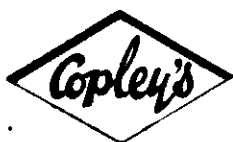




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## MAGIC WITH MUSHROOMS

**H**OTEL chefs may prepare dainty little sauces and side-dishes with mushrooms, but thousands of New Zealanders are able to get really worthwhile quantities of mushrooms just for the gathering, and enjoy plentiful helpings of them fried in bacon-fat, or good cod-fat (in the absence of the ideal, cooking in butter). Dry some of the broken ones, in a cool oven on sheets of paper until shrivelled. They make good flavourings for soups and stews, either soaked in water or just rubbed in as a coarse powder.

### Mushroom Ketchup

This is a very old recipe. Its special feature is repeated boiling, up to 6 times. It makes the best ketchup. Wipe fresh mushrooms, sprinkle with a little salt and allow to stand in a large crock in a warm place 24 hours, covered with a damp cloth. Then mash well and strain. To every quart of juice add 1oz. pepper-corns. Boil ½ hour, add 1oz. allspice, 1 blade mace or a little powdered mace and ½oz. root ginger to each quart. Simmer for another 15 minutes. Let get cold, then reboil 15 minutes, and again cool. Reboil fifteen minutes longer, then strain, bottle and seal.

### Mushroom Gravy

Cook about ½lb. sliced mushrooms in the fat in the roasting pan after taking out the meat, probably about 5 minutes, then strain off fat, add flour and water and make as usual.

### Mushroom Soup

You need some broth. Chicken is best so save the broth from boiling a fowl, but veal broth or even mutton will do. Half a pound of mushrooms makes quite a lot of soup. Don't peel, just chop finely. Simmer 5 minutes in a tablespoon of butter (or cod-fat) with a tablespoon of minced onion and twice as much minced celery. Add 2 cups broth and simmer 10 minutes. Meanwhile make a white sauce by melting 2 tablespoons butter, stirring in 2 tablespoons flour till smooth, and then adding gradually 2 cups cold milk, pepper and salt to taste, and cooking steadily till smooth and thickened. Then add mushroom mixture and heat together. Serve at once. Straining is optional.

### Baked Mushrooms

Remove stems from a pound of mushrooms, put them in a greased casserole, cut tips off stems, slice them, and add to casserole. Mix 2 tablespoons butter, 1¼ teaspoons salt, dash of cayenne pepper, and ¼ cup of top milk, and pour over mushrooms. Cover and bake in moderate oven (about 375 degrees) about 50 minutes or till tender. Stir once during the baking, without spoiling shape of mushrooms. May be served on toast or with devilled steak. Have this cut an inch thick and having scored it with a knife squeeze the juice of a lemon over each side. Mix up 2 tablespoons brown sugar, 1 dessertspoon any dark jam, 1 large dessertspoon Worcester sauce, 2 tablespoons tomato sauce, 1 teaspoon each pepper and salt, 1 or 2

tablespoons vinegar. Pour over steak, pressing steak well into it. Soak 2 hours, then grill. Heat any of "devil" left and pour over as sauce.

### Mushroom Omelette

Chop enough peeled mushrooms, caps and stems, to make 1½ cups. Fry lightly 5 minutes or until tender in 2 tablespoons butter. Season with salt and pepper, and a few grains nutmeg. Add to an ordinary omelette, when cooked, and fold it over.

### Stewed Mushrooms

Remove skins and stalks from 1lb. mushrooms. Melt 2oz. butter in saucepan, add juice of half a lemon, put in mushrooms, season with pepper and salt. Cover and cook gently 20 to 30 minutes, shaking pan occasionally. Mix a tablespoon of flour with a breakfast cup of milk, pour this into saucepan, stir and simmer for a few minutes till blended and thickened. Serve with hot toast, grilled steak or fried liver.

## FROM THE MAILBAG

### A Punjab Link

Dear Aunt Daisy,

During the last year someone has sent me the *Listener* more or less regularly and I have greatly enjoyed your column—especially when it contained letters from two friends, now, like myself, overseas! Now it is my turn to ask you a few questions.

(1) In an issue about a year ago there was a letter about whitening woollies in which powdered chalk was used. Could you please tell me if that means French chalk? If not, what? (2) Carrots are very cheap at present, so I tried the carrot jelly recipe, with definitely *unsuccessful* results! Could you tell me how long to boil the carrots first, and does it need only one lemon? With sugar rationed again, I am chary of experimenting.

And now may I contribute a hint I learned recently. The water here is very hard and if any is spilt on a polished surface it leaves a white stain which nothing would remove until someone advised me to use cigarette ash and almond oil. Its effectiveness varies with the type of varnished surface, but in general I have found it very successful. Maybe this is no news, but it was certainly news to me. With best wishes.

N.Z.P. Mission, "Eastern Punjab."

We are quite thrilled to get your letter, and hope you will write again. The powdered chalk recipe does mean French chalk; but we have had to discontinue that method of whitening woollies here, because the chalk that was coming in lately seemed to be less refined, and made the woollies hard, so that the last state was worse than the first. We find that it is best to prevent rather than cure, so now wash the woollies with luke-warm water softened with household ammonia and borax; use the best soap-flakes (and not very much, as the ammonia helps to make a quick, soft lather, and anyhow it is mainly the soap which yellows and hardens woollies); and rinse the garments in water of the same temperature and also containing ammonia. It is best to rinse in two waters. Squeeze the rinsed garments

NEW ZEALAND LISTENER, MAY 13