

Mushrooms

What's With the Brown Paper Bags?



So you choose your mushrooms and carry them home in a brown paper bag. As soon as you get home, you not only take them out of the brown paper, but also wash them. Don't do that! The brown paper bags absorb the moisture, allowing the mushrooms to breathe and keep them fresh longer.

Secondly, don't wash or clean the mushrooms until you are ready to use them. Mushrooms are like sponges; they soak up moisture and begin to discolor when washed with water. It is suggested that you use either a brush or damp paper towel/cloth to wipe any residue from mushrooms. At the very most, you may rinse them quickly under cold water. Any residue on a mushroom is generally peat moss and not harmful as they are grown in a completely sterile environment. Because they are high in water content and act like a sponge, they will absorb water very quickly, possibly interfering with taste profile and length of life if soaked.

And finally, the key to freshness is refrigeration. Keep them cold and they won't get old! At room temperature, mushrooms lose colour and flavour quickly. It is said that for every hour a mushroom is left in room temperature, the shelf life decreases by 8 hours.

The same rule applies to packaged mushrooms. If the package is unopened, the mushrooms will store well in the refrigerator. Once the package is opened, place the mushrooms in a paper bag.

People say mushrooms are more delicate than eggs and therefore must be cared for and stored properly so they don't expire so soon. These simple steps will keep the mushrooms tasty and delicious for days and allow you to enjoy the freshness of mushrooms longer.

For more information on mushrooms as well as great recipe ideas visit www.mushrooms.ca.