



Shiitake cultivation on indigenous substrates

A favourite of chefs, shiitake is often reserved for the most special of meals. And even though locally produced shiitake mushrooms smell and taste much more intense than imported ones, you have to experience some of Mark Eisermann's monster shiitake mushrooms. Organically nurtured on indigenous honeybush waste, they are simply magnificent!

Being in the investment business, Mark is no stranger to long-term thinking and he knows what it means to be a contrarian investor. In 1990, he founded his own asset management company, The Investment Group, after first spending 10 years in the corporate world with the Standard Bank Group. In a time

when South Africa was flooded with button mushrooms, he acquired EON Corporation (Pty) Ltd, which holds the patent for growing gourmet mushrooms on a substrate containing honeybush and/or rooibos tea waste.

"I have always been interested in commodities and I believe the gourmet mush-

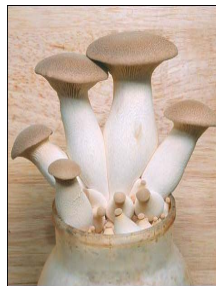
room industry is a high-growth industry with great development potential".

Still busy with scaling up, Mark's shiitake mushrooms are not yet commercially available each week. But watch this space!



Mr Mark Eisermann is creating a niche market for organically cultivated mushrooms nurtured on indigenous tea waste

Edible Fungi Association



At last! An organisation focusing on gourmet mushroom businesses, culinary schools and chef academies, mushroom retailers and distributors, restaurants, tourism groups, food editors of magazines, and wild

mushroom enthusiasts. Membership includes a subscription to the Mycological Gastronomy online newsletter, published four times a year in March, May, July, and September.

Visit www.mushroomacademy.com and click on "Edible Fungi Association".

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Of special interest:

- Visit the South African Gourmet Mushroom Academy exhibition at the 17th International Congress of the International Society for Mushroom Science: 20- 24 May 2008, Cape Town International Convention Centre, Cape Town, South Africa. (www.isms2008.co.za)
- Learn to distinguish edible and poisonous wild mushrooms. Refer to the following article: Smit, W.A. 2008. The Art and Adventure of Mushroom Hunting. South African Journal of Natural Medicine 34:53- 56. (www.naturalmedicine.co.za)
- Advertise your mushroom-related services. Contact the editor at info@mushroomacademy.com

Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, as long as it is legal ...

Cliff Emico

World Fungi 2007

The South African Gourmet Mushroom Academy represented South Africa at the first ever World Fungi conference, **World Fungi 2007, in Cordoba, Spain**, during December. We see the invitation as recognition of what we have achieved in South Africa. It is an honour to be part of the international gourmet mushroom community.

One of the interesting discussions at World Fungi 2007 centred on the recent construction of the **Mycorama International Centre, Switzerland**, which was inaugurated on 27 October 2007. This 4-million euro centre is sponsored by public and private partners. It aims to serve not only the mycological community but also the public at large. Mycorama sees its role as a continually evolving window on advances in mushroom science.

The Mycorama International Centre offers an overview of four main themes: Knowledge of mushrooms, their cultivation, the interaction between man and mushroom, and scientific exchange in the field of mycology.

The building covering a gross area of 2000 m² is divided into two parts, the museum itself, which can accommodate 400 visitors, and the conference and research space. The building was designed by Swiss architects O. Gagnebin and P. Studer and special attention was given to ensuring energy efficiency. The structure of the building itself is made from local wood.

The centre consists of two mushroom-shaped glass spheres, joined by a rectangular laboratory space. The one sphere features mushroom exhibits, as well as

an underground mushroom production unit. With 28 edible mushrooms species on display, the latter is a "living museum" that people can walk through. The centre also has its own mushroom-tasting restaurant.

"It is a complete panorama that doesn't exist anywhere else in the world," says Daniel Job, head of the mycology department at the University of Neuchâtel and a member of the centre's scientific advisory board.



