

Wild Mushroom Butter

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For this recipe you can use any edible wild mushroom that you have on hand . . . chantrelles, porcini, morels, oysters, shaggy manes . . . any of them!

If mushroom season has passed, you can use any domestic mushroom typically found in your grocery store. Shiitake, cremini or button mushrooms will all produce a rich creamy butter.

Serve it on sourdough bread and you have a delicious appetizer. A dollop on top a bowl of cream of mushroom soup would also be a delicious main course.

Wild Mushroom Butter

Ingredients

1 cup softened butter, preferably raw, divided

1 shallot, minced

1/2 cup minced edible wild mushrooms (or domestic mushrooms if wild are unavailable)

1 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves

freshly ground white pepper, to taste

Method

Melt about three tablespoons of your 1 cup of butter in a cast iron skillet over a medium flame until it begins to foam. Immediately reduce the heat to medium-low and add 1 minced shallot to the hot fat.

When the minced shallots have released their fragrance, have turned translucent and their edges begin to caramelize, empty your bowl of minced wild mushrooms into skillet quickly and all at once so that the mushrooms sizzle in the pan.

Stir the mushrooms with a wooden spoon to promote even cooking, scraping any bits that happen to adhere to the bottom of your skillet.

Sprinkle about 1 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves over your mushrooms and continue to cook for a minute or two.

Turn off the heat, and allow the seasoned butter, mushrooms, shallots and thyme to cool for about ten minutes.

While the mushrooms rest and cool, beat the remaining butter until soft, smooth and easily manageable.

Spoon the seasoned fat, mushrooms, shallots and thyme into the remaining butter and fold them together until the seasonings are well-incorporated into the fat. Use a stand mixer with a paddle attachment for greatest efficiency, but if you don't have one, a mixing bowl and rubber spatula should suffice.

Grind a bit of white pepper into the butter as you gently fold the ingredients together.

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Mould the compound butter gently over waxed paper, rolling it into a log if doing so suits you. If you're lucky enough to find a good butter mould, use that instead.

Place it in the fridge and use it within a month or two. Fat is an excellent preservative.

YIELD: About 1 cup wild mushroom butter.

TIME: about 25 minutes