

MUSHROOMS...

HIDDEN TREASURE OF MEATLESS CUISINE



Chermoula Grilled Cremini Kebobs
CHEF ALLEN SUSSER, Chef Allen's (Miami, FL)

- ☞ Americans are increasingly interested in including meat-free meals in their diet.¹
- ☞ This presents challenges as well as growing opportunities for foodservice. Food-savvy vegetarian customers expect unique, savory and delicious vegetarian options, rather than a token veggie pasta dish.
- ☞ Mushrooms make a vegetarian dish a meaty and satisfying meal for vegetarians and flexitarians alike.¹

“As a pioneer in bringing vegetarian cuisine to a high-end level at Greens, I had to convince the public that vegetarian cuisine was satisfying, delicious and sophisticated. Mushrooms play an important role in vegetarian cuisine because of their satisfying meaty flavor and texture and ability to make a dish special and elegant.”

– Chef Annie Somerville, Greens, San Francisco, CA



MEATLESS MEALS

- Nearly 25 percent of Americans say that they sometimes go meatless at restaurants.²
- The 2008 Harris Interactive poll for *Vegetarian Times* reported that 7.3 million Americans identify themselves as dedicated vegetarians.²
- Ten percent of consumers say they largely follow vegetarian-inclined diets and 5 percent more are “definitely interested” in shifting to vegetarian-based diets in the future.²
- Even though the percentage of Americans following a strict plant-based diet is small, this growing group is a vocal and influential one.²

WHY GO MEATLESS WITH MUSHROOMS?

Health and the environment are increasingly common reasons consumers go meatless.

HEALTH:

- Mushrooms are a natural source of vitamin D, a vitamin difficult to include in a plant-based diet since other vitamin D food sources are meat- and dairy-based.³
- Mushrooms contain antioxidants and are a good source of the B vitamins riboflavin (B2), niacin (B3) and pantothenic acid (B5).³

ENVIRONMENT:

- Mushrooms are great recyclers: they are grown in pasteurized agricultural by-products such as corn cobs and hay, and after harvesting, their growing material is used again as a rich fertilizer.



“We spend a considerable amount of time in research and development sessions creating vegetarian dishes, and mushrooms offer a great solution. Mushrooms enhance the overall visual appeal of whatever food they are paired with. In doing so, they increase the inherent level of ‘craveability’ of the dish.”

– Robert Okura, vice president of Culinary Development and corporate executive chef, Cheesecake Factory

¹ Cheskin, L.J., et al. (2008, July). Lack of energy compensation over 4 days when white button mushrooms are substituted for beef. *Appetite*, 51(1), 50-57.

² Perlik, Allison. “Meat Moves Over.” *Restaurants and Institutions*. (1 Nov. 2008). 22 June 2009 <<http://www.rimag.com/article/CA6612322.html>>.

³ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service. 2006. USDA National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference, Release 20. Nutrient Data Laboratory Home Page, <<http://www.ars.usda.gov/ba/bhncr/ndl/>>

☞ Barley and Mushroom Salad ☞
CHEF MARTIN BRESLIN, Harvard Dining Services (Cambridge, MA)



FOOD COST: PRICE COMPARISON*

Mushrooms offer a low-cost, satisfying, healthy, natural meat alternative.

- Button – 35 cents
- Portabella – 75 cents
- Cremini – 46 cents
- Tofu – 34 cents
- Seitan – 64 cents
- Tempeh – 59 cents
- Tofurkey – 98 cents
- Not Chicken Nuggets – 98 cents
- Gardenburger – 84 cents per pattie

* Prices are based on west coast broadline supplier, 4-ounce portions unless otherwise specified

“Vegetarian cuisine is not only healthy, but can also help control food costs. Meat analogues, such as veggie burgers and soy dogs, actually have about the same food cost as meat, plus they are highly processed. Mushrooms work as great meat replacers in vegetarian dishes, and they’re low in cost and high in nutritional benefits.”

– Chef Dwight Collins, University of Santa Cruz, CA

☞ Vegan Mushroom Stroganoff ☞
University of New Hampshire Dining Services (Durham, NH)



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