences. Traverse the many thousands of acres of state and federal land in search of this woodland delicacy from spring until fall. Enjoy the tranquility, wildlife, bird song and exercise. ***This is a safe and inexpensive way to have fun in these troubled times.***

For other ideas and great recipes please check out the Extension resource page at:

<https://www.lco.edu/continuing-ed-resources>

This information is courtesy of your friends at the LCO College Extension 13466 W. Trepania Rd. 715.634.4790 Ext. 156 & Farm 13457 W. Froemel Rd. 715.634.9666 Hayward, WI. 54843.