

## MORELS WITH MINT, PEAS, AND SHALLOT

Richard Kuo of New York City's Pearl & Ash uses preserved lemon, a Moroccan staple, to brighten this simple spring dish.

### Ingredients

- 2 tbsp. unsalted butter
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 shallot, roughly chopped
- 8 oz. fresh morels, cleaned and trimmed
- 8 oz. snow peas, trimmed
- 8 oz. sugar snap peas, trimmed
- 1 cup fresh peas
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup mint leaves, roughly torn
- 2 tbsp. minced preserved lemon peel
- 1 tsp. kosher salt

### Instructions

Heat butter and oil in a 12" skillet over medium-high. Cook shallot 1 minute. Add morels and snow and snap peas; cook 2 minutes. Add fresh peas; cook until morels are tender, 2–3 minutes. Stir in mint, preserved lemon, and salt.



# MOREL MUSHROOM RECIPES

Some ideas to inspire you on how to use delicious morel mushrooms  
- a treasured food growing in our forests -

Morels are one of the first mushrooms to arrive in the spring. They are treasured for their woody flavor. They have a relatively short growing season, so use them as much as you can during that period in early spring when they are available.

When morels come into season, you can find a bounty of other spring produce to cook with them. Ramps or wild leeks, with their bright, onion flavor, pair beautifully with the earthy mushrooms on a pizza with sharp Parmesan cheese, and just-set eggs. Peas are another great early spring vegetable. Try quickly sautéing snow peas and morels with mint and preserved lemon.

While morels are only in season for a short time, they can be dried and then used year-round. Grinding the mushrooms makes an aromatic spice rub for roast chicken. Dried morels also reconstitute remarkably well—try roasting your morel-rubbed chicken over rehydrated morels so that they absorb the chicken's juices. For our morel and asparagus spaghetti, the pasta is cooked in the water used to rehydrate the mushrooms, giving the dish an extra layer of flavor.



# MORELS IN BLACK BEAN SAUCE WITH FRIED ENOKI MUSHROOMS

Morels are paired with pieces of yuba, or tofu skin, to soak up a pungent black bean chili sauce to create this rich, flavorful almost-stew.

## Ingredients

4 oz. dried yuba sticks (dried tofu)  
¼ cup black bean sauce  
2 tsp. chili oil  
½ small shallot, minced  
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste  
2 tbsp. canola oil, plus more for frying  
3 oz. enoki mushrooms, trimmed  
3 oz. fresh morels, cleaned and trimmed  
1 ½ cups chicken stock  
6 tbsp. unsalted butter  
6 eggs, poached, for serving  
Baby or micro mustard greens, for garnish



## Instructions

Place dried yuba in a bowl of cold water; let soak until softened, about 1 hour. Drain yuba and cut into 1" pieces; set aside.  
Stir black bean sauce, chili oil, shallot, and black pepper in a bowl; set aside. Heat 2" canola oil in 4-qt. saucepan until a deep-fry thermometer reads 350°. Working in batches, fry enoki mushrooms until golden and crisp, about 1 minute. Transfer mushrooms to paper towels to drain; season with salt.  
Heat 2 tbsp. canola oil in a 12" skillet over medium-high. Cook morels until tender, 2–3 minutes. Add reserved yuba and black bean sauce, and the stock; boil. Stir in butter and salt; cook until thickened, 10–12 minutes, and divide between bowls. Nestle a poached egg in center of each dish; garnish with reserved enoki mushrooms and the mustard greens.

# ROASTED MOREL-RUBBED CHICKEN WITH CHARRED LEMON, ASPARAGUS, AND POTATOES

In this recipe, dried morels are pulverized and rubbed onto the chicken before roasting to perfume the bird and help produce evenly browned skin.

