

Truffles v. Mushrooms



Truffles and mushrooms are both in the fungi kingdom; however, they grow in different places, thrive in different climates, and have a unique place on the table. Think of the prized ingredients as distant (delicious) cousins.

TRUFFLES

What are truffles?

Truffles are tubers. There are several varieties — mainly white and black — that change based on season. White truffles are typically harvested from the end of September to the beginning of January, while black truffles vary in season depending on the specific variety.

Where do they grow?

Revered as rare culinary gold, truffles cannot be planted or tamed. They only grow underground in wild forests a few months each year. The tubers are only found in areas with a certain terroir, typically moist with warmer days and cooler nights. For this reason, northern and central Italy are known for a wealth of truffles.

How do you eat them?

As we said, the truffle is a type of fungus; however, don't confuse it with the mushrooms that you can fry, boil, or bake. The cooking process destroys the truffle's characteristic flavor and aroma that



render it a delicacy. Our chefs love to shave fresh truffle over pasta, risotto, or even egg dishes for an elegant twist.

However, when fresh truffles aren't in season, we turn to year-round pantry products, such as truffle butters, salts, and sauces. Select Italian producers have mastered the art of preserving the truffle.

How do they taste?

The earthy flavors — even aromas — of truffles are renowned across the world. White winter truffles are especially prized for the pungent flavors with notes of shallot.

MUSHROOMS

What are mushrooms?

Mushrooms are the fruit of fungi. There are more than 38,000 varieties — but only about 20 species are edible.

Where do they grow?

The real question here may be, "Where do they not grow?" Unlike truffles, mushrooms grow above ground in a variety of environments. While they pop up everywhere in the wild, they can also easily be cultivated.

How do you eat them?

Mushrooms are very versatile: most can be eaten raw, sautéed, baked, grilled, and more. Excellent on their own, mushrooms can also stand up to heartier dishes, like beef. We love to highlight their flavors in simple dishes, like pasta, risotto, and polenta.

Happily, mushrooms are easily preserved, whether whole in olive oil, blended in sauces, and even combined with truffles, so we can enjoy them at any time of year.

How do they taste?

While each variety has a different taste, mushrooms are especially celebrated for their savory "umami" quality. The woody, meat-like fungi tend to have a hearty full-bodied flavor that is perfect for fall.

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