



## Tasty Toasted Portobello Reuben Sammies

By Erin Fletter

**Prep Time** 15 / **Cook Time** 15 / **Serves** 4 - 6

### Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

**knife skills:** Bear Claw (growl), Pinch, Plank, and Bridge (look out for trolls).

**pickle:** to preserve or flavor a food by covering it with a salty and/or sweet liquid brine.

**sauté:** to cook or brown food in a pan containing a small quantity of butter, oil, or other fat.

**slice:** to cut into thin pieces using a sawing motion with your knife.

**toast:** to brown and crisp food in a heated skillet or oven, or in a toaster.

**whip:** to beat food with a whisk or mixer to incorporate air and produce volume.

### Equipment

- Skillet
- Cutting board + kid-safe knife
- Mixing bowl
- Liquid measuring cup

### Ingredients

#### Tasty Toasted Portobello Reuben Sammies

- 3 large portobello mushrooms (or 3/4 lb baby portobellos)
- 1/4 C olive oil + more for cooking
- salt and black pepper to taste
- 1 loaf rye bread **\*\***(for GLUTEN/WHEAT ALLERGY sub gluten-free bread)**\*\*** (Use 1 slice per open-faced sammie or 2 slices for closed.)

□ 1 slice Swiss cheese for each sammie **\*\* (for DAIRY ALLERGY sub Daiya Swiss Style Slices) \*\***

## Food Allergen Substitutions

Tasty Toasted Portobello Reuben Sammies

**Gluten/Wheat:** Substitute gluten-free bread for rye bread.

**Dairy:** Substitute Daiya Swiss Style Slices for Swiss cheese.

## Instructions

Tasty Toasted Portobello Reuben Sammies

rinse + twist + scrape + slice

Rinse loose the dirt from **3 portobello mushrooms**. Twist off their stems and discard. Scrape the gills from underneath each mushroom cap with hands or spoon and discard. Then slice the mushroom caps into 1/2 inch slices. Add the mushroom slices to a mixing bowl.

drizzle + mix + sauté

Drizzle mushroom caps with **1/4 cup olive oil** and sprinkle with **salt and black pepper**. Stir to mix, then sauté in skillet over low heat until mushrooms are tender and brown in spots. Transfer sautéed mushrooms to the bowl.

drizzle + toast + melt

Drizzle skillet with more olive oil, then add **sliced rye bread** (you could also use a toaster oven!). For each sammie, layer on some of the sautéed mushrooms and **1 slice of Swiss cheese** on a slice of rye bread. Cover the skillet and toast until the cheese has melted and the bread is golden brown. If desired, top each toast slice with Quick-Pickled Cabbage (see recipe) and let it warm through. Finish by spreading Whipped 1,000 Isle Dip (see recipe) on each sandwich. Eat Sammies open-faced or closed!

## Featured Ingredient: Portobello Mushrooms!

Hi! I'm Toady! I'm a Portobello mushroom!

"Which means I'm very mature for my age, and 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

Portobello mushrooms are native to Italy and have been grown since ancient times. Alternative names are "portabello" and "portabella."

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 crimini, or white, like the button.

The head of the portobello mushroom is called its cap, which is smooth, firm, thick, and spongy in texture.

Turn the cap over to find dark brown or black gills surrounding a white and fibrous stem.

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 Italian word "portobello" literally means "beautiful port" in English, and "portabella" means "beautiful door." It may have been an alteration of the Italian "prataiolo," which means something grown in a meadow. Still, it is widely believed the pleasant name was a marketing tool in the 1980s to sell more of the unfamiliar, large, mature mushrooms!

## 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. Cooked portobello mushrooms taste earthy, smoky, and hearty. When cooked, they are very tender and meaty.

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 can be broiled, sautéed, and grilled. Portobello caps are large enough to eat like a hamburger on a bun!

Portobello 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.

