

Warm Mushroom Dip

We believe every winter party needs a warm dip. This was originally one of our favorite pasta sauces, but everyone loved sopping it up with bread so much that we decided to skip the pasta, give the sauce the gratin treatment with some toasty melted cheese on top and call it a dip. It's great with any kind of mushrooms and is a nice way to use up those less-than-perfect ones. If you do want to try it with pasta, toss it with *pappardelle* and replace the Vella Toma with a bit of grated Parmesan or *grana padano* cheese.

SERVES 12

1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil

1 1/2 lb mushrooms (such as hedgehog, maitake, or chanterelle), cleaned, stem ends trimmed, and torn into large

uniform pieces

1 teaspoon kosher salt

3 tablespoons unsalted butter

1/2 cup minced shallots

1 tablespoon minced garlic

4 teaspoons fresh thyme leaves

2 tablespoons all-purpose flour

1/2 cup dry white wine (such as Sauvignon Blanc)

2 cups heavy cream

1/4 cup plus 1 tablespoon soy sauce

1/2 lb Vella Toma or Monterey Jack cheese, grated

1 baguette, sliced and then toasted if desired

Preheat the broiler.

In a large sauté pan, heat the olive oil over medium heat for 1 minute. Add the mushrooms and salt and cook, stirring occasionally, for 4 to 7 minutes, until the mushrooms are soft and have released their water. Transfer the mushrooms to a bowl and reserve.

Return the sauté pan to medium heat and melt the butter. Add the shallots, garlic, and thyme and cook, stirring occasionally, for about 2 minutes, until the shallots and garlic are golden brown. Add the flour and cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Add the wine and deglaze the pan, stirring to dislodge any browned bits from the pan bottom, then cook for 1 minute. Pour in the cream and soy sauce and cook for 3 to 6 minutes, until reduced by half. Add the reserved mushrooms and cook for 2 minutes longer.

Remove from the heat and transfer to a broiler-proof serving dish. Top evenly with the cheese and broil until the cheese melts and is golden brown. Serve the gratin hot with the baguette slices on the side for dipping.

Enjoy with Kendall-Jackson Pinot Noir

Mushrooms adore and enhance the earthy fruit and spice flavors of a high-quality Pinot Noir.