

Everyday Healthy! Everyday Delicious!

From the Kitchen of Janice Feuer Haugen

Chestnut Wild Mushroom Bisque with Cashew Cream

A velvety smooth and luscious blend of wild and cultivated mushrooms, roasted chestnuts and cashew cream—vegan, gluten-free and dairy-free. Inspired by and adapted from a recipe from [Martha Stewart Living](#) and another from the [Tasting Table](#).

Makes 11 cups, 5-6 servings

Active time: 1½ hours with fresh chestnuts

Total time: 2½ hours

Chestnuts

1½ pounds fresh chestnuts *OR* 1 pound peeled frozen chestnuts *OR* 21 ounces of jarred peeled and cooked chestnuts, drained

Vegetable Stock

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

1 medium yellow onion, peeled and cut into ½-inch pieces

2 large carrots, peeled and cut into ½-inch slices

2 stalks celery, cut into ½-inch slices

1 garlic clove, coarsely chopped

1/3 cup (1/3 ounce) dried porcini mushrooms

Stems from the fresh shiitakes used in the soup

2 bay leaves

6 whole peppercorns

8 cups water

Soup

6 ounces cremini mushrooms, 2 sliced and reserved for garnish and the rest coarsely chopped

2 ounces shiitake mushrooms, stems removed and added to the stock; 2 caps sliced and reserved for garnish and the rest coarsely chopped

1 medium tart apple, i.e., Granny smith, peeled, cored, coarsely cubed

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

2 large shallots, sliced

1 garlic clove, halved

The peeled and roasted chestnuts

1¼ teaspoons good quality salt

Dozen twists freshly ground pepper

8 sprigs fresh thyme

8 cups Vegetable Stock

¼ teaspoon nutmeg

Salt and fresh pepper to taste

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Cashew Cream

2 cups water

1 cup cashew pieces

Garnish

1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil (or butter)

2 each shiitake and cremini mushrooms sliced 1/8-inch thick

4 chestnuts, sliced 1/8th inch thick

½ tablespoon fresh thyme leaves

1. Heat the oven to 350 degrees.
2. Use a chestnut knife, a "box cutter" or the tip of a sharp paring knife to cut through the shell and into the flesh all around the middle of each chestnut. This keeps the nuts from exploding and facilitates their peeling.
3. Place the chestnuts on a rimmed baking sheet. Roast them about 35 minutes. They will be tender when pierced with a paring knife.
4. Turn off the oven, leaving the pan of chestnuts inside. Remove a few chestnuts at a time to a clean dish towel.
5. Roll the chestnuts around in the towel, pressing on them lightly to break their shells. Remove and discard the outer shell and the inner skin. Repeat the process with the rest of the chestnuts. Hint: the shells and inner skin are much easier to remove when the chestnuts are hot.
6. Reserve 4 whole, peeled chestnuts. Slice them thinly and set aside.
7. While the chestnuts are roasting, **prepare the vegetable stock**. Heat 2 tablespoons oil in a soup pot over medium heat. Stir in the onion, carrot, celery and garlic. Cook covered for 5 minutes. Remove the cover and cook another 10 minutes, stirring occasionally, till gently browned. Stir in the dried porcinis, shiitake stems, bay leaves, peppercorns and water. Bring the water to a boil then lower the heat so the stock simmers gently. Cover the pan and cook for 45 minutes. Strain the stock through a fine sieve, pressing on the solids to extract as much liquid as possible. Discard the solids.
8. **Begin preparing the soup** once all of the chestnuts are peeled. Heat 2 tablespoons olive oil in a soup pot over medium-high heat. Stir in the chopped mushrooms, apple, shallot, garlic and peeled, roasted chestnuts. Sprinkle with the salt and pepper.
9. Cook 7-10 minutes, stirring occasionally, till everything is golden.
10. Stir in the fresh thyme sprigs and then the strained vegetable stock. Bring the soup to a boil and reduce the heat so the partially covered pot simmers gently. Cook until the chestnuts are very tender, 45-50 minutes.
11. Stir in the nutmeg.
12. While the soup is cooking, prepare the **Cashew Cream**. Use a blender to blend together the cashews and water for 4 minutes. Transfer the cashew cream to a large bowl and set aside.

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13. Remove the sprigs of thyme and discard. Carefully transfer about 2½ cups of soup at a time to the blender. Blend until very smooth; add to the bowl with the cashew cream. Repeat with the remaining soup. Return everything to the soup pot. Adjust the salt and pepper to taste.
14. Keep the soup over very low heat while you sauté the **garnish vegetables**.
15. **Prepare the Garnish** Place the olive oil or butter in a small sauté pan over medium-high heat. When hot stir in the reserved sliced mushrooms and sliced chestnuts. Cook until golden brown, about 3-4 minutes.
16. Serve the soup garnished with the sliced mushrooms and chestnuts and sprinkled with fresh thyme leaves.

