

Dank Winter Mushroom Soup

You might think that blending all these unique mushrooms into a soup is a strange culinary choice, given that they are all so pretty and whatnot. Au contraire! The variety, along with the roasting treatment and some funky fungal garnishing, produce a rich, smooth soup of wonderful complexity. Add a few good ol' fashioned brown mushrooms if you want, but take it easy and use ones that have a good aroma and a properly unfurled cap.

- 250g oyster mushrooms, cleaned and torn
- 150g lion's mane mushrooms, cleaned and cubed
- 150g chestnut mushrooms, cleaned and stems trimmed
- 250g of brown mushrooms, cleaned and sliced
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 100g butter
- 1 medium onion, finely diced
- 2 cloves garlic, finely sliced
- 750ml vegetable or chicken stock
- 150ml cream
- 2 sprigs of thyme
- 1 bay leaf
- Salt and fine ground white pepper to taste
- Fresh parsley, chopped (for garnish)
- 1 coral mushroom, wood blewett or foraged rooting shank, torn or sliced. (for garnish)

Preheat your oven to 200°C. Chuck a heavy-based saucepan over a low-medium heat source.

Toss the prepared mushrooms in the olive oil, season with salt and pepper, and roast for 15 minutes in the oven, on a tray lined with a baking sheet

Meanwhile, in the large, heavy-based saucepan, sauté the onions and garlic in the butter over low-medium heat until very soft. Avoid colouration. The onions should be translucent and fragrant, which should take about 7 minutes.

Add the stock and the thyme to the pot, bring to a boil, then reduce the heat and let it simmer for about fifteen minutes. Add the roasted mushrooms and simmer for a further 15 minutes. Add the cream and briefly return to the boil.

Blend it until as smooth as possible. If you like your soup with a bit more texture, you can blend only a portion and leave some mushroom pieces whole.

After blending, taste and season with salt and white pepper as needed.

For the garnish, toss the rooting shanks (or other mushrooms) in the parsley and a generous drizzle of EV olive oil.

Ladle the soup into large bowls, garnish with the dressed coral mushrooms and serve with bread, salad and love.