

The Hybrid Cook Books

The Complete Mushroom Book: The Quiet Hunt written by Antonia Carluccio Rizzoli, International Press, 2003

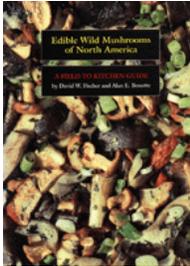


This book is a hybrid. It is also the only one of the cookbooks here that also could qualify as a coffee table book. The book starts with a general introduction to mushrooms and mushroom hunting followed by a list of mushroom pictures and descriptions organized alphabetically. About 75 edible or poisonous mushrooms are covered with most of the basic edibles appearing here. Following the guide portion come the recipes organized into the following chapters: Soups, Sauces, and Preserves; Light Dishes; Pasta, Rice and Polenta; Fish; and Meat (which includes Poultry). The recipes range from the very basic to some sublime gourmet treats like caponata of mushrooms, mushroom stuffed squid (sulfur shelf), sweetbread medallions with horn of plenty (*Craterellus fallax* or *C. cornucopoides*). Although I would strongly recommend using a standard guidebook in addition to this, the recipe section does not suffer from insufficiencies unlike some other hybrid books.

The Edible Mushroom Book a Guide for Foraging and Cooking written by Anna del Conte and Thomas Laessle, Darling Kindersley Ltd., 2008

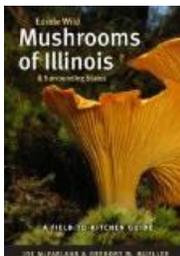
This is a hybrid book. The first part describes mushroom hunting and mushrooms. There is a section with pictures and minimal descriptions of 10 deadly poisonous mushrooms followed by a guide to about 50 edible mushrooms. The mushrooms are organized by season and then alphabetically. The pictures are very good as are the descriptions. A few of the mushrooms do not grow in the United States; this book was originally written for Europe. The next section describes, preparing, cleaning, slicing, and cooking mushrooms and then come the recipes. There are 70 pages of recipes that, as usual, range from basic to gourmet.

Edible Wild Mushrooms of North America: A Field to Kitchen Guide written by David Fischer and Alan Bessette, University of Texas Press, 1992



This is a hybrid book. The first chapter describes mushrooms and mushroom hunting. The second presents mushroom pictures and descriptions organized as follows: chanterelles; gilled mushrooms; Boletes; toothed mushrooms; corals, club shaped and cauliflower shaped mushrooms; shelf like mushrooms; puffballs; morels and jelly fungi. Approximately 100 edible mushrooms are described. The next section presents poisonous mushrooms. Approximately 20 deadly poisonous or seriously poisonous mushrooms are presented. There are 60 pages of recipes with one or two recipes for the more common wild edible mushrooms.

Edible Wild Mushrooms of Illinois and Surrounding States A Field to Kitchen Guide written by Joe McFarland and Gregory Mueller, University of Illinois Press



This is a new hybrid book that has a mushroom guidebook section as well as a recipe section. Unlike the other hybrids reviewed here that are equally divided between the guide and cookbook sections, this book devotes eight chapters (158 pp) to identifying and hunting for mushrooms and one chapter to recipes. The book starts with a fairly basic introduction to mushrooms and mushroom hunting. Like most hybrids there are no keys. The chapters here are “Common and Poisonous” (5 species, with global warming, should we study their *Amanita* in case it moves to Michigan; we don’t have a meadow *Amanita*), “Into the Forest” (13 species), “The Morels” (3 species), “The Chanterelles” (5 species six including hedgehogs as a look-alike), “The Boletes” (3 species), “Puffballs” (5 species), “Take the Field Without Getting Hurt” (4 species), and “Let’s Eat” (29 recipes).

Overall 35 species and 29 recipes. Though not very comprehensive this is a good beginner’s book. Several pages with many excellent photos are devoted to each species. Look-alikes are not only described they are also pictured to illustrate the differences between them and the relevant edible. The mushroom descriptions are excellent and not too technical. Although there are only 29 recipes, I’m looking forward to trying several of them; the club will probably try Wild Mushroom Lasagna with Arugula Pesto at one of our pot-lucks.