



## **Mushroom Ragu – Gourmet Style With Creamy Italian Polenta**

1 ounce dried porcini mushrooms  
1 medium onion, coarse chop  
1 carrot, coarse chop  
6 medium peeled cloves garlic  
1-1/2 lbs. mixed fresh mushrooms, such as crimini, shiitake, button, oyster  
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil  
1/2 cup dry white wine  
1 (14 oz.) container crushed Italian seasoned tomatoes  
1/2 teaspoon thyme  
1 to 2 Tablespoons prepared basil pesto  
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

In a medium heatproof bowl, combine dried porcini with 2 cups boiling water and let stand 15 minutes.

Place onions, carrot, and garlic cloves in food processor; pulse to mince; set aside.

Meanwhile, clean fresh mushrooms; trim woody stems. (Save stems for making stock)  
Thinly slice mushrooms.

Remove rehydrated porcini mushrooms from liquid; squeeze off excess liquid. Strain and save liquid; set aside.

In a large pot, heat oil over high heat. Add onion, carrot, and garlic, and cook, stirring to soften and beginning to brown; about 5 minutes. Add fresh and soaked dried mushrooms; cook, stirring and scraping bottom of pot, until they release water and begin to brown, about 10 minutes. Add wine, crushed tomatoes, 1 cup reserved mushroom liquid, thyme, and pesto.

Lower heat to medium-low; cook, stir often; scraping pot bottom until sauce is thick, about 1 hour. Season with salt and pepper. Serve over polenta.

Inspired by: <http://www.serious-eats.com/recipes/2015/05/print/mushroom-ragu-sauce-recipe.html>

## **Easy Forest Mushrooms Ragu**

2 Tablespoons olive oil  
1/4 cup chopped chanterelle or trumpet mushrooms  
1/4 cup oyster mushrooms; sliced  
2 garlic cloves, minced  
2 shallots, minced  
1/2 to 1 teaspoon thyme  
3 Tablespoons dry white wine  
Salt and black pepper to taste  
3 Tablespoons Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, grated  
2 Tablespoons unsalted butter

Heat oil in large sauté pan over medium high heat. Add the mushrooms and sauté for 20 minutes or browned. Add garlic, shallots; and thyme; cook for 3 minutes or softened; add wine. Remove from heat; season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve over polenta or pasta. Serves: 2 to 4

## **Creamy Italian Polenta**

5 cups low fat milk  
1 cup medium cornmeal  
Salt to taste  
2 Tablespoons unsalted butter  
1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese

In a large saucepan; add milk; cook over medium high heat; sprinkle in cornmeal while whisking. Bring to a boil, stirring frequently; let boil; whisk frequently until polenta thickens. Lower heat; continue to cook; stir frequently; scrape bottom to prevent scorching until polenta becomes very thick; about 30 minutes. Season with salt; whisk in butter and grated Parmesan cheese. If polenta becomes too thick; stir in additional milk or water. Serves: 6

**Cook's Note:** This uses a 5 liquid to 1 cornmeal ratio. This is the most important step along with whisking to prevent scorching.

### **Smaller portion Creamy Italian Polenta**

1-1/2 cups water or chicken broth  
1 cup low fat milk  
1/2 cup cornmeal  
2 to 3 Tablespoons grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese  
1 to 2 Tablespoons unsalted butter

Place water and milk in large saucepan. Set heat to medium high; whisk in cornmeal. Bring to a boil; stir frequently until starts to thicken. Reduce the heat to low; simmer for 15 minutes or desired thickness; stir frequently. Add the grated cheese and butter; stir until melted. Arrange mound of polenta on small plate or bowls; top with mushroom ragu.  
Serves: 4

**About the Recipe:** The deep flavored vegetarian ragu uses fresh and dried mushrooms accented with a splash of wine and rich crushed tomatoes. The layers of flavor come from toasted, savory vegetables, pesto, and thyme that blend into a hearty mushroom sauce to serve over Italian polenta or even pasta. Così delizioso!