

Hungarian Style Mushroom Paprikash and Noodles (Amended 2-19-21)

1-1/2 lbs. cremini or mixed mushrooms, halved or quartered in roughly 1" chunks if the mushrooms are large

3 tablespoons olive oil

½ teaspoon dried thyme or 3 branches of fresh thyme

Salt and pepper

2 tablespoons butter

3 cloves garlic finely chopped

1 large leek (save the dark green part for stock or compost) or yellow onion, diced to make about 1-1/2 cups

1 sweet red pepper thinly sliced

1 tablespoon tomato paste

1 – 4 tablespoons sweet Hungarian paprika

2 tablespoons all-purpose flour

2 cups stock, any flavor

1 - 3 tablespoons best red wine vinegar

1 tablespoon tamari or soy sauce

1 teaspoon caraway seeds

1 bay leaf

1 cup reserved cooking water for the noodles

1 tablespoon or more lemon juice

½ cup sour cream, plus more for garnish if desired

Parsley for garnish if desired

1 package wide egg noodles, cooked, reserve 1 cup of cooking water before straining

Step 1

Preheat oven to 450 degrees F. Put the mushrooms on a baking sheet with sides. Drizzle with olive oil, thyme, salt and pepper, toss to distribute the oil and spice. Spread out as evenly as possible for roasting, not steaming. Bake for 20 minutes, stirring or shaking the pan after 10 minutes.

Step 2

Put the butter and garlic in a large pot or Dutch oven, turn the heat to low and cook the garlic for 1 or 2 minutes until the butter is simmering and the garlic is soft but not brown. Increase the heat to medium. Add the leeks or onion and stir for about 2 minutes until the leek/onion starts to soften. Season with salt and pepper. Add the red pepper slices and stir to combine. Cook about 8 minutes stirring occasionally or until the leek/onion begins to brown. Stir in the tomato paste.

Step 3

Move the pot off the heat and stir in one tablespoon of paprika. Move the pot back on the heat and stir until the paprika is fragrant about 1 minute. Stir in the flour cooking for at least 1 -2 minutes, to be sure it's not raw. Add the stock, 1 tablespoon vinegar and tamari, caraway seeds and bay leaf stirring to mix all the ingredients and release any browned bits from the bottom of the pot. When the mixture simmers, add the roasted mushrooms and any sheet pan juices, reduce the heat to low, partly cover the pot with a lid and simmer for about 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Taste and adjust the seasoning with more salt, pepper, paprika or vinegar. Continue cooking several minutes more while preparing to serve. The paprika needs the heat and fat in the recipe to open the flavor of the paprika.

Step 4

Prepare a large pot with hot salted water and keep on low heat until the Mushroom Paprikash is almost done. Cook the noodles according to the package directions. (Use a cup of the cooking water at this point to warm up your serving bowls) When the noodles are done, reserve 1 cup of the cooking water before straining. Add about ½ cup of the cooking water to the mushroom mixture stirring to combine. Add more cooking water if you think the mixture is too thick or dry. Taste and adjust the seasoning again with more salt, pepper or paprika. The flavor of the sauce should be bold. Stir in the lemon juice and the sour cream.

Serve the mushroom mixture over the noodles with a bit of parley and more sour cream to garnish if desired.

Step 5 Meat Option

Prepare a NY Strip steak or your preference of cut the way you like it. Slice in thin strips and garnish the top of the Paprikash mixture with the steak slices. Any meat you have would be fine too.

Cooking Class Preparation

Wash and prep the vegetables. Put all the ingredients out on the counter. Not essential, but measure ingredients if you like.

We will relax and chat while the mushroom mixture is simmering.

Optional Enhancements

Create a Hungarian play list for atmosphere. There are so many composers to choose from. Here's [one music file](#) you may find familiar.

If you enjoy wine with your dinner, choose any red you like or any Hungarian wine you might find locally. The most famous Hungarian red is from the Eger region is known as bull's blood and is a blend of several grapes to make a dark, medium body wine that's plummy in the mouth and spicy in aroma. A Bordeaux style blend of Cabernet and Merlot is another Hungarian favorite from the Villány region where the climate is like Bordeaux, France.