## Ingredients

1 (3 ½–4) lb. chicken, backbone removed, chicken halved  
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste  
1 oz. [dried morel mushrooms](#)  
6 tbsp. olive oil  
1 tsp. dried thyme  
½ tsp. ground mustard  
⅛ tsp. cayenne  
1 tsp. [dried carrot powder](#)  
1 lb. baby Yukon Gold potatoes  
2 lemons, sliced ¼" thick, seeds discarded  
1 lb. asparagus, trimmed  
8 oz. fresh morels, cleaned, trimmed, and halved lengthwise  
1 tsp. fenugreek seeds



## Instructions

Place chicken on a plate and season liberally on both sides with salt. Grind dried morels in a spice grinder into a powder and transfer to a bowl; stir in 2 tbsp. oil, the thyme, mustard, cayenne, and, if using, the carrot powder. Rub morel paste over skin side of chicken; let chicken sit at room temperature for 45 minutes or chill overnight. Heat oven to 375°. Bring potatoes to a boil in a 4-qt. saucepan of salted water. Reduce heat to medium-high. Cook potatoes until tender, about 15 minutes. Drain potatoes and let cool; halve and transfer to a bowl. Meanwhile heat a 10" cast-iron skillet over high. Toss 1 tbsp. oil, the lemons, salt, and pepper in a bowl. Arrange lemon slices in a single layer in skillet; cook, flipping once, until charred, 3–4 minutes. Transfer half the lemon slices to the bowl with potatoes. Add remaining oil, the asparagus, morels, fenugreek, salt, and pepper to potatoes, and toss to combine; spread in an even layer on a baking sheet. Place chicken, skin side up, over the vegetables; roast until an instant-read thermometer inserted into the thickest part of the chicken reads 165°, 40–45 minutes. Heat oven broiler; broil until skin of chicken is crisp and potatoes are browned, 4–6 minutes. Let chicken rest 10 minutes before carving. Garnish with remaining charred lemon slices.

# MOREL AND ASPARAGUS SPAGHETTI

In this bright spring pasta dish of morels, asparagus, and cream, dried morels are rehydrated in boiling water that is then used to cook spaghetti, infusing the pasta with an earthy, mushroomy flavor.

## Ingredients

- ½ oz. dried morel mushrooms (about 5 mushrooms)
- 1 lb. spaghetti
- ¼ cup olive oil, plus more for drizzling
- 3 tbsp. unsalted butter
- 6 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 3 medium shallots, finely chopped
- 1 bunch asparagus (1 pound), ends trimmed cut into 1-inch pieces
- ¾ cup vegetable stock
- ½ cup heavy cream
- Juice and zest of 1 lemon
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, taste
- ¼ cup grated parmesan cheese, plus more for serving



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## Instructions

- Place morels and 8 cups boiling water in a bowl, set aside until morels are tender, about 30 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer mushrooms to a cutting board and slice in half lengthwise.
- Pour soaking liquid into a large stockpot, discarding any dirt or sediment at the bottom. Add additional water sufficient to cook pasta, bring to a boil. Season water with salt, add spaghetti; cook, stirring, until al dente, about 13 minutes.
- Meanwhile, heat oil and butter in a 12 inch skillet over medium-high heat. Add garlic and shallots; cook, stirring occasionally, until golden, about 4 minutes. Add reserved morels, plus asparagus and stock, bring to a boil. Cook, covered, until asparagus is tender, about 3 minutes. Uncover, add cream, cook until slightly reduced, about 3 minutes.
- Remove from heat and add pasta, juice, zest, salt, pepper, and cheese. Toss until evenly combined. Drizzle with more olive oil and sprinkle with more cheese, if you like.

# Pizza WITH RAMPS, MORELS AND EGGS

In springtime one never gets tired of ramps. When they are in season you can substitute them for onions and leeks in all kinds of dishes. A delicious creation is this pizza, which pairs wild leeks with mellow, earthy morels, sharp Parmesan cheese, and just-set eggs. The runny yolks act almost like a sauce that you can sop up with your crust—but feel free to add the eggs as soon as the pizza goes in the oven if you prefer harder yolks. The best part? The dough is super-fast to pull together, so you can top this with whatever bits and pieces you have lying around in your fridge for a quick dinner.

## Ingredients

1 packet active dry yeast  
½ tsp. sugar  
1 ¾ cups flour, plus more for dusting  
½ tsp. kosher salt  
1 tbsp. unsalted butter  
1 oz. ramps (about 5), trimmed, stems diced and leaves cut into 2" pieces  
⅓ oz. morels (about 10)  
1 tbsp. olive oil  
4 oz. mozzarella cheese  
2 eggs  
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste  
Grated Parmesan, for serving



## Instructions

In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a hook, combine yeast, sugar, and ¾ cups water heated to 115°; let sit until foamy, about 10 minutes. Add flour and salt and mix on medium speed until dough forms. Increase speed to medium-high and knead until dough is smooth, about 5 minutes. Cover bowl with plastic wrap and let rise 30 minutes.

