DIRECT · EASY

Saffron Milk Caps on a Steel Griddle with Garlic and Parsley

Saffron milk caps hit dry steel at 250 °C: first they give up their water, then they brown. Garlic and parsley go in at the very end, in the last minute. The shortest autumn recipe here, and the easiest to ruin.



PREP	COOK	SERVINGS	TEMPERATURE
20 min	10 min	4	250 °C

Ingredients

- **700 g** fresh saffron milk caps, medium and firm
- **15 g** fresh parsley leaves
- **1 cdta** flaky sea salt
- **60 g** diced serrano ham (optional)
- **1 cdta** sherry vinegar
- **0.5 ud** lemon, zest only (optional)
- **3 ud** garlic cloves
- **4 cda** extra virgin olive oil (Arbequina or Picual)
- **1 pizca** freshly ground black pepper
- **0.5 cdta** sweet smoked paprika from La Vera (optional)
- **1 ud** dried cayenne chilli, crumbled (optional)
- **4 ud** slices of country bread

Method

1 CLEAN THEM DRY

Brush the soil off the saffron milk caps with a soft brush and wipe the cap with a barely damp cloth. Trim the gritty base of the stem and halve any very large specimens; medium ones go on whole. Never run them under the tap: a mushroom soaks up water like a sponge, and that water is exactly what stops them browning later.

2 CHOP THE GARLIC MIX

Finely chop the garlic cloves and the parsley leaves, then mix them in a bowl with two tablespoons of olive oil, the crumbled cayenne and the paprika. Keep it within reach of the griddle: it all goes on at once in the final minute, and there is no time to chop anything with the mushrooms already on the steel.

3 HEAT THE GRIDDLE

Light the kamado for direct cooking and settle it at 250 °C with the lid closed. Set the solid-steel Petromax Griddle FS38 on the grate — or the Lodge Reversible Grill Griddle 42×24 cm on its smooth side — and leave it for 12-15 minutes. Steel needs that long to load heat through its whole thickness, not just the top face.

4 READ THE SURFACE

Point the Ooni infrared thermometer at the middle of the plate: it should read 230-250 °C. The kamado's dome and the steel do not move in step, and it is the surface that does the cooking. If it falls short, open the bottom vent a little more and wait three minutes; if it climbs past 270 °C, close the top vent a notch and let it settle.

5 FIRST SIDE, GILLS DOWN

Lay the mushrooms gills down, with no oil and without crowding: leave a finger's width between them. You will hear a steady hiss for 2-3 minutes; that is the water in the gills evaporating against the steel. Do not move them, do not press them down and do not salt them yet. If they do not all fit, work in two batches.

6 FLIP ONTO THE CAP

Using the Weber Precision spatula, turn each mushroom and leave them 3-4 minutes cap down. Any remaining water escapes through the gill cavity, now facing up. Look for a hazelnut-coloured edge on the cap; if the plate has lost temperature, open the bottom vent slightly and give them another minute.

7 GARLIC, PARSLEY AND OIL

Turn them back gills up and spoon the garlic, parsley and oil mixture into the hollow of each cap. Count 60 seconds: the garlic should perfume the air and barely take colour, never fully brown. The hollow acts as a little pan and keeps the garlic off the steel, which is where it would scorch in seconds.

8 SALT AND SERVE

Move them to a warm dish, drizzle with the remaining oil and a few drops of sherry vinegar, then finish with flaky salt, pepper and, if you like the contrast, a fine grating of lemon zest. If you are using ham, sizzle the dice for 30 seconds on the now-empty plate and scatter them over. Serve at once, with bread for the juices.

Editor's tips

- Choose medium, firm saffron milk caps whose caps still curl inwards; wide-open ones are usually past their best, wetter, and often riddled with larvae in the stem.
- Do not crowd the plate: each mushroom needs full contact with the steel and a finger of air around it, so two short batches beat one long one every time.
- If you did not pick them yourself, buy them at a market or a greengrocer you trust, and never cook a wild mushroom you have not identified with certainty.
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Do not bin the stems and trimmings: brown them on the same plate at the end, once it is free, and keep them for a rice dish or for huevos rotos.

Gear for this recipe

Big Green Egg Large
mikamado.es/en/kamados/big-green-egg-large

Carboext 100% Holm Oak Lump Charcoal, 15 kg Sack
mikamado.es/en/accesorios/carboext-encina-15kg

Petromax FS38 Solid Steel Griddle / Fire Bowl 38 cm
The mushrooms go on dry, and that only works if the steel has loaded heat through its whole thickness: the solid Petromax Griddle FS38 holds 250 °C even when a cold, water-heavy batch lands on it all at once. On the grate they would stick, tear as you turned them and drip their juice into the coals; here the water boils, leaves as vapour and the edge browns. On my Big Green Egg Large its round 38 cm fit with room to spare.

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/petromax-griddle-firebowl-fs38

Ooni Digital Infrared Pizza Oven Thermometer
The kamado dome can read 250 °C while the steel sits thirty degrees behind it, and it is the surface that cooks. The Ooni infrared thermometer is aimed at the middle of the plate and gives the reading on the spot: below 230 °C the mushroom stays pale and weeps water; above 270 °C the garlic of the final minute burns before it can perfume anything. Without it, those 12-15 preheating minutes are guesswork.

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/ooni-termometro-infrarrojo

Weber Precision Grill Spatula (6769)
Each mushroom is turned twice and reaches the second turn fragile: first gills to cap, then back over so the hollow can be filled with the garlic mix. A thick spatula snaps it in half. The Weber Precision spatula has the thin edge and the cranked neck you need to slide right under a whole cap and lift it in one piece, and its long handle keeps your hand away from steel sitting at 250 °C.

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/weber-espatula-precision

Full recipe at: mikamado.es/en/recetas/niscalos-plancha-acero-ajo-perejil-kamado

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