

POLENTA WITH MUSHROOMS

Source: Amanda Hesser's NY Times Cookbook

Prepared by Judity Evnen

6 to 8 servings

2 cups cornmeal
2 cups cold water
6 cups boiling water
3 teaspoons salt
4 cups sliced fresh mushrooms
½ cup diced onions
1 garlic clove, minced
2 teaspoons lemon juice
4 tablespoons butter
1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/3 cup half and half
¾ cup grated Parmesan cheese
6 mushroom caps (optional)

Combine the cornmeal and the cold water. Pour into a saucepan containing the boiling water and 2 teaspoons of salt, stirring constantly. Cook until thickened, stirring frequently. Cover and continue to cook over low heat for 10 minutes. Turn into a loaf pan (9 x 5 x 3 inches) and let stand until cold and firm.

Preheat the oven to 350.

Saute the mushrooms, onions and garlic in the lemon juice and butter. Add the remaining teaspoon of salt and the pepper.

Remove the cold cornmeal mush from the pan. Split lengthwise into halves to form 2 layers. Return the lower half to the pan. Cover with the sautéed mushroom mixture and pour the half and half over all. Sprinkle with the cheese. Top with remaining cornmeal layer.

Bake for 30 minutes. If desired, 10 minutes before the baking time is up, dip mushroom caps in melted butter and arrange over the top of the polenta as garnish. Serve as a main dish.

