

LITTLE MUSHROOM TARTS

Prepare these tarts as part of an appetizer platter. They reheat well the same day they are prepared, but not beyond that. If you need a million of them, assemble them the day before, then bake them the day you need them.

MUSHROOM FILLING

4 ounces shiitake mushrooms, diced
8 ounces domestic mushrooms, diced
3 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoons olive oil
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 small onion, minced
2 garlic cloves, minced
Sherry vinegar to taste
2 teaspoons chopped Italian parsley

SAVORY TART DOUGH

6 tablespoons butter
1 cup all-purpose flour
Pinch of salt
1/4 cup plus 1 to 2 tablespoons cold water
Egg wash of 1 egg and pinch of salt

TO PREPARE THE FILLING:

Cook the mushrooms separately in a mixture of a scant spoonful each of butter and olive oil. Cook the shiitakes over medium-high heat until just browned, and then remove from the heat. Start the domestic mushrooms over high heat so they will release and reabsorb their juices, then lower the heat and cook slowly until they are dark brown and intense. Season the mushrooms well. Cool briefly. Chop finely. In one of the mushroom pans, caramelize the onion in 1 tablespoon of the butter. Just before removing the pan from the heat, add the garlic and deglaze the pan with the vinegar. Add the parsley and mix in the mushrooms. Adjust the seasoning; the mushrooms should be slightly salty and acidic so that they will be able to stand up to the pastry. Refrigerate. The tarts are much simpler to assemble if the filling is cold.

TO PREPARE THE DOUGH:

Place the flour on a cutting board. Dice the butter into cubes and sprinkle it over the flour with the salt. Chop finely with a knife, as you would parsley, but make sure that the butter is not completely obliterated. We want little

chunks here and there. Pour some of the water over it and gently push the dough with the heel of your hand. Use just enough water to bring the dough together, then wrap tightly in plastic and refrigerate for 15 to 20 minutes.

TO ASSEMBLE THE TARTS:

Roll the dough out thinly on a floured surface to a 1/4- to 1/8-inch thickness. Brush half the dough with egg wash. Form the mushroom filling into 12 little balls, and line them up 1 inch apart on the egg-washed side of the dough, as though you were assembling ravioli. Fold the vacant side of the dough over the rows of filling, and gently press down around each mushroom mound. Make sure there is a good seal. Use a round or scalloped cookie cutter to cut out the tarts. The tarts can be prepared ahead to this point and refrigerated, covered with plastic wrap.

Bake in a preheated 375° to 400° oven for 15 to 20 minutes. The last 5 minutes of cooking, brush again with egg wash. The tops of the tarts should be golden brown. Serve warm.

MAKES 12 TARTS

