

Smoked salmon and mushroom pasta

BY DAVID CAMPICHE

The lobster mushroom colonizes the Russula mushroom, a white, bitter and inedible substance, transforming it into a dense, orange wonder. Its color and texture are similar to a lobster.

This mushroom appears in early fall and grows in dry ground long before other popular mushrooms. It requires slow and lengthy cooking to tenderize but is certainly worth the wait. I chose to make a wild mushroom pasta, featuring a white sauce (bechamel or mornay with the addition of cheese), smoked salmon and a homemade salmon stock.

For the topping, smoke Coho salmon pieces for two hours at 170 degrees Fahrenheit, separating the skeleton, collar and stomach from the fillets. The beauty of this is simple: there is little waste and plenty to use.

Smoked salmon pasta with lobster mushrooms

Ingredients

- 6 to 8 ounces smoked salmon
- Three large lobster mushrooms, chopped
- 1/2 onion, diced
- Three stalks celery, finely diced
- One carrot
- Fresh ginger
- 2 tablespoons fish paste
- 1 tablespoon curry paste
- 3 cups kale, chopped
- 2 cups salmon broth
- 1/4 cup cream
- 1/2 cup dry white wine
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- 6 tablespoons butter
- 4 tablespoons flour (gluten-free rice flour can be used)
- 8 ounces pasta
- 4 tablespoons parsley, finely chopped

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons butter
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper or red chili flakes to taste
- Parmesan cheese to taste

Preparation

Cook the pasta in salted water. Add in kale at the last minute and stir into the hot pasta. Strain and hold. Sauté the lobster mushrooms, onion and celery in equal parts of butter and olive oil until the onion is translucent. Whisk in the flour.

Stir until the roux is toasty. Stirring constantly, add in white wine and then stock, a little bit at a time. Continue to stir over medium heat until the sauce is smooth and thickened.

Add the cream and continue to stir until the sauce is silky and smooth. Add half of the chopped parsley, cayenne, salt and pepper. At the last moment, swirl in the smoked salmon bits. Toss the pasta with the sauce. Shave on parmesan cheese and garnish with other half of the parsley. Serve immediately with a tossed green salad.

Create a stock with the salmon head, celery, onion and carrot, along with 2 tablespoons of fish sauce, fresh ginger and 1 tablespoon of curry paste. Slow cook the broth for two hours and strain.

Summer is such a pleasure with the availability of fresh salmon, garden vegetables and the early mushrooms: chanterelles and lobster fungi. Autumn and heavy rain will bring out many other species of wild mushrooms – and a particular joie de vivre.

David Campiche is a potter, poet, writer and lifelong resident of the Long Beach Peninsula with a keen interest in adventure, fine and culinary arts. Find more about his work at davidcampiche.com.



Photos by David Campiche

ABOVE: Fettuccine pasta, topped with a serving of smoked salmon. **BELOW:** Smoked salmon and pasta atop a bed of spinach, topped with shaved parmesan.



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