

# The Mushroom Season

IT is a good idea during the mushroom season to keep a billy or basket in the back of the car in case you pass a paddock studded with them, being very particular, of course, about not damaging gates or fences!

I looked up some information about the food value of mushrooms. It appears they are quite high in calories in the proportion of 119 to 125, as compared with carrots; contain more protein than carrots (19 to 5), but are beaten by carrots in carbohydrates, being only 8 to 43. Mushrooms also have some Vitamin D.

If your mushrooms are quite fresh and tender you need not quite peel them—just wash and brush carefully with a soft brush. Cut a little slice off the stem and use the rest. Add a few mushrooms to your stewed steak and kidney—they transform it.

## Dried Mushrooms

Any broken ones can be included in a batch for drying. They are excellent for flavouring meat pies or pudding or soups. Just skin them and spread on a tray or dish, put in a coolish oven (regular 1 or 150 degrees) and leave the door ajar to allow for the free circulation of air. Leave till they are dry and shrivelled. Put them into paper bags, tie up and hang in a dry place.

## Mushrooms Fried or Broiled

We are generally quite happy to fry a big pan-full of mushrooms in butter; or to fry some bacon first and then fry the mushrooms in the bacon-fat; but there is a delightful way of broiling them. Just put them rounded side down in a big shallow dish. In the upturned cavity of each put half a teaspoon of butter, sprinkle with pepper, salt, and a dash of nutmeg. Add a drop or two of lemon juice. Brush the surface with melted butter, and cook at the top of a fairly hot oven for 5 to 10 minutes. They could also be grilled under the grill.

## Mushroom Souffle

Three tablespoons butter, 3 tablespoons flour, ½ teaspoon salt, few

grains paprika, 1 cup milk or soup stock, 1 cup chopped cooked mushrooms, caps and stems, 3 eggs. Blend the butter, flour and seasonings; add the milk or stock; stir constantly until boiling. Stir in the mushrooms first sauteed three minutes in one tablespoon melted butter, add the egg yolks well beaten, and then fold in the egg whites whipped stiff. Turn into an oiled baking dish, or ramekins, and bake 20 to 30 minutes in a moderate oven, 350 degrees. Serve at once.

## Mushroom Croquettes (American)

Two cups finely-chopped, peeled mushrooms, 1½ cups cooked rice (brown rice is good), 2 egg yolks, ½ cup very thick brown sauce (see below), ½ teaspoon salt, ½ teaspoon onion juice. Combine the ingredients in the order given; take tablespoonfuls and shape into balls or cylinders; roll in fine dry breadcrumbs, dip in an egg slightly beaten with ¼ cup milk, cover with more breadcrumbs; and fry in deep fat, preferably vegetable fat or oil (350 degrees), hot enough to brown a bit of bread in a minute. Serve with Brown Sauce, made thus: Melt 1½ tablespoons butter and when browning stir in 1½ tablespoons flour. Cook until pale brown, stirring; add a tablespoon each of minced carrot and onion, then 1½ cups of soup stock, any kind, stirring constantly. Season with pepper and salt and a few grains of nutmeg, add a sprig of parsley, sweet mar-

joram or thyme, and simmer 5 minutes. Strain and use as desired

## Mushroom Soup (American)

You need only a quarter to half a pound of mushrooms for this. If fresh, do not peel them—just wash them and chop them finely. Simmer for 5 minutes in 1 tablespoon of butter, with 1 tablespoon of minced onion, and 2 tablespoons of minced celery. Add 2 cups of canned chicken broth, or fresh broth, or even veal broth, and simmer for 10 minutes. Make a white sauce with 2 tablespoons butter melted in a saucepan. Add 2 tablespoons of flour, stir till smooth; then add 2 cups cold milk, salt and pepper to taste. Cook, stirring, till smooth and thickened. Add the mushroom mixture, heat and serve. You may strain it if you like.

## Mushroom Soup (N.Z.)

Half pound mushrooms, 1 cup water, 1½ cups milk, butter size of a walnut, pepper and salt, 1 dessertspoon cornflour. Skin or peel mushrooms, and break in small pieces. Put in saucepan with the water, and simmer till tender, about 15 minutes. Then add milk, butter, pepper and salt, and cornflour previously mixed with a little milk. Bring to the boil, letting it thicken, and stirring to prevent it sticking.

## Mushroom Dainties

Fry ½ lb. mushrooms in butter. Then chop very fine and mix with 2 tablespoons of breadcrumbs already moistened with top milk, season with pepper



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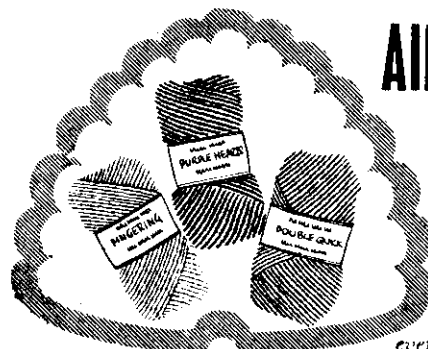
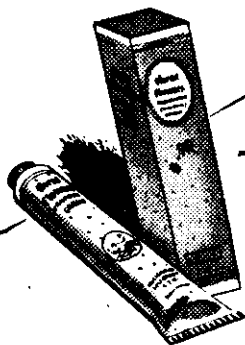
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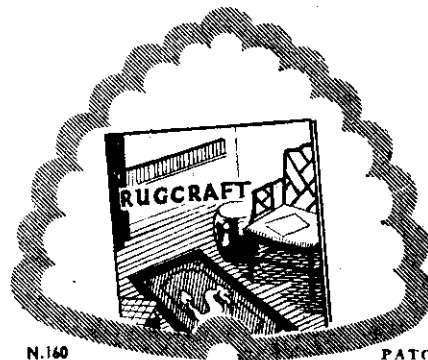
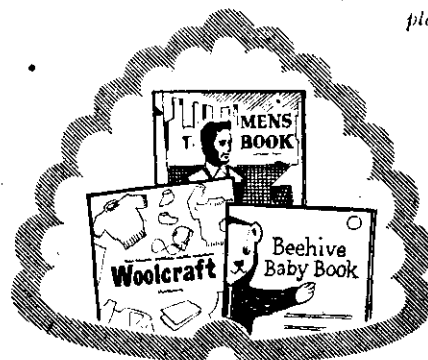
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