Heat oven to 450°. Melt butter in a small skillet over medium-high; cook ramp stems and morels until ramps are soft, 2 minutes, and set aside. Divide dough into 2 balls. On a lightly floured surface and working with one ball of dough at a time, roll dough into an 8" circle about ¾" thick. Place onto a parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Divide oil between dough, and top with cheese, ramp stems, morels, and ramp leaves. Bake 15 minutes, rotating pans halfway through; remove from oven and top each with an egg. Cook 5 minutes more, or until egg is lightly set. Finish with black pepper and Parmesan and serve immediately.

## Trout with Fiddleheads, Morels, and Wild Onions

This is essentially a chunky morel sauce with simply seared trout. If you think of it that way it doesn't seem so esoteric. I used a larger trout for this recipe, but any trout will do. I prefer to leave the skin on because it gets über-crispy with this cooking method, but remove the skin if you must. It is important to have fresh mushrooms for this dish, so if you can't find or afford morels, use some other mushroom; maybe shiitake. As for ramps and fiddleheads, they are in markets (and forests) right now.

## Ingredients

1/2 pound fiddleheads  
Salt  
1 1/2 to 2 pounds trout fillets (or 1 small trout per person)  
1/4 cup unsalted butter, divided  
1 pound fresh morels, sliced into rings  
1/2 pound ramps or other wild onions, or scallions  
3 garlic cloves, minced  
1 cup chicken stock  
2 to 3 tablespoons sour cream  
1 cup sorrel, cut into a chiffonade (optional)  
Black pepper  
Violets, for garnish (optional)



## Instructions

You'll need to blanch the fiddleheads first. Bring a large pot of water to a boil and salt it well. Get a bowl of ice water ready. Boil the fiddleheads for 2 minutes, then shock them in the ice water. If you are using bracken fiddleheads you will need to leave them in the ice water for 1 hour. Regular fiddleheads you can remove as soon as they are cold.

Take the trout out of the fridge and salt it lightly. Let it rest on the counter while you make the morel sauce.

Put the morels and the white parts of the onions into a large sauté pan. Turn the heat to high until everything begins to sizzle, then turn the heat down to medium-high. Soon the morels will release a lot of water. Sprinkle salt over everything now.

When the liquid has almost boiled away, add 2 tablespoons of butter and shake the pan to coat everything. Let the morels and onions brown a little, then add the garlic. Let this cook for 1 minute, then add the chicken stock. Use a wooden spoon to scrape up any browned bits from the bottom of the pan. Boil this down by half and turn off the heat.

To cook the fish, get another sauté pan hot and add the remaining butter. Wipe the skin side of the fish with a paper towel to dry it. Once the butter is hot, lay the trout into the pan, skin side down. Turn the heat down to medium-high for a skinny fillet, and down to medium-low for a very thick piece of lake trout or chinook salmon.

Let the trout cook for 2 minutes -- you may need to press down on it with a spatula to ensure even contact between the skin and pan. After two minutes, use a large spoon to start basting the meat side of the trout with the butter. Baste a dozen times or so and leave it alone. Then baste again a dozen more times. If you do this a third time, your fish will be totally cooked through, but I stick to twice so the fish is just barely cooked in the center. Move the trout to individual plates.

To finish the dish, turn the heat to high on the morels. When the stock boils, add the fiddleheads and the green parts of the onions and the sorrel, if using. Cover the pan and turn the heat to medium. Let the greens wilt. Uncover the pan and stir well. Turn off the heat. When the sauce stops bubbling, stir in the sour cream and pour next to the trout.

## Morel Cracker Crumb Fry

Serves 6 to 8 as an appetizer

Collecting morels in May is a Midwestern American tradition for many admirers of this mushroom. Be sure to keep the mushrooms dry and crisp. Cook small amounts at a time so they can be served hot.

- 20 to 30 small morels
- 1 egg, slightly beaten with 2 tablespoons cold water
- 1/2 cup cracker crumbs
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 5 tablespoons butter
- 2 tablespoons olive oil

Roll the morels in the egg mixture. Put the cracker crumbs, salt, and pepper in a paper bag. Quickly shake the morels a few at a time in the bag. Melt the butter with the oil in a sauté pan or skillet. Sauté the morels until brown and crisp.

