

*This recipe is excerpted from the book I co-authored in 2018, called “Untamed Mushrooms: From Field to Table”.*

## **MUSHROOM XO SAUCE with ROASTED CAULIFLOWER STEAKS**

Serves 4

½ pound king bolete mushrooms, trimmed and finely chopped

1 tablespoon toasted sesame oil

1 teaspoon mushroom soy sauce or tamari

1 tablespoon fermented black beans, rinsed and mashed

1 tablespoon roasted garlic seasoned rice vinegar

2 teaspoons Asian hot pepper sauce

¼ cup water

1 large head cauliflower, cut vertically into 4 slabs

2 tablespoons peanut oil

Coarse salt and freshly ground pepper

1. Heat the oven to 450° F. Line a large rimmed baking sheet with parchment. Toss the mushrooms with the oil; spread in an even layer on the baking sheet. Roast for 10 to 12 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the mushrooms have released their juices and are golden brown.
2. Scrape the mushrooms into a bowl. Stir in the rest of the ingredients; cover and set aside.
3. Arrange the cauliflower on the baking sheet; drizzle with the oil and season with salt and pepper. Roast for about 35 minutes, turning once, or until very tender and golden brown.
4. Serve cauliflower with spoonful of the XO sauce.

### **Kitchen Notes**

I first learned about XO sauce in San Francisco—a souped-up Chinese condiment filled with expensive, deeply rich and intense ingredients liked smoked scallops and premium Chinese ham. Thus the OX moniker that refers to a super pricey Cognac, automatically conferring an exclusiveness in both cost and flavor. But taken to its most common denominator, an XO sauce is all about salty, smoky, spicy-sweet umami—which wild mushrooms have in spades. Just a spoonful is enough to take the most elegantly simple vegetable to new places. Keep a jarful in the fridge for up to a few weeks.