Ontario Mushrooms: Food of the Gods

Featured Article:

FEBRUARY

Mushrooms Can Out Survive Us All!
Mushrooms are hardy organisms. The oldest mushroom found in amber, dates back 90 million years. The spores of mushrooms are made of chitin, the hardest naturally made substance on earth. These spores can remain dormant for a century and still grow.

Animal or Plant?
In some ways, mushrooms are most closely related to animals than plants. Just like us, mushrooms take in oxygen and exhale carbon dioxide as a waste product. They belong to the Kingdom of Fungi with more than 70,000 kinds on the planet. Be careful, only 250 of these are edible.

How Mushrooms Grow:
Mushrooms grow from microscopic spores. They are grown in compost. Within three weeks, the mushroom root structure stretches across the compost floor. Peat moss is then spread over the compost and mature mushroom are produced.

Early Edible Mushrooms:
Early Romans referred to mushrooms as the “food of the gods”. In Egypt, hieroglyphics, found in the tombs of the pharaohs, suggest that they believed that the mushroom was the plant of immortality. Their distinct flavour so intoxicated the demigods, that they decreed mushrooms to be the food for royalty alone, and prohibited any commoner from handling the delicacy.

Ontario Mushrooms:
Ontario is Canada’s largest producer of mushrooms with 50 mushroom farms. Mushrooms are produced 24/7 365 days of the year. Purchasing Ontario Mushrooms not only helps the growers, their production also helps other Ontario farmers by transforming their agriculture by-products into a healthy food crop and a valuable soil conditioner (spent mushroom substrate).
The White Button Mushroom is Ontario’s largest crop but culinary demands have given cultivation to other varieties: Shiitake, Oyster, Portabello and Crimini.

Nutritional Benefits:
- Mushrooms are low in calories, fats and carbohydrates
- They have no cholesterol and are a good source of vitamins and minerals
- Mushrooms contain anti-oxidants to safeguard against cancer:
  Mushrooms contain disease fighting “phytochemicals” which can lower risk of breast cancer and prostate cancer
- Unlike most produce, mushrooms retain their nutrient values when cooked

Our Recipe of the Month for February
This month, we are featuring the Portobello mushroom. One Portobello has more potassium than a banana. The meaty texture of this mushroom makes it a suitable substitute for meat with a fraction of the calories. Enjoy!

you could win a $1,000 VIP gift voucher to one of Ontario’s Finest Inns just for purchasing Ontario food products through us between Jan 14th to March 29th 2013