

Baked Eggs and Mushrooms in Brioche

Yield: 12 servings

- ¾ lb. mixed mushrooms, (oyster, shiitake, cremini), finely chopped
- ¼ cup finely chopped shallot
- 2 Tbsp unsalted butter
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- 2 Tbsp crème fraîche or sour cream
- 1 Tbsp finely chopped fresh tarragon
- 12 individual brioches
- 4 thin slices of Virginia ham or prosciutto (optional)
- 12 large eggs
- ½ cup cream
- fresh tarragon leaves, for garnish

Preheat oven to 375° F. Cook mushrooms and shallot in butter with salt and pepper in a large heavy skillet over moderately high heat, stirring constantly until mushrooms are tender and the liquid they give off is evaporated, about 10 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in crème fraîche and tarragon.

Cut the top off brioches and hollow out cup. Butter the insides of brioche shells and the bottoms of the top piece. Place brioche bottoms in a 12-cup (½-cup) muffin tin. Cut up the ham, if using meat, and line the bread shell. Divide mushrooms among brioche cups and spread in the bottom.

Break 1 egg into each brioche. Top each egg with 2 teaspoons of cream. Bake in middle of oven until whites are cooked but yolks are still runny, about 18 minutes. Place brioche tops in the oven during last five minutes of baking to toast. Season eggs with salt and pepper and remove from muffin cups carefully, using 2 spoons or small spatulas.