



INGREDIENTS

Serves 4

- 4 slices of crusty country loaf
- 4 flat mushrooms (white or brown)
- vegetable oil and knob of butter for frying

METHOD

- 1 Paint the bread with oil and grill it on both sides until golden, using a ribbed grill (or frying) pan.
- 2 Heat some vegetable oil in a frying pan until hot. Add the mushrooms whole to the pan.
- 3 Fry on both sides until cooked and golden. Add the butter just at the end of cooking. (Don't overload the pan as you want it to stay as hot as possible. The mushrooms will release lots of water, but at a high heat this will evaporate.)
- 4 Place one mushroom onto each piece of toast and serve.



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ABOUT MUSHROOMS



- It is thought that the Egyptians prized mushrooms very highly and thought them to be the plant of immortality. It is said that the Pharaohs were so intrigued by the delicious flavour of mushrooms that they decreed only royalty could eat mushrooms.
- The Romans prized truffles as well as mushrooms - they thought that they were formed during thunderstorms by flashes of lightning.
- Beneath the soil of the Malheur National Forest in eastern Oregon, a fungus that has been slowly weaving its way through the roots of trees for centuries has become the largest living organism ever found. Popularly known as the honey mushroom, the *armillaria ostoyae* started from a single spore (invisible to the naked eye) and has been spreading its black, shoestring filaments (called rhizomorphs) through the forest for an estimated 2,400 years, killing trees as it grows. It now covers 2,200 acres.
- The most popular/sold mushroom is the white *agaricus bisporous*. It accounts for approximately 95 per cent of mushroom sales in Britain. It can be picked at four stages of its growing cycle: the button mushroom (which will double in size every 24 hours), the closed-cup mushroom, the open-cup mushroom, and finally the large, flat mushroom.