



Kid-Created Green Bean Casserole Cups

By Erin Fletter

Prep Time 15 / **Cook Time** 18 / **Serves** 6 - 12

Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

bake: to cook food with dry heat, as in an oven.

blend: to stir together two or more ingredients until just combined; blending is a gentler process than mixing.

coat: to apply a covering of flour, breadcrumbs, sauce, or batter to food before baking or frying.

Equipment

- Oven
- Oven mitt or pot holder
- Muffin pan (12-cup)
- Blender
- Liquid measuring cup
- Measuring spoons
- Dry measuring cups
- Mixing bowl
- Cereal bowl

Ingredients

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- 12 wonton wrappers + extra in case some rip ******(for GLUTEN ALLERGY sub 3 gluten-free/nut-free store-bought pie crusts or make your own gluten-free pie crust—more info below)******

- 14 medium-to-large sized button mushroom stems—if also making Stuffed Mushrooms, save caps for that recipe **** (Omit stems for MUSHROOM ALLERGY)****
- 1 1/2 C frozen green beans
- 1 T butter **** (for DAIRY ALLERGY sub a nut-free oil, like olive or vegetable oil)****
- 1/2 C heavy whipping cream **** (for DAIRY ALLERGY sub coconut cream)****
- 1/2 C whole milk **** (for DAIRY ALLERGY sub dairy-free/nut-free milk)****
- 2 tsp garlic powder
- 2 T cornstarch **** (for CORN ALLERGY sub arrowroot powder)****
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/8 tsp ground black pepper
- 1/4 C grated Parmesan cheese **** (for DAIRY ALLERGY sub nutritional yeast, found in health food stores)****
- French fried onions or panko bread crumbs, optional **** (Omit for GLUTEN ALLERGY or sub gluten-free/nut-free panko bread crumbs)****

Food Allergen Substitutions

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Gluten/Wheat: Omit French fried onions or panko bread crumbs OR substitute gluten-free/nut-free panko bread crumbs. For wonton wrappers, substitute 3 store-bought gluten-free pie crusts or make your own gluten-free pie crust dough before class: Mix 1/2 C cassava or gluten-free flour (use a blend with xanthan gum) together with 1 pinch of salt. Add 1/4 C cold butter in chunks, then use clean hands to break up the butter into the flour until it's the size of peas. Add 1/2 tsp vinegar and cold water, starting with 1 T of cold water and adding more as needed (drier climates may need more water). Using your hands, work the vinegar and water into the dough until it all holds together. Roll out the dough until it's no thicker than 1/4 inch using a rolling pin or an empty, clean water bottle just before class starts. Kid chefs can punch out circular shapes using the top of a wide-mouthed mason jar or cut 4" x 4" squares freehand.

Mushrooms: Omit mushroom stems.

Dairy: Substitute a nut-free oil, like olive or vegetable oil, for butter. Substitute coconut cream for heavy cream. Substitute vegetable broth for milk. Substitute nutritional yeast (found in health food stores) for Parmesan cheese.

Corn: Sub arrowroot powder for cornstarch.

Instructions

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preheat + twist + pull

Preheat your oven to 400 F. Twist and pull the stems from **14 button mushrooms**. Set the mushroom caps aside in a mixing bowl to use for the Creamed Spinach Stuffed Mushrooms or another recipe. (For mushroom allergies: Omit the mushroom stems. Also, you will be slicing mini sweet peppers in halves lengthwise and setting those aside for the Creamed Spinach Stuffed Mushrooms (Peppers) recipe instead of mushroom caps.)

add + blend

Add the mushroom stems, **1/2 cup heavy whipping cream, 1/2 cup milk, 2 teaspoons garlic powder, 2 tablespoons cornstarch, 1 tablespoon melted butter, 1/2 teaspoon salt, and 1/8 teaspoon black pepper** to your blender. Blend until mixture (with or without mushroom stems) is puréed and smooth!

pour + mix

Pour **3/4 cup of the mushroom cream mixture** into a bowl and mix in **1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese**. Save the remaining mushroom cream mixture for the Creamed Spinach Stuffed Mushrooms (see recipe)!

add + stir + coat

To the mushroom and cheese mixture, add **1 1/2 cup of frozen green beans**. Stir to coat the beans!

press + fill + bake

Press **12 wonton wrappers** into your muffin pan wells (1 wrapper per well). Fill each wonton cup with about 2 to 3 tablespoons of green bean mixture. Sprinkle each cup with optional French fried onions or panko bread crumbs. Bake the Green Bean Casserole Cups for 15 to 18 minutes until golden brown and bubbly on top! Let them cool slightly before eating, as they will be very hot!

Featured Ingredient: Mushrooms!

Hi! I'm Toady! I'm a Mushroom!