For more information on Mycorama, visit www.mycorama.ch

Academy explores Mycotourism

Those who attended the **Intermediate Gourmet Mushroom Course** at the South African Gourmet Mushroom Academy will remember enjoyable visits to shiitake, king oyster and pink oyster mushroom facilities. Now the Academy has decided to establish its own gourmet mushroom demonstration facilities just outside Stellenbosch.

The South African Gourmet Mushroom Academy demonstration rooms will also

be accessible to tourists who intend staying at the new, luxurious **Wild Mushroom** accommodation (currently under construction).

The gourmet mushroom demonstration facilities will be up-and-running by April 2009.

Regular updates will be posted on: www.mushroomacademy.com



*"If there is one thing I have learned from the incomparable Warren Buffet, it is **not** to go with the flow."*

Organic/Fresh Markets



Oyster mushrooms produced by SA Gourmet Mushroom Academy course participant Mr. Hennie Meintjes

Bryanston Organic Market (Michael Mount Organic Market), outside of Johannesburg. Probably the best selection of organic fruit, mushrooms and vegetables anywhere in the country.

www.mmom.co.za

A local favourite in Cape Town is the **Neighbourgoods Market** in Woodstock on a Saturdays. Be on the lookout

for shiitake mushrooms produced by Cape Gourmet Mushrooms.

www.neighbourgoodsmarket.co.za

Missed out on the first **Stellenbosch Fresh Goods Market** at Bosman's Crossing? Not to worry, it's on every Saturday.

www.slowmarket.co.za

An Introduction to Gourmet Mushrooms

Seven years of planning prior to April 2005, and three years since the establishment of the South African Gourmet Mushroom Academy! What a journey!

The Academy has been blessed to be enriched by so many of you. It was the best possible decision to put gourmet mushroom training on a firm footing when the gourmet/exotic/specialty/medicinal mushroom concept was still unknown to most South Africans. The Academy was fortunate to train confident individuals from all spheres of life. Your backgrounds listed were vast and impressive, from environmental, agricultural, natural, social, business and medical sciences, just to name a few.

Some of you have moved on to es-

tablish your own gourmet mushroom/spawn companies. Others have proved to be successful cultivators and have gotten lucrative job offers. The vegetarians among you now produce your own protein of choice. Some of you are doing gourmet mushroom planning as a



SA Gourmet Mushroom Academy course participants: Ms Claret le Roux-Walker, Dr Ronel van Rooyen, Ms Marietjie du Toit and Ms Zelda Jordaan

sideline while continuing with your primary professional careers. Not to mention those of you who have enrolled just to get insight in the cultivation of 'magic' mushrooms!

The Academy is now in a position to establish a gourmet mushroom association for the benefit of all interested in mushrooms and/or the cultivation thereof. Being a new agricultural industry, there is a need for stability, guidance on price structures, detail about suppliers and distributors, and much more. The **Edible Fungi Association** will connect all interested in gourmet mushrooms, a process that is scheduled to be completed by September 2008.

www.mushroomacademy.com

Click on "Edible Fungi Association"

The Meaning of 'Mycological Gastronomy'

The culture of a society is manifest in a variety of ways, in its art, language and literature, music, and in all forms of religious and secular ritual. But while it is a powerful factor in the definition and development of the human species, cultural expression is not always vital in the strictly utilitarian sense. Rather, it can be regarded as a group of activities usually referred to as 'art for living', which pro-

vides substance, meaning, continuity and value to living in a particular social grouping. Joseph A. Hegarty and G. Barry O'Mahony argue that gastronomy, that is the selection, preparation, presentation and participation with culinary and gastronomic aspects of food, fall squarely into this cate-

Mycology = study of fungi, including mushrooms
Gastronomy = the art or science of fine dining

gory of 'fine art activity' since most societies seek to differentiate their food preparation. Between either the purely utilitarian or the highly developed and stylised methods of presentation and participation which, in many instances, are not designed for consumption merely, but also for status, ritualistic and aesthetic purposes.

