

2. Gradually stir in the milk, 1 cup at a time, allowing the mixture to thicken before adding more. You might find a whisk helpful for breaking up lumps. Lower heat to very low and simmer, covered, for 1 hour.

3. Stir in the mushrooms, tomato, and Tabasco sauce. Taste for seasoning before serving with Savory Mountain Cake or other biscuits.

Part of the secret of success in life is to eat what you like and let the food fight it out inside.

Mark Twain

### Thickening with Roux

Velvety smooth sauces, soups, and gravies are often thickened by adding flour that's been cooked in butter or oil. The mixture, called roux, consists of equal parts flour and fat. Cooked slightly, "blond" roux is perfect for light sauces and for white or cream soups. Cooked longer, "brown" roux is the preferred thickener for New Orleans's famed Cajun *etouffée* and other stews. Uncooked, this mixture is called *beurre*

*manié* and has a slightly starchy flavor that works well in only a few dishes.

Add cooled roux to hot liquid or hot roux to cold liquid. Start by adding a small amount of liquid to the roux and cooking until it thickens greatly, then add that mixture back to the rest of the liquid. This method prevents lumps, which sometimes form when roux is added directly to the whole volume of liquid at once.