--Louise Freedman

**ALTERNATE MUSHROOMS: Oyster Mushroom, Puffballs**

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## Morels and Buttermilk

Serves 10 as an appetizer

Harry Knighton, founder and executive secretary of the North American Mycological Association, recommends preparing morels this way.

- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground white pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon dry mustard
- 1/8 teaspoon ground turmeric
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/4 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 cup flour
- 20 to 25 large morels, cut halved lengthwise
- 1/2 cup buttermilk
- 4 tablespoons butter
- 2 tablespoons mild vegetable oil

Combine the salt, pepper, paprika, sugar, mustard, turmeric, garlic powder, and onion powder with the flour. Dip the morels in the buttermilk and roll in the flour mixture. Melt the butter with the oil in a sauté pan or skillet and sauté the morels until crisp and brown on all sides.

--Harry Knighton

**ALTERNATE MUSHROOMS: Puffballs**

## Morels Stuffed with Sausage

Serves 10 as an appetizer

Stuffed morels are great finger food for parties. They harmonize with

In a sauté pan or skillet, fry the sausage quickly and break it into small pieces. Add the chopped onion and cook for 2 to 3 minutes. Remove as much fat as possible with a spoon. Add



sherry or a red wine such as zinfandel or cabernet sauvignon.

- 1 pound finely ground sausage
- 1 tablespoon minced onion
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley
- 1/3 cup cracker crumbs
- 20 to 25 large morels, halved lengthwise

the salt and pepper, nutmeg, parsley, and cracker crumbs. Fill the morels with the mixture, mounding the filling. Place the mushrooms in a buttered shallow baking dish. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes in a preheated 450° oven.

--*Kitchen Magic with Mushrooms*

ALTERNATE MUSHROOMS: Common Store Mushroom, Shiitake

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## Morels Stuffed with Walnuts

Serves 4 to 6 as an appetizer

Morels are great for stuffing--especially with bacon and walnuts.

- 2 shallots or green onions, minced
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1/2 cup bread crumbs
- 1 bacon slice, cooked crisp and finely crumbled
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts
- 1/2 cup heavy cream
- Salt
- 10 to 15 large morels, sliced lengthwise

In a sauté pan or skillet, sauté the shallots in the butter until translucent. Stir in the bread crumbs, bacon, and walnuts. Remove from the heat and mix in the cream. Add salt to taste. Stuff the morels, using your fingers. Place the mushrooms in a shallow buttered baking dish and bake in a preheated 450° oven for 20 minutes or until they turn brown.

--*Louise Freedman*

ALTERNATE MUSHROOMS: Common Store Mushroom, Horse Mushroom, Meadow Mushroom

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## Stuffed Morels, Japanese Style

Serves 10 as an appetizer

The stuffing in this recipe is equally tasty with other mushrooms. Try filling common store or shiitake mushrooms with this mixture.

- 20 large morels, halved lengthwise
- 1/2 pound ground pork

- 1 small onion, minced
- 9 canned water chestnuts, minced
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1/8 teaspoon five-spice powder
- 1 tablespoon dry sherry
- 1 tablespoon arrowroot

In a mixing bowl, combine the pork, onion, water chestnuts, soy sauce, five-spice powder, and dry sherry. Stir in the arrowroot. Mound as much filling as will fit into the hollow morels. Arrange the mushrooms in a large baking pan. Bake in a preheated 450° oven for 20 to 25 minutes.

--Louise Freedman

## Morels Stuffed with Panade Paste

In this dish, whole morels are filled with a rich bacon-flavored stuffing.

Panade Paste:

- 4 bacon slices, cut into 1-inch slices
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1/2 cup fine bread crumbs
- White pepper to taste
- 1/3 cup half and half or more
- 30 to 35 morels, large enough to be filled through the stem
- 3 to 4 tablespoons butter
- 1/4 cup Madeira

To make the panade paste, fry the bacon until very crisp. Remove from the pan with a slotted spoon and drain on a paper towel. Allow the bacon to cool. Blend it in a blender or food processor with the parsley until it is almost a paste.

