



Contact:

Eric Davis, 612-202-9407, edavis@curiousplot.agency

The Year's Best Blended Burgers Are...

Mushroom Council® Announces Winning Recipes in 2022 Blended Burger Contest Hosted on FoodNetwork.com

Oct. 11, 2022 – According to the New York Times, mushrooms are the 2022 “[Ingredient of the Year](#).” But who holds the distinction of making the best mushroom-centric “Burger of the Year”? The Mushroom Council today announces the winners in its 2022 Blended Burger Contest in partnership with Food Network.

The competition – launched in May on FoodNetwork.com and in *Food Network Magazine* – encouraged individuals to create and enter a blended burger recipe, featuring at least 25% finely chopped fresh mushrooms mixed with ground meat or meat alternative.

The Blended Burger Contest earned 1,361 entries, the most in any of the Council's past eight annual blended burger contests. Mushroom Council and Food Network judges selected two winning recipes in the home cook and professional (chefs, cooks, recipe developers, or caterers) categories, with each winning \$10,000.

“Our annual blended burger contests have long celebrated how blending in mushrooms can make the iconic burger more delicious, nutritious and sustainable,” said Pam Smith, R.D.N., Foodservice Strategic Partner for the Mushroom Council. “Now, with inflation putting pressure on grocery budgets, we’re learning more than ever that mushrooms are the answer in stretching your food dollars – making this year’s competition even more impacting. We loved exploring these delicious entries and congratulate the winners.”

Home Cook Winner: Souvlaki-Inspired Blended Burgers

Sarah Meuser

New Milford, CT

Meuser is a food allergy mom and self-taught home cook/baker who currently is creating recipes for a food allergy-friendly cookbook she hopes to publish. Her approach with her winning burger was to transform a popular and beloved Greek fast food – pork souvlaki – into a burger made more delicious by blending mushrooms at a ratio of 1/3 white buttons to 2/3 pork.

“I wanted to create a burger anyone could replicate at home,” she said. “I also felt it was important to make a more budget-friendly recipe since grocery costs are so high. Souvlaki was the first idea that popped into my head, so I went with that, since I love souvlaki.”

“For the patty, I used white button mushrooms because I know they are available at every grocer,” Meuser continued. “White buttons, with their mild, tender texture, pair well with ground pork. I love the flavors, textures, and colors in a souvlaki platter and felt these flavors would translate well as a blended burger.”

“I am a burger fan! I love how you can create one with beef, poultry, pork, seafood or plant-based ingredients; and then there are so many different varieties of fresh mushrooms – each with its own distinct flavor profile – to blend,” she concluded. “The possibilities are endless.”

Make Sarah’s burger at: <https://www.mushroomcouncil.com/recipes/souvlaki-inspired-blended-burgers/>.

Professional Winner: Crispy Katsu Blended Burger
Tsz Chan, Bolo
Temple City, CA

Earlier this summer, Tsz – co-owner of Bolo in Southern California – found herself with an unexpected free weekend. Looking to fill it with a creative pursuit, she discovered the Blended Burger Contest, setting her mind in motion.

“My vision was to create something that could transport people to Japan,” she said of her Crispy Katsu Burger. “I wasn’t trying to win – I was trying to create something to take people to a place I love.”

She spent the first day fleshing out ideas: “Menchi katsu was the best meatloaf I’ve ever had in Japan so I came up with the idea to transform it into the ultimate burger,” said Tsz, whose burger features a blend of equal parts ground ribeye, ground pork, and chopped sauteed shiitake mushrooms. “The shiitakes provide an extra, powerful layer of texture and flavor.”

On the second day, she cooked her recipe, serving it for her family to unanimous approval.

“Being from Hong Kong, mushrooms are such a part of our cuisine,” she added. “I love putting them in dumplings and won tons. If you put mushrooms in a recipe, it’s going to make it that much better. That’s why blending mushrooms makes sense to me: You get all the benefits of the meat, but you add mushrooms and bulk it up not only in size, but also flavor.”

Make Tsz’s burger at: <https://www.mushroomcouncil.com/recipes/crispy-katsu-blended-burgers/>.

Food Network Magazine will showcase both burgers in its November issue, available on newsstands mid-October.

About the Mushroom Council:

The Mushroom Council is composed of fresh market producers and importers who average more than 500,000 pounds of mushrooms produced or imported annually. The mushroom program is authorized

by the Mushroom Promotion, Research and Consumer Information Act of 1990 and is administered by the Mushroom Council under the supervision of the Agricultural Marketing Service. Research and promotion programs help to expand, maintain and develop markets for individual agricultural commodities in the United States and abroad. These industry self-help programs are requested and funded by the industry groups that they serve. For more information, visit mushroomcouncil.com.

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