



## SHIMEJI (S)

Edible Shimeji mushrooms began appearing in North American grocery stores only a few years ago. They're increasingly sought after for their gastronomic and medicinal qualities, as they have historically been in Japan. Actually, the Japanese name itself refers to a few different species. Take a deep breath and prepare to jump from Japanese to English to Latin and back working through the realm of common, Japanese and scientific nomenclature, as well as from traditional oriental cuisine through to your local supermarket.

Hon-shimeji (*Lyophyllum shimeji*) is a wild mushroom much valued in Japan. A symbiont of red pines and oaks, it is not cultivated and it is not available in North America.



*Hypsizygos tessalatus*



*Lyophyllum decastes*

Now, Hon-shimeji must not be confused with buna-shimeji (brown beech mushrooms), nor with bunapi-shimeji or (white beech mushrooms), both varieties of the same species of saprobic mushroom *Hypsizygos tessulatus* (sometimes called *H. marmoreus* and *H. elongatipes*).

The genus also includes the "elm pleurotus" (*H. ulmarius*), nicknamed tamo-motashi or shirotomogidake in Japanese. Both the elm pleurotus and the beech pleurotus decompose deciduous trees with each one growing on



## SHIMEJI (S)

its respective tree type. Both are commercially cultivated and increasingly available in our stores, fresh or in home cultivation kits. To make things more confusing, they may actually be the very same mushroom. For now we do not know.

### Nutritional value per 114 g portion

#### **Brown / White Beech (*Hypsizygus tessalatus*)**

Calories	20	%
Total Lipids	0,6g	1%
Saturated fats	0 g	0%
Trans Fats	0 g	0%
Cholesterol	0 mg	0%
Sodium	0,7mg	< 1%
Carbohydrates	7,4g	1%
Proteins	3g	6%
Riboflavin	0,2mg	12%
Niacin	7mg	35%
Magnesium	10,9mg	13%
Thiamin	0,1 mg	7%
Iron	0,4mg	2%
Beta glucan	2,1mg	s/o

% daily requirement in a 2 kcal regime

Another species, the fried chicken mushroom (*Lyophyllum decastes*) is altogether a different type of shimeji, spelled hatake shimeji in Japanese. This one is a saprobe common in our North American forests, and it is edible, but not considered choice.

The flesh of shimejis, whether buna or bunapi, is tougher than that of the oyster mushroom (*Pleurotus ostreatus*, the only genuine *Pleurotus* of all that are mentioned here). They have a subtler taste, recalling a slightly



## SHIMEJI (S)

sweet hazelnut after they have been cooked. However, it is not recommended to eat them raw: cooking eliminates a slight bitterness.

As with many mushrooms, whether buna and bunapi, shimejis represent a healthy food choice. They also have some medicinal interest: anti-tumor properties created from polysaccharides they contain.