

Pan-Fried Polenta with Myzithra and Mushroom Ragout

Serves 2

Polenta:

1/2 Tbsp. butter
2 cloves garlic
1 small sprig thyme (leaves only)
1 1/4 cups chicken or vegetable broth
.5 cups milk
1/2 cup cornmeal
1/4 cup myzithra cheese
flour for dredging (optional)
1 Tbsp. olive oil
salt and pepper

In a medium sized sauce pan, melt the butter and then add the garlic and thyme, cooking until the garlic is fragrant. Add the chicken broth and milk and bring the mixture to a boil. Reduce the heat to low and slowly start to add the corn meal, whisking constantly. Continue cooking the cornmeal over low heat, whisking, until thickened for about 5 minutes. Take the polenta off the heat, and stir in the myzithra (or romano or parmesan or whatever you want). Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Pour the mixture into a small baking dish (I lined mine with foil for easy removal/clean up). Refrigerate until firm, a few hours or overnight.

Cut the polenta into slices or wedges. If desired, dredge in flour. Heat the oil in a nonstick skillet and once hot, add the polenta to the skillet, browning on both sides.

Mushroom Ragout:

1 Tbsp. butter
1 large shallot, diced, or about 1/4 cup diced onions
2 sprigs of thyme
1 bay leaf
1/2 lb. wild/assorted mushrooms (I used cremini, shiitake and yellow oyster)
2 cloves garlic, minced
1/4 cup wine (I like marsala or red with beef broth, dry white for chicken or veg...it's really your call)
1 Tbsp. tomato paste
1/2 cup broth (any kind you want)
salt and pepper

Heat the butter over medium heat and add the shallot and thyme, cooking until the shallots are just translucent. Stir in the mushrooms, bay and garlic. Cook for about a minute or two, and then put a lid on the pot and reduce heat to low. Cook over low heat until the mushrooms have released most of their moisture and have browned, about 20-30 minutes. Stir occasionally.

Add the wine and bay leaf. Increase the heat and cook until the wine has evaporated almost completely. Stir in the tomato paste and cook for about a minute before adding in the broth. Continue to simmer until the mixture has thickened to the consistency you want. Season to taste.

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