

Wild Mushroom Stroganoff

Serves 4

leave the dough on the surface covered by the upturned bowl or transfer the dough to a clean bowl and cover it with clingfilm that has been lightly oiled on the side that is facing the dough. Leave it until it looks as though it has doubled in bulk, which will be about an hour at room temperature.

Having made the dough and left it to rise, pre-heat the oven to gas mark 8, 450°F (230°C), along with the pizza stone or baking sheet. The next stage is to tip the dough back on to a work surface that has been sprinkled generously with polenta to prevent it from sticking. Knock all the air out of the dough and knead it for a couple of seconds to begin shaping it into a ball. Then dust your rolling pin with polenta and roll the dough out to a circle that is approximately 10 inches (25.5 cm) in diameter. Finish by stretching it out with your hands, working from the centre and using the flat of your fingers to push the dough out; it doesn't need to be a perfect round, but you want it to be a fairly thin-based pizza, with slightly raised edges.

Then, using a thick oven glove, very carefully lift the baking sheet or pizza stone out of the oven and sprinkle it with a little polenta (cornmeal). Now carefully lift the pizza dough on to the stone or baking sheet and quickly arrange teaspoonfuls of ricotta here and there all over. After that, scatter the mozzarella and Gorgonzola pieces (or other cheese) in between and, finally, scatter the parmesan over. Bake the whole thing on a high shelf for 10-12 minutes, until the crust is golden brown and the cheese is bubbling. You can lift the edge up slightly to check that the underneath is crisp and brown. Finally, carefully remove the baking sheet or pizza stone from the oven, again using a thick oven glove, and serve the pizza on hot plates straightaway ■

Serve this wild mushroom stroganoff with some plain rice and a crisp green salad or some lightly buttered spinach.

2 lb (900 g) mixed fresh wild mushrooms or other mushrooms (such as flat, chestnut or shiitake), thickly sliced

½ oz (10 g) dried porcini mushrooms

10 fl oz (275 ml) dry white wine or Madeira

2 large onions, peeled

2-3 oz (50-75 g) butter

7 fl oz (200 ml) crème fraîche

freshly grated nutmeg

salt and freshly milled black pepper

You will also need a lidded, heavy-based frying pan, approximately 10 inches (25.5 cm) in diameter.

First of all, heat the wine (or Madeira) in a small saucepan until it just begins to bubble around the edges. Then remove it from the heat, add the porcini and leave it aside to soak. What you now need to do is to cut each onion in half, then each half needs to be sliced and the layers separated out into half-moon shapes.

Now melt 2 oz (50 g) of the butter in the frying pan and gently soften the onions for about 10 minutes or until they have turned golden brown. Then, with a draining spoon, remove them to a plate. Next, turn the heat up high, and add a third of the fresh mushrooms (you need to cook them in batches). Brown them and then transfer them to join the onions, adding a little extra butter if it is needed.

When all the mushrooms are browned, return the whole lot to the pan, along with the onions. Meanwhile, drain the porcini, reserving the liquid and chop them. Next, add the porcini to the pan with the wine

(or Madeira) and season with salt and freshly milled black pepper. Now bring it up to a gentle simmer, turn the heat to low, put a lid on and leave to cook gently for 30 minutes.

Next, taste to check the seasoning, remove the pan from the heat and stir in the crème fraîche with a few good gratings of fresh nutmeg. Re-heat, without allowing it to come back to the boil ■