

CREAMY SAUSAGE-STUFFED MUSHROOMS

Adapted from Food52

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| 5 pint mushrooms (button, cremini, portobello) destemmed | 4 Italian sausage links |
| 7 tsp olive oil, divided | 2 yellow onions, minced |
| 3 tbsp balsamic vinegar | 5 garlic cloves, minced |
| salt and pepper | 8 oz cream cheese, room temp |
| | 5 oz Asiago cheese, shredded |

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Toss mushrooms with 5 tbsp olive oil, balsamic vinegar, salt, and pepper. Spread out on sheet pan and bake for 30 minutes. Set aside and cool.
2. Slit Italian sausage and remove casing. Crumble into heated pan and sauté until golden brown. Break up into small pieces while cooking. Set aside.
3. Add remaining 2 tbsp olive oil in sauté pan and add onions. Cook until dark and caramelized, about 15-20 minutes. Add garlic and cook for 1 minute.
4. Add cooked sausage, onions, garlic, cream cheese, salt, pepper, and 3 oz Asiago cheese to a bowl and mix well. Break apart large pieces of sausage.
5. Heat oven to 375° F. Line mushrooms in greased baking dish with concave side facing up. Stuff each mushroom with generous portion of sausage mixture. Top mushrooms with remaining Asiago cheese.
6. Bake for roughly 45 minutes or until cheese is golden brown.

SAVORY BEETROOT, CARROT, & OAT BAKE

Adapted from Nirvana Cakery

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| 2 tbsp ground flaxseed | ½ cup walnuts, chopped |
| 6 tbsp water | ¼ cup pumpkin seeds |
| 1 red onion | 1 tbsp fresh thyme |
| 1 tbsp olive oil | 1 tsp oregano |
| 2 cups beetroot (~2 large beets) | 1 tsp sea salt |
| 2 cups carrots (~3 medium carrots) | black pepper |
| 2 cups gluten-free rolled oats | ½ cup almond milk |



1. Preheat conventional oven to 400°F (350°F if convection). Grease 9"x 9" square baking dish with olive oil or line with baking paper.
2. Mix 2 tbsp ground flaxseed with water and set aside to thicken.
3. Finely slice red onion and sauté with a bit of olive oil for about 5 minutes. Take off heat and let cool.
4. Peel and coarsely grate beetroot and carrot and set aside.
5. In large bowl, whisk oats, walnuts, pumpkin seeds, thyme, oregano, sea salt and pepper until combined. Fold in beetroot, carrot, and onion.
6. Whisk flax with almond milk and stir into mixture. You should have moist mix. Spoon mixture into baking dish and smooth until level. Sprinkle extra pumpkin seeds and gently press them in. Bake for about 40 min. Enjoy warm or cold.



WINTER + SPRING NEWS

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Week 12 of 18

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LEAFY GREENS

Store unwashed in original bag, or chop, wash, and dry with a salad spinner, and return to bag with a dry paper towel to absorb moisture. Always refrigerate.



CABBAGE, CARROTS, WINTER RADISHES, HAKUREI, AND BEETS

Store in the cold area of the fridge; these will keep a long time.



WINTER SQUASH

Store in a cool, dry location, but don't let freeze; once cut, refrigerate and use within 5-7 days.



JARRED ITEMS

Favorites like Honey, Marinara, BBQ Sauce, Kvass, Ferments, or Salsa can round out your pantry and complement your meats and veggies.



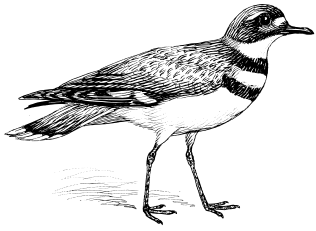
SWEET POTATOES

Store sweet potatoes at room temperature and they will keep for weeks or months.



FRESH HERBS

Place in water in the refrigerator.



WE NEED A SPRING BREAK

With this spell of warm weather in March, the frigid February we experienced seems like ages ago. Most likely, we are in for more really cold weather yet, but if it does come, it won't last very long. Just a snap.

Timing is everything in farming, especially now, as the earth begins to warm and our little micro-ecosystem wakes up.

When the ground freezes, the ice crystals that form will swell the soil and actually shear and spear their way between the particles and hold it all together in a frozen mass. When it thaws, the particles of soil must nestle themselves back into place, forming the habitat for roots, insects, worms, and microbes to coexist. The firm footing will return if undisturbed, but during that transitional time, farmers would say the soil has "no bottom." We know to keep all four wheels of the vehicles on the gravel and look for the best sod to traverse on.

The hoof action of the cattle breaks up the sod in conditions like this, which is one reason they are kept on the fields that will be plowed for crops in a few weeks anyway.

We need a window of dry weather for the moisture from all the rain we have been getting to drain out of the top layer of soil, so it can be tilled without harming the precious soil structure.

When you see all manner of earthworms strewn about on top of the ground, that tells you the air chambers of the soil are full of water, and the worms are escaping from drowning. Some perish before finding their way back underground, but not to worry, they have left millions of eggs (or pupae or whatever they use to procreate) to survive the wet conditions.

The ba-zillions of microbes slow down and/or hibernate during inclement weather, be it freezing temperatures or excessive rain. To be clear, sub-zero temperatures do not "kill all the bugs" as many a home gardener knows. They, too, have tried and true survival mechanisms that have adapted to the Central Kentucky climate over the past several million years.

Sure, if it stays really cold, longer into the spring, insect emergence may be delayed, a mere tribute to their capabilities. This really warm spell we are in may trigger some to wake up early, and then fall on hard times if it gets really cold again, but don't get your hopes up that they will all magically disappear forever; they won't. Their pattern may be altered a bit from year to year, but that's it.

We can track the progression of the annual awakening after winter as we

see songbirds returning to adorn the fields and trees. We heard the first spring peepers on a morning walk this week (frogs for the unfamiliar), aptly named to announce the coming of spring. Countless "V's" of Canada Geese have been seen heading north, the killdeer are already luring us away from their camouflaged eggs on the ground, and the robins are on the ground nourishing themselves on the easy pickings of worms as they prepare to rear their broods. The meadowlarks and red-winged blackbirds already showing up, which seems a little early. Only when the barn swallows return from South America do we know spring is over and summer is here.

Our Narragansett tom turkeys began strutting their stuff this past week, and the hens have already started laying eggs. Unlike chickens, these magnificent creatures are still seasonal egg layers, like their wild first cousins. The coyotes have been howling like crazy since it warmed up.

The grass is green, and it's still muddy, but at least the ground has a bottom. We just have to be ready to shift gears when we get a chance to work some dirt. We know not to force our will on Mother Nature. We always get the crops out in the spring, just never know when. For now, we will hunker down and be ready for the opportunity to have another great growing season.

-Mac Stone

MEAT SPECIAL

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