

Morels

Facts about the popular edible mushroom

General

Name:

Morel (Morchella)

Divison:

Ascomycota

Origin:

North America, South America, South Africa, Asia & Europe



Harvesting / Picking

In **Canada**, the forest fire season is closely monitored in the fall and winter so that pickers can be sent to the affected forest areas the following spring after the fires. They are often out in the bush for days on end and disconnected from the world outside.

In **India** and **Pakistan**, the morels are often picked by wandering shepherds and then dried over a fire directly in the forests. The dried morels are then delivered directly to the nearest collection point.

Facts

- Morels are one of the most expensive and sought-after mushrooms. There are different types. They grow on organic matter, on roadsides and embankments, after forest fires or even after flooding.
- They are high in protein, vitamin D and potassium, to name only a few.
- Raw morels are poisonous and should therefore be consumed either heated or dried. Whether for a cream sauce, a risotto or with pasta - there are almost no limits to the way they can be served.
- Dried morels lose up to 90% of their weight. This is why dried morels have a high price. They expand to almost their original size when soaked.

Cultivation

The mushroom is a sustainable resource and also an alternative to meat. Commercial cultivation in China has only been possible for a few years, and this after various experiments.

Morels in space

At different stages of growth, morels are sensitive to light conditions as well as soil and air humidity. In 2021 and 2022, morel sprouts were sent into space, where they were exposed to weightlessness and cosmic radiation. This resulted in mutations that were resistant to extreme temperatures, drought, moisture and disease. As a result, the usual harvest yield was more than doubled at high altitudes in southwest China.