"I'm also a fun guy! Get it? Fun guy—fungi? I'm good in salads, sandwiches, soups, stews, on pizza, with pasta, and stuffed with other yummy foods. Plus, you can cook and use me in recipes just like you would meat!"

History

The first mushrooms were thought to be cultivated in Southeast Asia, but it is not known why for sure. Perhaps someone discovered that mushrooms grew by accident and sought out a growing method.

All mushrooms are fungi, but not all fungi are mushrooms! There are an estimated 1.5 to 2 million species of fungi on planet Earth, of which only 80,000 have been properly identified. There are over 250 kinds of mushrooms that people eat.

Mushrooms are a kind of fungus that look like umbrellas! They grow in places like yards, forests, fields, and gardens.

What is a fungus? It's a kind of living organism that is different from plants. In fact, mushrooms are more like humans than plants!

Fungi walls are made of a fibrous substance called "chitin," rather than cellulose, like plants. Also, plants produce their own energy from the sun from photosynthesis, but mushrooms and other fungi don't need the sun for energy!

Many fungi eat by breaking down dead plants. However, other fungi feast on dead animals, bird droppings, manure, wallpaper paste, fruit, and living animals. So fungi are like nature's cleanup crew!

The yeast that makes bread rise is a type of fungi.

Mushrooms are sometimes called Toadstools! Can you picture a toad sitting on top of a giant mushroom?

Some mushrooms are good to eat, like portobellos, crimini, and shiitakes, while others are extremely poisonous. Never eat a mushroom you find growing outside unless you are with a mushroom expert!

The Honey Mushroom in the Blue Mountains of Oregon is the world's largest living thing. It is actually a mushroom colony and is believed to be at least 2,000 years old! It covers almost four square miles!

Some mushrooms live entirely underwater.

In the Amazon rainforest, mushrooms release spores into the air, which creates the surface for water to condense and can trigger rain. The rain then causes more fungi to grow.

Before the invention of colorful synthetic dyes, people used mushrooms for dyeing wool and other natural fibers.

Greek warriors ate mushrooms to increase their strength before battle.

Mushrooms are one of the vegetable world's substitutes for meat.

Anatomy & Etymology

The largest mushroom you'll find in most grocery stores is the portobello. It is the fully grown version of the *Agaricus Bisporus* species and has a large, brown cap. Smaller, immature mushrooms may be brown, like the cremini, or white, like the button.

Mushrooms contain more than 90 percent water!

Some mushrooms glow in the dark! They produce light through a process called bioluminescence. People used to carry these in ancient times to light their way through the forest.

Mushrooms can grow super fast. Once they break through the surface of whatever they're growing on, they can double their size in just one day.

The word "mushroom" comes from late Middle English for any fungus with a fleshy and fruiting body. It is derived from the Old French "mousseron," from the late Latin "mussirio."

How to Pick, Buy, & Eat

Wild mushrooms can be found in many wooded areas. If you choose to harvest wild mushrooms, make certain you have a professional identify your pick. Many mushrooms may resemble safe mushrooms but are actually poisonous!

Buy mushrooms with whole, intact caps, and be sure they are not wet or slimy!

They will smell strong, sweet, and earthy when fresh.

Rinse mushrooms before you slice or cut them. Whole mushrooms won't absorb much water, while cut mushrooms will. Wait to rinse mushrooms until right before you cook them; otherwise, they'll turn slimy. Mushrooms can be broiled, sautéed, and grilled. Mushrooms can be chopped or sliced and added to other dishes. Portobello caps are large enough to eat like a hamburger on a bun!

The mushroom cap is most often the part that is cooked and eaten. The stem can be fibrous and woody but will add flavor to vegetable or meat stock.

Mushrooms pair well with balsamic vinegar, fresh herbs (like oregano, rosemary, thyme, and cilantro), marinara, spinach, leafy greens, tomatoes, goat cheese, mozzarella, cream-based sauces, garlic, and onions.

Store mushrooms in a partially closed resealable plastic bag to ensure air circulation without drying out the mushrooms.

Nutrition

Mushrooms are low in calories and are an excellent source of B vitamins. These vitamins are needed for healthy cell and brain function, and they help prevent cancer and stress.

Even though mushrooms don't use the sun for energy, they use it to produce vitamin D, just like humans do! Vitamin D is essential to our bones! It keeps them strong and regenerating.

Mushrooms have essential minerals such as selenium, copper, phosphorus, zinc, and potassium. Copper helps the body build red blood cells and is necessary for the health of our bones. Selenium is an antioxidant that may decrease cancer risk.

Mushrooms have been used successfully in traditional Chinese medicine for thousands of years to treat many health conditions. Western medicine is finally beginning to recognize and utilize some of the medicine mushrooms naturally contain.