

Recipe For: Grits Toast with Beef Sausage & Quail Eggs

Recipe courtesy of Meredith Poffenberger—Serves 12



Ingredients

- 5 ½ cups** homemade chicken stock
- 1 ½ cups** quick grits
- ½ cup** grated Parmesan cheese, plus 1 cup
- ½ tsp.** salt (Do not add if stock has already been salted.)
- 4 tbsp.** butter, divided
- 2** large onions, sliced into ½" rings or half rings
- 1** tbsp. vegetable oil
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 1 lb.** baby Portabella mushrooms, sliced
- 1 lb.** Stonecrest Farms beef sausage, browned and crumbled
- 2 tsp.** mayonnaise
- 12** quail eggs
- Small** bunch of fresh chives, sliced

Bring broth to a boil. Stir in grits (and salt, if need be) and return to a boil. Reduce heat, stir or whisk often to avoid lumping. Simmer for 5 minutes until grits are thickened. Stir in ½ cup Parmesan cheese. Remove from heat. Pour grits into a buttered/greased 9x13" glass baking dish. Spread mixture to corners so that the grits are an even height. Cover and chill for 2 hours or more until firm.

While grits are chilling, slice onions and add to a sauté pan with 2 tablespoons of melted butter. Sprinkle onions with salt and pepper to taste (about 1 tsp. salt and ¼ tsp. pepper is recommended.) Sauté onions on low heat for 40 to 60 minutes until the onions are golden brown in color. Add more butter or 1 tablespoon of water to keep onions moist while caramelizing.

While onions are caramelizing, brown the beef sausage. Allow to cool and drain off the grease. Crumble beef sausage to ½" or less crumbles. Slice mushrooms. Sauté mushrooms in vegetable oil. Add sausage to flavor the mushrooms while sautéing.

Pre-heat oven to 400°. Un-mold the grits by running a butter knife or spatula around the edge of the pan and topping the pan with a large cutting board. Hold firmly in place and "flip" the pan and cutting board at same time. Remove the pan. Grits mold should be on the cutting board. Cut grits into 12 round disks with a biscuit cutter. Grease a baking sheet with butter. Place each grits disk onto the sheet. Brush tops of disks with melted butter. Place baking sheet with grits disk into oven. Bake for 15 minutes, turn and bake for 15 more minutes. Set aside.

Mix caramelized onions, sausage, mushrooms and 1 cup Parmesan cheese with 2 tablespoons of mayonnaise. Top each disk with the sausage mixture. Place baking sheet with topped disks under a broiler for 5 minutes until golden brown and heated through. Watch so that they don't burn. Slice chives and set aside. Fry each quail egg in 2 tablespoons melted butter. Sprinkle each with salt and pepper to taste. Fry egg to desired consistency. Quail eggs do not take long to cook. (To crack open quail eggs, tap each egg shell and "peel" away a large enough opening to let the yolk and whites out.) Remove the grits disks from the broiler. Top the mixture with a fried quail egg. Sprinkle with sliced chives. Makes 12 servings.

