

Published February 25th, 2015

Roasted Mushroom Orzo: The Perfect Accompaniment

By Susie Iventosch



Roasted Mushroom Orzo on a bed of arugula with a side of glazed carrots Photo Susie Iventosch

We were all set to grill pheasant one night, but I was struggling with what to serve with it. We had just done potatoes the night before, but still, I wanted some kind of starch to go along with the pheasant. So, I was thinking of making our Mexican-style orzo casserole, but it didn't seem to be a good fit. Then the lightbulb went on as I was looking at a package of mushrooms in the vegetable drawer. Why not make an orzo casserole with roasted mushrooms and caramelized shallots instead? And I had some of that amazing Trader Joe's triple cream, soft ripened cheese, which was almost jumping out of the refrigerator, saying, "Pick me! Pick me!" So I did. This dish turned out to be the perfect accompaniment to the pheasant and then, the next night, we had the leftovers as our main meal along with some delicious rosemary bread. Though I didn't add it, a little grated Gruyere would be a nice touch to this dish, too!

INGREDIENTS

- 1 16-ounce package of Orzo
- 1 yellow onion, coarsely chopped
- 1 shallot, coarsely chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2-3 cups sliced cremini mushrooms
- 6-8 dried porcini mushrooms, reconstituted in boiling water, drained and cut into bite-sized pieces
- 1/2 cup Trader Joe's Le Delice De Bourgogne Triple Cream Soft Ripened Cheese (Use about 1/2 of the package; save some to use with crackers another time. I used the skin and all.)
- 1/2 cup plain low-fat Greek yogurt or sour cream
- 1/2 cup freshly-grated Parmesan cheese

DIRECTIONS

Heat oven to 425 F. Toss sliced mushrooms and pieces of reconstituted porcini mushrooms with 1-2 tablespoons olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Place on a sprayed or oiled baking sheet. Roast in hot oven until just beginning to brown, approximately 7-8 minutes. Remove from oven. Lower oven temperature to 350 F.

In a sauté pan, caramelize chopped onions, shallots and garlic in 2 tablespoons olive oil. Set aside.

Cook orzo according to directions. Drain and place in a large bowl. Add caramelized onion mixture, roasted mushrooms, Trader Joe's Le Delice De Bourgogne Triple Cream Cheese and Greek yogurt. Mix well.

Turn out into well-greased baking dish. You can choose either a 9-by-13 or 9-by-9 inch dish. It will be taller in the 9-by-9, and be a bit moister, but the 9-by-3 offers a crunchier cheesy topping. Sprinkle top with grated Parmesan or Gruyere, and bake at 350 F for approximately 25 minutes, or until top is nicely browned and cheese is bubbly. Bon appetite!

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