

CONTACT:

Georgeanna Smith, 312-233-1271
georgeanna.smith@edelman.com



**MUSHROOM
COUNCIL**

CELEBRATE NATIONAL MUSHROOM MONTH WITH NATURE'S HIDDEN TREASURE

Chef Tom Colicchio Serves Up a Mushroom Twist on a Favorite Comfort Food

SAN JOSE, Calif. (August 10, 2007) – Americans know that fall means cooler weather and warm comfort foods. As people head back to the stove, it's a great time to experiment with new twists to familiar weeknight meals. In honor of National Mushroom Month in September, Tom Colicchio, chef and owner of Craft restaurants and head judge on Bravo's "Top Chef," suggests tossing sautéed mushrooms into family favorites like mac 'n' cheese. Nutrient-dense, low-calorie and delicious, mushrooms are nature's hidden treasure.

Tom Colicchio's Mushroom Mac 'n' Cheese

Chef Colicchio is known for his love of mushrooms and for the different ways he uses them in his cooking. "Mushrooms' unique taste can bring a new level of flavor and enjoyment to almost any meal," he says.

Different mushroom varieties are constantly featured at all of Colicchio's restaurants, both as mouthwatering side dishes and to add a distinct deep and earthy flavor to meat, fish, pasta and vegetarian dishes. Try Chef Colicchio's mushroom twist on classic mac 'n' cheese at your next family gathering or dinner party. His recipe **Baked Gemelli with Crimini Mushrooms, Bacon, Savoy Cabbage, Pearl Onions and Fontina** brings upscale taste to everyday dining at home with rich flavors that are sure to please any palate.

Made With Mushrooms Means More Nutrients

Mushrooms are a healthy food you can feel good about serving to loved ones. Though people often think of light-colored vegetables as light in nutrition, a serving of four to five medium mushrooms is an excellent to good source of many nutrients, including the B vitamins riboflavin, niacin, and pantothenic acid; copper; and the antioxidant selenium.^{1,2,3,4} White button mushrooms have an antioxidant capacity similar to tomatoes, zucchini and carrots, while brown mushrooms are comparable to green beans, red peppers and broccoli.⁴

In addition, mushrooms are one of the few foods in the American diet that naturally contain vitamin D, mushrooms provide 15 IU of vitamin D,^{1,5} and higher vitamin D intakes may be associated with a lower risk of some cancers.⁶ Mushrooms also are a great choice for vegetarians since they provide several nutrients typically found in meat, including the B vitamins riboflavin, niacin and pantothenic acid.

Mushroom Mac ‘n’ Cheese Recipes for Any Occasion

Celebrate nature’s hidden treasure this fall with these delicious versions of a classic staple:

- **Mushroom ‘n’ Beer Mac ‘n’ Cheese:** A manly mushroom mac ‘n’ cheese made with beer that’s perfect for tailgating. Fit to feed a crowd, the dish combines penne pasta, cheddar cheese, beer and sautéed mushrooms. Cook it at home, wrap the pot in a blanket and just warm it up before the game. But be prepared to play some defense if the team dives in all at once!
- **Baked Mushroom Mac ‘n’ Cheese:** Looking for new recipes that sneak nutrients into the kids’ favorites? This mushroom mac ‘n’ cheese is a no-fuss weeknight meal made with sautéed mushrooms, elbow macaroni, and melted cheddar and mozzarella cheeses.
- **Mini Mushroom Mac ‘n’ Goat Cheese:** Dinner-party guests will be pleasantly surprised by this upscale version of a childhood favorite. With a beautiful presentation and flavor, the individual servings are made with a mix of exotic mushrooms, goat cheese and cavatappi pasta.

Add Mushrooms to Favorite Everyday Dishes

Don’t stop at macaroni and cheese. Sautéed mushrooms are a great addition to any dish. Try tossing them in spaghetti, omelets, burgers, quesadillas, soups or potatoes to name a few. Since mushrooms contain a natural flavor-boosting quality, known as “umami” (pronounced oo-mom'-ee), which means “delicious” in Japanese, try pairing them with other umami-packed foods like parmesan cheese, walnuts, tomatoes, grapes, broccoli and red meats. For additional information on mushrooms’ nutrients and health benefits and for usage tips and delicious recipes visit www.mushroominfo.com.

Mushroom Festival Celebration

Every September, mushroom lovers from around the world unite for the annual Mushroom Festival. This year the 22nd celebration will attract more than 100,000 visitors to the small town of Kennett Square, Penn., population 5,273, which is known as “Mushroom Capital of the World.” At the festival, mushroom lovers will partake in unique mushroom activities such as bobbing for mushrooms and sampling mushroom ice cream. For more information, visit www.mushroomfestival.org.

The Mushroom Council

The Mushroom Council is composed of fresh market producers or importers who average more than 500,000 pounds of mushrooms produced or imported annually. The mushroom program is authorized by the Mushroom Promotion, Research and Consumer Information Act of 1990 and is administered by the Mushroom Council under the supervision of the Agricultural Marketing Service. Research and promotion programs help to expand, maintain and develop markets for individual agricultural commodities in the United States and abroad. These industry self-help programs are requested and funded by the industry groups that they serve. For more information on the Mushroom Council, visit mushroomcouncil.org.

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¹ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service. 2006. USDA National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference, Release 19. Nutrient Data Laboratory Home Page, <http://www.ars.usda.gov/ba/bhnrc/ndl>

² U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Center for Food Safety & Applied Nutrition. A Food Labeling Guide. September, 1994 (Editorial revisions June, 1999) <http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/flg-toc.html>

³ U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005. Chapter 2. <http://www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines/dga2005/document/html/chapter2.htm>

⁴ Dubost, N. J., et al. (2006). Identification and quantification of ergothioneine in cultivated mushrooms by liquid chromatography-mass spectroscopy. *International Journal of Medicinal Mushrooms*, 8, 215-22.

⁵ Neuhauser, M.L., et al. (2007). (n-6) PUFA increase and dairy foods decrease prostate cancer risk in heavy smokers. *Journal of Nutrition*. 137, 1821-27.

⁶ Duyff, R. *American Dietetic Association's Complete Food and Nutrition Guide*. Third addition. Wiley & Sons. NJ. 2006.