

Cooking With Tom

Mushroom Beef Stroganoff Sauce

By Tom Blair

Mushrooms, once reserved exclusively for Royalty, are now an everyday part of American fare. Ancient cultures believed that mushrooms were the plant of immortality and decreed that no commoners should touch them.

The first commercial cultivation of mushrooms began in caves near Paris, France. British gardeners soon joined in growing the popular fungus and by the late 19th century, US growers joined in.

Today, more than 850 million pounds of mushrooms each year find their way into our favorite meals. Enjoy this mushroom dish that will satisfy any regal appetite.



Mushroom Beef Stroganoff Sauce

Ingredients:

- 1 lb. ground beef
- 2 - 6 oz. cans mushroom steak sauce
- 1 - 15 oz. can peas, drained
- 1 - 15 oz. can whole baby corn, drained
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 1 tbsp. chives
- 1 tsp. celery seed
- 1 tsp. black pepper
- 1 tsp. salt

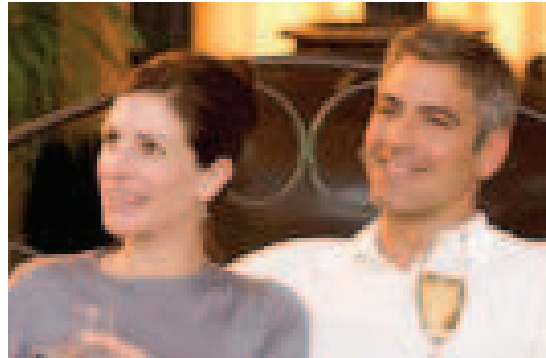
1. Brown the ground beef in a large saucepan. Drain the beef and remove the saucepan from the heat.
2. Add to beef, mushroom steak sauce, peas, corn (cut into 1/2" slices), sour cream, chives, celery seed, black pepper and salt. Mix thoroughly.
3. Simmer for 5 minutes over a low heat.
4. Serve over pasta, rice or toast. Makes approximately 10 servings.

Tom is a nationally syndicated columnist specializing in antiques, cuisine and pets. He can be reached at TomBlairScribe@aol.com © Tom Blair 2005

Julia Roberts and George Clooney Top Best Tressed Survey

By Kristi Fuhrmann

America praises "Ocean's Twelve" stars Julia Roberts and George Clooney for their great hair in 2004, in the 11th annual Best Tressed® Survey. The survey, conducted by Sally Beauty and Harris Interactive Inc., asked people to cast a vote on best and worst hairstyles and worst reality show hairstyles from the past year, as they gear up for the upcoming awards season.



Though Americans awarded glamour girl and new mom Roberts and eternal "Sexiest Man Alive" Clooney for their luxurious locks, they may be more attentive in watching the red carpets for Pink and Michael Moore. The survey denounces these stars for "Least Tressed Calamities" in 2004, and identifies Nicole Richie of "The Simple Life" and Donald Trump of "The Apprentice" as the reality show personalities with the worst hairstyles.

Eleven years ago, when Sally Beauty conducted its first Best Tressed survey, voters said Heather Locklear and Lyle Lovett were the celebrities with

the hair they would most like to have. The reigning "King and Queen" of good hair in 1995 were Julia Roberts and Lyle Lovett, followed closely by Nicole Kidman and Tom Cruise. This year's winner for best hair, Julia Roberts, has been a favorite among voters, appearing seven of the last 10 years on the survey. Brad Pitt has also been a top pick, cited for his locks six times in the 11 years.

While voting on celebrity best and worst hairstyles, this year's survey participants were also asked about their own styling habits:

★ Thirty percent of Americans change their hairstyle once a year or more often, with one in 10 changing it several times a year.

★ More than 60 percent of Americans cannot live without product when styling their hair, naming hairspray and styling gel as their top two necessities.

★ Six in 10 Americans visit a hair salon at least four times a year, with more than half of them diligently visiting every five weeks or more often.

★ A cut or trim is the most popular reason to visit the beauty salon on a regular basis, with highlights or low-lights and coloring coming in second.

Kristi Fuhrmann is a Hollywood stylist with major studios. If you have a beauty question, please e-mail Kristi at www.asksally.com. —NAPS



Going To The Movies

A Stunning Love Story...In Black and White

What Emperor Penguins Do For Love

By Bill Finley

Even better than *Winged Migration*, that fascinating docu-drama about what birds do to keep their communities alive and well, the new movie, *March of the Penguins* is full of laughs, tearful moments and unbelievable sex but is a true saga of what the horrific climate of the Antarctica demands of these wingless birds.

True to their ancient breeding grounds, these hapless but endearing three-foot high creatures, have to WALK, one tiny step at a time, 70 miles from the frigid sea to seek a mate. Hundreds of these tuxedoed wonders march or slide on their rounded bellies across the tundra. After much dating, they pick each other (they all look alike) and lean against each other with beaks and necks entwined.



Then the fun begins in one great flapping and squealing orgy. When the mechanics are over, the guys peck a pointed kiss and take off to march or slide 70 miles back to the closest hole in the ice and go fishing with a vengeance. Meanwhile, the huge tribe of mothers gather for warmth against the howling winds and temperatures at 80 below zero. Of course, they are dressed for it, but even so, it has to be mighty uncomfortable.

Four months later, the mama lays an egg bigger than a football and carries it in a downward facing pouch (contrary to marsupials) over which she drapes a furry fold of warming skin. The weather could still freeze the egg's infant into an ovoid ice cube. Meanwhile, daddy has his belly full of fish and he trudges back to say hello.

Then, as is only fair, she transports the giant egg from the tops of her claws to his. He rocks around learning the balancing act, no sudden movements and no games with the guys. In nature's turnabout, she says "See ya

later" in Penguinese, and with her girlfriends, waddles off to find another hole in the ice.

He and his other male penguins huddle close together for several more months with frigid blowing weather below 70 degrees waiting for junior to hatch. When the little cutie pecks it way through shell, it screeches for something to eat. Daddy does have a little old goeey fish in his saliva for the youngster but stares over the bleak horizon yearning for mama to return. Soon the female troupe appears, each nearly identical female calling for her mate and child.

She rushes to feed the newborn but daddy gets only a kiss. After the chick, a gray furry image of his father, learns to waddle and slide, daddy decides to go back to the fun of hunting. The end of their no-fault monogamy is at hand.

The babies now start to hang out together and play their penguin games. The mamas seem to lose interest, too. Pretty soon, the youngin's are ready for their first leap into the icy water. They will soon dart around like lightning in their watery world. They only need air about every 15 minutes which they know without a clock.

After four years of playing around, dodging ferocious seals and sharks, the survivors will return to their ancestral home and begin the mysterious cycle once again.

This French-made film, narrated by Morgan Freeman, will touch the hardest of souls and bring tears to the softies. But the awkward antics of these unique birds bring some laughs, too. Nature is cruel but wonderful. As more-or-less monogamous creatures, we can feel the tenderness portrayed by these strange birds who probably think we are weird, too.

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