Melt the 2 tablespoons butter in a small saucepan. Add the bread crumbs, bacon-parsley mixture, and the white pepper. Stir for 1 minute or until the bread crumbs are slightly browned. Turn off the heat and blend the cream slowly into the bread crumb mixture until it becomes a pliable paste.

Prepare the morels by trimming the stems to accommodate the filling. Fill each morel, using a pastry bag. Melt 3 to 4 tablespoons butter in a large sauté pan or skillet. Sauté the morels until they are brown on all sides. When nearly done, pour the Madeira over the morels. Quickly turn each morel to coat it with the sauce.

--Louise Freedman

## Morel Bisque

Serves 4 as a first course

The characteristic flavor of morels is highlighted in this bisque. Add buttery croutons to each soup bowl just before serving, if you like.

- 4 tablespoons butter
- 1 small onion, minced
- 1 pound morels, chopped
- 2 tablespoons flour

In a sauté pan or skillet, melt the butter and sauté the onions and the morels for about 10 minutes. Stir in the flour and cook 2 to 3 minutes. Stir in the beef broth until well blended. Add the half and half and white pepper. Simmer, but do not allow the soup to boil. Just before serving, add the sherry and salt, and sprinkle the parsley on top.

--Louise Freedman

- 3 cups beef broth
- 2 cups half and half
- White pepper to taste
- 2 tablespoons dry sherry
- Salt to taste
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley or chives

ALTERNATE MUSHROOMS: Chanterelle, Fairy-ring Mushroom, Shaggy mane

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## Steamed Morels

Serves 4 to 6 as a side dish

Steaming makes morels plump and succulent.

- 20 to 25 small firm morels
- 5 tablespoons butter
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 2 teaspoons chopped fresh tarragon
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh chives or parsley
- Salt and pepper

Steam the morels for 10 minutes. While they are cooking, melt the butter in a saucepan. Add the garlic, tarragon, chives, and salt and pepper to taste.

Place the morels in a serving dish and pour the butter sauce over them. Save the liquid from the steamed morels for use with other dishes.

--Bill Freedman

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## Morels in Madeira Sauce

Serves 4 to 5 as a side dish

Philip Turniey owner-chef of a restaurant in Mariposa, California, prepared our collected morels in this classic way. He served sourdough bread to dip into the sauce that remained.

- 1 pound morels, split lengthwise
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 1/4 cup Madeira
- Salt to taste
- Chopped fresh chives (optional)

In a sauté pan or skillet, sauté the mushrooms in the butter for 2 to 3 minutes on each side. Remove the morels to a warm serving dish with a slotted spoon. Add the Madeira to the pan. Taste the sauce and add salt. Boil rapidly until the liquid is reduced to the consistency of syrup. Pour the sauce over the morels. Sprinkle the chives on top.

--Philip Turniey, Gardenia Cantina Restaurant

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## Chicken Breasts and Morels

Serves 4 as a main course

Chicken and morels are beautifully matched, especially when served over pasta and accompanied with a dry white wine.

- 2 dozen fresh morels, sliced, or 2 ounces dried morels and 1/2 cup heavy cream
- 1/4 cup flour
- 4 single chicken breasts, skinned, boned, and pounded flat
- 5 tablespoons butter
- 2 tablespoons oil
- 2 tablespoons brandy
- 1/4 cup beef broth
- 1/4 cup heavy cream (use the reserved cream if you have used dried morels)
- 1/2 teaspoon green peppercorns, crushed
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- Salt and pepper

If using dried morels, simmer them in the cream until soft, about 15 minutes. Do not allow to boil. Reserve the cream.

Flour the chicken breasts lightly. Heat 2 tablespoons of the butter and the oil in a sauté pan or skillet, and sauté the chicken quickly, about 3 minutes on each side, then remove to a heated pan. Deglaze the pan with brandy. Pour this over the chicken breasts. Place them in a preheated 250° oven while you prepare the sauce.

Melt the remaining 3 tablespoons butter in the same pan. Add the morels and cook until they become semi-dry. Add the beef broth and cream and let it cook down into a sauce. Add the peppercorns, lemon juice, and salt and pepper to taste.

Place the chicken breasts on a warm platter and cover with the sauce just before serving.

--Louise Freedman

**ALTERNATE MUSHROOM:** Chanterelle