

Morels en Croute

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15-20 dried morels
2 large or three medium shallots, finely diced
1-2 tbs butter
1 tbs olive oil
1 tbs Dijon mustard
1/4 c. red wine (my favorite is a bretty Rhône)
1/4 c. soaking liquid or stock
2 tbs brown roux
2 pinches dried thyme
2 tbs creme fraiche (optional: normal cream)
4 puff pastry shells
3 tbs chopped Italian parsley
salt and pepper

Soak, drain, and rinse (if necessary) the morels. Reserve the soaking liquid. Start baking the puff-pastry according to directions (the Pepperidge Farm shells work fine if you're not inclined to make your own).

Add the olive oil and butter to a medium-hot pan. After the butter foams, then collapses, sautee the shallots until they are translucent. Toss the morels in, then continue sauteeing until the morels are thoroughly cooked and the shallots are barely beginning to brown. Deglaze with the wine and the soaking liquid. Reduce slightly, then stir in the mustard, thyme, and a pinch of salt and pepper. Cook for another minute or two, then quickly stir in the roux. Reduce the heat to medium-low, and continue stirring until the gravy thickens. Add 1 tbs of the parsley, then add the creme fraiche with continuous stirring. Remove from heat, adjust salt and pepper to taste.

Take the center cap off the baked puff pastry shells, hollow them out, then spoon in the morels with sauce. Sprinkle with the remaining chopped parsley, then put the caps back on. Serve with big reds.

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