

Give and Grow Mushrooms

How to Clean and Cook Morel Mushrooms

Cleaning Morels

As you'll find with a lot of mushrooms, the biggest risk with morels is that they soften and rot. Seek out morels that are fresh, firm, and dry—avoid ones that are shriveled or soft, wet, and spongy.

Plunge them in salted water for about 15 minutes, then towel dry

Cooking Morels

To cook morels, start by searing them in oil over high heat to brown them, just as you would other mushrooms.

The morels will soften and brown. Some recipes have you cook morels from start to finish in butter, but we find that the butter will burn before the morels are sufficiently browned. It's better to brown the mushrooms first, saving the butter for the end.

Then add minced onion, [shallots](#), and/or garlic, lowering the heat to prevent scorching. (If you add these before browning the mushrooms, you risk burning them as the mushrooms sear.)

Add a very generous pat of butter, which will melt and soak into all the little crevices in the morel caps.

I like to add a splash of soy sauce, which pumps up the umami depth, along with some lemon juice, to brighten the whole thing up. A little [stock](#) or water helps emulsify the butter into a creamy, mushroom-y sauce that's just thick enough to both coat *and* soak into the morels.

Some green herbs right at the end, like parsley, chervil, or minced chives, add a hit of freshness, and, of course, seasoning with salt and pepper is important. Just make sure to go easy on the salt and taste as you go if you've used soy sauce—it's already brought some saltiness to the mix.

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon (15ml) vegetable or canola oil
- 8 ounces (225g) morel mushrooms, cleaned, trimmed, and split in half lengthwise
- 1 small shallot, minced (about 2 tablespoons)
- 1 medium clove garlic, minced (about 1 teaspoon; optional)
- 2 tablespoons (30g) unsalted butter
- 1 teaspoon (5ml) soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon (5ml) fresh juice from 1 lemon
- 1/4 cup (60ml) [homemade](#) or store-bought low-sodium chicken stock, or water
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh herbs, such as chives, chervil, or parsley
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

Directions

Heat oil in a large cast iron or stainless steel skillet over high heat until shimmering. Add mushrooms and cook, stirring and tossing occasionally, until well browned, about 4 minutes total.

Reduce heat to medium-high and add shallot and garlic (if using). Cook, stirring constantly, until fragrant, about 45 seconds. Add butter, soy sauce, lemon juice, and chicken stock or water and cook, swirling pan, until liquid reduces and morels are coated in a creamy sauce, about 1 minute. Stir in herbs, season to taste with salt and pepper, and serve immediately.