



How the Blend Won Me Over



Registered dietitian and chef Katie Cavuto explored the ins and outs of mushroom blending, the cooking technique that calls for finely chopping mushrooms to match the texture of ground meat and blending them into your favorite recipes. From the glorious umami flavor to inherent health benefits, Katie shares why she believes in the trend to blend.

Earthy, savory, meaty and aromatic; mushrooms have long been a beloved addition to many meals. Recently, a new study from the Culinary Institute of America and University of California-Davis has given us another reason to celebrate this flavorful fungi for its starring role in a meat and mushroom blend. The study published this September in the *Journal of Food Science* found that blending finely chopped mushrooms with ground meat enhances both the flavor and nutrition of the dish. As a chef and dietitian, this was music to my ears! I am always looking for ways to maximize the flavor in a dish, all the

while maintaining my mission—to create good-for-you grub that tastes delicious.

Burgers, tacos, meatloaf and more; by using a 50/50 or even 80/20 mushroom to meat blending ratio you are able to decrease the total calorie, fat and saturated fat intake. I was amazed at the way the blended mushrooms really enriched the flavor of the dish—so much that I was able to reduce the amount of salt I would traditionally use (in fact, the CIA study says you can reduce sodium by 25% without comprising the integrity of the dish). Considering the importance of creating a more plant centric plate, the blend is a great way to achieve this goal. I also enjoy the meat-like texture of mushrooms which is complementary when blending—you won't feel like you're missing out on anything. Mushrooms have a rich, umami flavor profile which naturally enhances and deepens the flavor of the meat all the while adding healthful nutrients like vitamin D, potassium*, b-vitamins and antioxidants.

Are you curious, hungry and ready to create a nutritious blend? It's quite simple, actually. Start with your favorite

*A serving of white mushrooms supplies 8 percent of the daily value of potassium.

mushrooms like shiitake, white button or crimini. Chop or pulse (in a food processor) your mushrooms to create a size and consistency of the ground meat you are using. Have fun with it! If you want a bit more texture you can chop your mushrooms more roughly. Once chopped, you can combine your mushrooms with your meat of choice and proceed with recipes for items like meatballs and meatloaves or burgers. Making a one-pot dish? Brown your meat and then brown your mushrooms in the same pan, then mix them together to finish the dish.

While it's not absolutely necessary, I like to cook the mushrooms first to maximize the flavor. Craving an intense smoky flavor and aroma? Pan sear and brown your mushrooms prior to blending. Yearning for that caramelized buttery, slightly sweet yet oh-so savory essence we love about mushrooms? Roast them to concentrate all of their umami goodness.

Now take your blend expertise into the kitchen! Have fun creating Katie's festive meatball recipe to wow

your guests this holiday season. Or, try your hand at the Roasted Mushroom Blend Burger by Chef Linton Hopkins. Both rich, meaty and flavorful; the addition of the mushrooms will likely steal the show.

I Heart Mushrooms Giveaway

Help us extend the mushroom love! Share your favorite mushroom tip or why you love to cook with mushrooms with the hashtag **#IHeartMushroomsGiveaway** on Twitter (or send directly to us at info@mushroominfo.com).

The first 25 people to share will receive a mushroom growing kit.

No purchase necessary. [Click here](#) for full rules and regulations.



New Mushroom Research

Read the complete [abstract](#) for the Culinary Institute of America and University of California-Davis study published in the *Journal of Food Science*. The study explored the flavor-enhancing properties of mushrooms and found that blending finely chopped mushrooms with ground meat enhances flavor and nutrition.

As the study shows, a traditional ground meat recipe prepared with 50 percent mushrooms and 50 percent meat can:

- Reduce calorie intake, while adding nutrients like vitamin D, potassium, b-vitamins and antioxidants
- Enhance the overall flavor, because of double the impact of umami
- Maintain flavor while reducing sodium intake by 25 percent

Mushrooms are fungi, which are so distinct in nature they are classified as their own kingdom – separate from plants or animals. In fact, authors of a recent [Nutrition Today](#) article noted, mushrooms' nutrient and culinary characteristics suggest it may be time to re-evaluate food groupings and health benefits in the context of three separate food kingdoms: plants/ botany; animals/zoology and fungi/mycology.

The proceedings from the Mushrooms and Health Summit were recently published in the *Journal of Nutrition*. [Watch the video](#) to hear highlights from speakers. To see the presentations from the Summit and for more information on the proceedings, visit mushroomhealthsummit.com.





Indulge in the
blend with Chef
Linton's burger
recipe!

Roasted Mushroom Burger

Chef Linton Hopkins, local Atlanta restaurateur and "Burger Time" originator, created the irresistible Roasted Mushroom Blend Burger. The patties get a welcome blast of umami from three different types of mushrooms: crimini, shiitake and oyster.

