

FOUR WALL FARM GOURMET MUSHROOMS

CHICKEN-FRIED OYSTER MUSHROOMS & CHEESE WAFFLES

My family loves waffles, almost as much as we love mushrooms. I became a waffle devotee more than a decade ago, and now have at least 6 waffle irons, a couple that are over a hundred years old. So it seemed natural, when I started thinking about chicken-fried mushrooms, that I pair them with a savory waffle. You don't have to make the waffle at all, the chicken-fried mushrooms stand delicious on their own. The crispy, spiced (not spicy) breading embraces the mushroom, and when you bite it, the savory deep flavor fills your mouth with a yummy goodness that is inspired by my dream southern fried chicken, but the moist mushroom is less dense, and the flavors are present in every single bite. While you don't have to do the waffle, I highly recommend it. This is not your traditional waffle! The standard waffle is a dense and cakey thing, pretty reminiscent of a pancake. The texture of this waffle is entirely different. Made with tapioca flour and rice flour, it is crispy on the outside, packed with cheesy flavor yet surprisingly light and airy. Our favorite topping for this is a drizzle of hot honey, (I was able to obtain a sample of a soon-to-be-released hot sauce and honey blend by @pb_hotsauce. When you can get some, try it. It's magnificent.) but you can experiment. Enjoy!



CHICKEN FRIED OYSTER MUSHROOMS

8oz oyster mushrooms

Oil for frying (use peanut for a crispier finish)

Batter:

2/3 cup buttermilk

1/4 cup heavy cream

1/2 tbsp Aleppo pepper*

1 tsp smoked paprika

1 tsp granulated garlic

1/2 tsp salt

Breading:

1/2 cup flour

1/2 cup panko crumbs

3/4 tsp salt

3/4 tsp fresh ground black pepper

1 tsp chili powder

1/4 tsp dried oregano

1/4 tsp dried chervil*

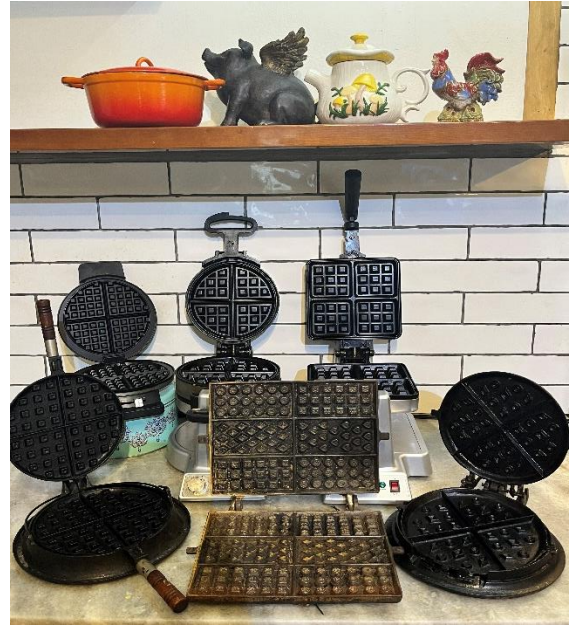
Combine batter ingredients in a medium bowl. Heat the mixture in your microwave for 90 seconds. Stir. Separate your oyster mushroom cluster into individual mushrooms. If you have some that are very large, just slice them in half or thirds. Submerge as many as you can in the batter while you prepare the breading. Make sure that the gills are entirely coated. Brush your finger along the underside to make sure that the spices and batter are worked in.

Combine breading ingredients in a small bowl and whisk them together, then put them on a plate for easy breading. Take a mushroom from the batter, letting any excess drip off without shaking it; lay it down on the breading plate. Scoop the breading over it to make sure that it is coated entirely, checking each side and pressing in the breading as needed. Put it on a piece of wax paper to rest. Dredge all of the mushrooms and let them sit as you heat your oil in a deep skillet. Use a thermometer to make sure that you are maintaining temp, or a fryer. Alternatively, you can spray them and air fry them. When your oil has reached about 365°F, start frying your mushrooms in small batches. Cook them for at least a minute on each side, until they are golden brown. Drain on a piece of newspaper. If you are making waffles, let the mushrooms sit in a 200°F oven while you cook the waffles

*You may not be familiar with these spices, but they are well worth tracking down. I'm sure that you will soon be able to find them in your local supermarket, as the spice section has really grown recently. Until then, find them where you get your "gourmet" spices, or online.

CHEESE WAFFLES

1 ½ cups tapioca flour (frequently in the gluten-free section of the supermarket)
½ cup rice flour (frequently in the international aisle with the dried beans)
½ tsp baking soda
½ tsp baking powder
½ tsp salt
1 tsp garlic powder (granulated is fine too)
3 eggs, separated
1 ¼ cup milk
¼ cup canola oil
1 cup grated extra sharp white cheddar cheese
3 tbsp parmesan cheese, grated or powdered is fine
Belgian waffle iron



In a medium bowl, combine the flours, baking soda, baking powder, salt and garlic powder, whisking them together. Separate the eggs, putting the whites in another medium bowl, and mixing the yolks into the milk. Heat the mixture in the microwave for 90 seconds, or until very warm, but not boiling. Stir into the dry ingredients. Stir in the canola oil, then the cheeses. In a separate bowl beat the egg whites into stiff peaks, then fold gently into the batter. It will seem unusually thin for a waffle batter, but that is alright. Heat the waffle iron. Use about ¾ - 1 cup of batter per waffle, and cook on highest setting (usually about 3 minutes or so) or until a deep golden brown. Use a fork to remove the waffle from the iron to a plate. Immediately top with chicken fried mushrooms and a drizzle of hot honey. Enjoy!



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