

ITALIAN SAUSAGE STUFFED MUSHROOMS

Ingredients

- 3 spicy or sweet Italian sausage links, casings removed (about 12 ounces)
- 2 cloves garlic, finely minced
- 2 ounces prosciutto, finely chopped
- 1 cup grated Parmesan cheese, divided (about 4 ounces)
- 1 cup fresh breadcrumbs, divided
- 1 8-ounces package cream cheese, at room temperature
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 2 Tbsp finely chopped fresh Italian parsley
- 20 large (about 2-inches in diameter) mushrooms, stemmed
- Olive oil, for drizzling

Directions

1. Sauté the sausage in a large, heavy skillet over medium-high heat, breaking up the large lumps with the back of a wooden spoon, until the sausage is cooked through and brown, about 5 minutes.
2. Add the garlic and prosciutto and continue to cook for another minute. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the sausage mixture to a large bowl and let cool.
3. Add 1/2 cup of the Parmesan cheese, 1/2 cup of the breadcrumbs, and the cream cheese and mix together until well combined. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

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Directions, cont.

4. In a small bowl, combine the remaining 1/2 cup Parmesan cheese and 1/2 cup breadcrumbs with the parsley. Set aside.
5. Brush a 9-by-13-inch baking dish with olive oil. Fill each mushroom cap with about 1 1/2 tablespoons of filling. Make sure you have enough filling to mound nicely on top of the mushroom. Sprinkle with some of the cheese-breadcrumb mixture. Arrange the mushrooms, filling side up, in the prepared dish and drizzle lightly with olive oil.
6. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Bake, uncovered, until the mushrooms are tender and the filling is brown on top, 20 to 25 minutes.

Make-ahead: *the unbaked stuffed mushrooms can be made 1 day ahead. Cover and chill. They can also be frozen on baking sheets wrapped with plastic and foil for up to 2 weeks. Bake directly from the freezer, adding 7 to 10 minutes to the baking time.*

Tip: *When you get your mushrooms home from the market, wipe them with a damp towel to remove any dirt, and store them in a paper bag in the refrigerator. For a light luncheon entree, use this filling in portobella mushrooms and serve with a green salad.*

Serves 20 appetizers

Source: *The Big Book of Appetizers* (Deeds and Snyder)