Makes 4 burgers

Ingredients:

8 oz. crimini mushrooms
2 oz. shiitake mushrooms
2 oz. oyster mushrooms
1/4 cup olive oil
3 teaspoons kosher salt, divided
1/2 pound ground chuck
1 tablespoon vegetable oil

Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F.
2. Thinly slice all of the mushrooms and toss in olive oil and 1 teaspoon salt.
3. Spread the mushrooms in a single layer on a metal sheet pan and roast in the oven for 15 minutes.
Remove from oven and cool.
4. In a food processor pulse the mushrooms into a fine dice.
5. Gently mix the mushrooms with beef and form into four 4 oz. patties.
6. Refrigerate the patties for 15 minutes.
7. Heat a cast iron skillet over high heat and add the vegetable oil.
8. Season patties with 2 teaspoons of kosher salt.
9. Add the patties to the skillet. Note: The patties are delicate so be careful when laying into pan.
10. Press the patties firmly with a spatula and cook for 3

minutes until crisp on one side.

11. Carefully turn the patties over and press once with a spatula. Cook for 2 minutes.

12. Add a slice of American or sharp Cheddar cheese on top. As the cheese begins to melt, place on top of your favorite toasted bun.

13. Serve with whole grain mustard and shaved red onion.

Nutrition Facts

Serving size: 1 burger patty

Calories: 240; Total Fat: 20g; Saturated Fat: 3.5g; Cholesterol: 30mg;
Sodium: 1480mg; Protein: 13g; Total Carbohydrate: 4g; Dietary Fiber: 1g

"Mushrooms are a staple in my kitchen because they add a deep, savory tone to dishes and a delicious earthiness to each bite. If I had to guess, I'd say we've featured at least four varieties of cultivated mushrooms in my restaurants this season alone. Recently, as a playful twist on my classic burger, I blended mushrooms into the meat when making them for my family. What I love about a great burger is its texture, so I blend equal parts finely chopped, roasted mushrooms and meat to get the same satisfaction as a meaty burger."

~ Linton Hopkins, Chef & Restaurateur



Spice Up your
Holiday Season
with
Mushrooms!

Middle Eastern Meatballs with Cinnamon Spiced Tomato Sauce

Earthy, savory and satisfying, this Middle Eastern Meatballs with Cinnamon Spiced Tomato Sauce recipe is perfect for the holiday season. Blended mushrooms add flavor and texture while the cinnamon and bulgur provide a pleasantly surprising twist on traditional recipes.

Yield 18-20 meatballs

Ingredients:

½ pound lean ground beef
½ pound ground lamb
8 oz whole crimini mushrooms, finely chopped
½ cup cooked bulgur
1 large egg, lightly beaten
2 cloves of garlic, grated
2 tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped
1 tablespoon fresh oregano, finely chopped
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
¼ teaspoon allspice
½ teaspoon cinnamon
½ teaspoon red pepper flakes
Salt and pepper to taste
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 cinnamon stick
16 ounce tomato sauce

Instructions:

1. In a large bowl, combine the meat, mushrooms, bulgur, egg, garlic, herbs and spices through salt and pepper. Mix well, cover and refrigerate for one hour.
2. Preheat oven to 375.
3. Shape the meat mixture into golf ball sized meatballs. Place on an oiled baking dish.
4. Bake the meatballs, uncovered, for 15-20 minutes or until cooked through.
5. While the meatballs are cooking, heat the tomato sauce and cinnamon stick in a small saucepan.
6. Serve meatballs with tomato sauce for dipping.

Nutrition Facts

Serving size: 1 meatball
Calories: 70; Total Fat: 4.5g; Saturated Fat: 1.5g; Cholesterol: 25mg; Sodium: 170mg;
Protein: 5g; Total Carbohydrate: 3g; Dietary Fiber: 1g

“I am always looking for ways to create healthy and more plant centric plates that burst with flavor and richness and The Blend allows me to achieve this! Blend earthy, savory, smoky mushrooms into your next meat dish to create a soul satisfying dish that’s big on flavor and nutrient density.” ~ *Katie Cavuto, RD*

Visit www.mushroominfo.com for the latest news, recipes and blog posts from the Mushroom Council.



The Mushroom Council is composed of fresh market producers or importers who average more than 500,000 pounds of mushrooms produced or imported annually. The mushroom program is authorized by the Mushroom Promotion, Research and Consumer Information Act of 1990 and is administered by the Mushroom Council under the supervision of the Agricultural Marketing Service. Research and promotion programs help to expand, maintain and develop markets for individual agricultural commodities in the United States and abroad. These industry self-help programs are requested and funded by the industry groups that they serve.