

# WILD RICE CASSEROLE

This takes REAL wild rice, which is not really rice, but a grass seed. Do not confuse it with "mixes" available in stores where white and or brown rice are mixed in with a little bit of wild rice. Wild Rice grains are black in color and it can be found at most grocery and health food stores - it is expensive, about \$10-15 per pound, but it is worth it! It can be hard to find in the stores, but sometimes it comes in small 4-ounce boxes - about the size of a small Jello pudding mix box, so take your time in the rice section and look carefully; it's probably there.

## INGREDIENTS:

1 cup (8 ounces) 100% wild rice, washed if necessary  
3 cups boiling water  
1 cup chopped onion  
½ cup (1 stick) REAL butter, NOT margarine  
¼ tsp salt  
1 pound (16 ounces) fresh button or portabella mushrooms,  
sliced (about 5 - 6 cups)  
1 cup grated sharp or extra sharp cheddar cheese  
1 tsp salt  
1/2 cup hot water

## DIRECTIONS:

1. Cook rice (covered) in boiling, salted water until tender, about 45-60 minutes. Some of the rice hulls may not be cracked open - that is okay - usually not all the rice will be fully cooked, but it will finish cooking in the oven.
2. Drain rice if any water remains. Take care not to burn yourself.
3. Sauté mushrooms and onions in butter for about 5 minutes. Transfer to a bowl with a slotted spoon to remove excess liquid.
4. Toss cooked rice with onion-mushroom mix, then add cheese and toss until thoroughly incorporated. The cheese may melt partially - that is okay.
5. Place in a 2 - 3 quart casserole or 9"x 9" x 2" dish, pour additional 1/2 cup of salted water over rice, cover and bake for 1 hr to 1:15 at 350 degrees. At 1 hour mark, uncover and check to see if all the water has been absorbed. If not, uncover and bake for additional 5 minute increments. After the first additional 5 minutes and to prevent burning, you will probably have to re-cover it, but leave it vented enough to allow the water to boil off and steam to escape.

**NOTE:** This may be prepared the day before and baked just before serving. If doing this, don't pour in water in Step 5. until ready to cook. Great as a side dish with pork, poultry, or game. This dish has been very popular with my guests - you may want to make a double recipe if you're serving more than 6 people.

Keeps well for over a week - cover & reheat in microwave.

## TIPS:

If desired, about 5 minutes before finished baking, remove the cover on the casserole and sprinkle some more cheese on the top and finish baking.

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