Kalahari truffles

The harsh, scrubby desert of the Kalahari is very different from the verdant forests of Europe. Yet these disparate landscapes both produce one of the world's rare, edible mushroom treasures – the truffle. Located by animals in Europe, the hunt for the African version, the **Kalahari truffle** or **N'abba** (*Kalaharituber pfeilii*) is a somewhat different adventure. N'abbas grow mainly on the Kala-

hari's dune slopes between bushmen grass and three-thorn acacias. They push to the surface after triggered by late summer rains, creating cracks in the sand surface. Although plentiful when in season, the truffles grow far apart and are hard to find, making the harvest of more than a handful an exhausting task. Without the help of the region's indigenous people, the San, any efforts to find these delica-

cies will most likely go unrewarded. Resembling small potatoes on the outside, once broken open they reveal a soft, whitish flesh with the texture of hard, slightly crumbly cheese.



Story by Naashon Zalk



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Bringing mushrooms to life!

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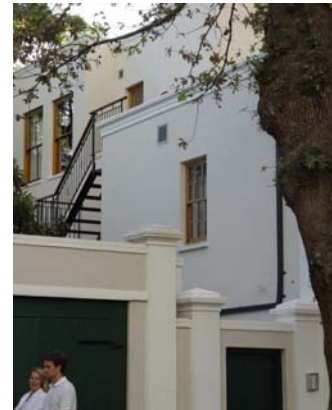
Academy goes culinary

Mycogastronomy Information Session

Aimed at professional chefs and culinary schools; 2 hours.

A favourite of royalty and presidents alike, gourmet mushrooms are often reserved for special occasions and for state banquets. Not surprising, therefore, that bamboo shoot mushroom was served to Queen Elizabeth II during an official state visit to China. Or that Russian President Vladimir Putin, Time Magazine Person of the Year for 2007, celebrated this award with shiitake mushroom hors d' oeuvres.

Enquiries: info@mushroomacademy.com



Fine Dining at Overture

Picture a modern restaurant with exquisite views of Table Mountain and the Stellenbosch valley. Add Hidden Valley wines and award-winning chefs. Welcome to Overture!

In association with the South African Gourmet Mushroom Academy, Bertus Basson (a member of the South African National Culinary Team) and Craig Cormack, the Overture restaurateurs (www.dineatoverture.co.za) and also All Things Culinary consultants (www.allthingsculinary.net) are responsible for preparing a true mushroom culinary experience – as the Gourmet Mushroom Menu given here, testifies to.



Mouth-watering mushroom dessert: Brown-and-white Buns-shimeji (*Hypsizygos tessulatus*) panna cotta, bamboo shoot (*Dictyophora indusiata*) mushroom crisp and caramelised pineapple

Mushroom species involved	Gourmet Mushroom Menu
<i>Kalaharituber pfeilii</i> syn. <i>Terfezia pfeilii</i>	Hors d'oeuvre Kalahari truffle poached egg, hot smoked salmon parmintier, fried breadcrumbs and chives
<i>Lentinula edodes</i> <i>Flammulina velutipes</i>	Seafood main course Octopus and Shiitake ballontine, ginger and lime dressing, Asian sprout and Enoki salad
<i>Grifola frondosa</i> <i>Boletus edulis</i> <i>Pleurotus eryngii</i>	Main course Crown roast chicken, Maitake and Cèpe tortellini sauce bouridde and panache of spring vegetables with King Oyster mushrooms
<i>Hypsizygos tessulatus</i> <i>Dictyophora indusiata</i>	Desservir / Dessert Brown-and-white Buns-shimeji panna cotta, Bamboo Shoot mushroom crisp and caramelised pineapple



Chefs Craig Cormack and Bertus Basson