Any Questions? Need More Information?

Should you have any questions, call our Mushroom Hotline at (360) 426-9292. Our hours are 8:30am–4:30pm Pacific Time, Mondays through Fridays. We will be happy to help you! We also offer technical support for our products via email at info@fungi.com.

For more detailed information on mushroom cultivation, we suggest you consult the book Growing Gourmet & Medicinal Mushrooms, available from Fungi Perfecti for $44.95 plus shipping and handling. This book explains in detail cultivation techniques and growing parameters for 31 different edible and medicinal mushroom species. With 574 pages and more than 400 photographs and diagrams, this is the definitive text on mushroom cultivation for both hobbyist and professional growers.

We supply and instruct mushroom growers worldwide, amateurs and professionals alike. Contact us via phone, fax or email for a free color brochure. Or you can browse our complete product line and order securely with your Visa, MasterCard, American Express or Discover Card at our Web site, www.fungi.com.

If you purchased this Fungi Perfecti® product from another retailer or catalog company, please offer them the courtesy of your continued business. Thank you!

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Ganoderma lucidum, known as Reishi (ray-shee) by the Japanese and Ling Chi by the Chinese, is a conk-forming mushroom found growing on logs and stumps in temperate zones throughout the world. It comes in a variety of colors: red, yellow, purple and black (the strain we have provided for you is deep red in color), with a varnished-looking upper surface and a light, porous underside that is velvety to the touch.

Reishi, often referred to as “The Mushroom of Immortality,” has long been sought after for its beneficial properties, and has been represented in Asian art for thousands of years. Western studies are increasingly authenticating what Eastern cultures discovered long ago: that this mushroom modulates the body’s immune system, promotes joint support and facilitates respiration. Once mature fruitbodies have formed, this mushroom is broken up, powdered and steeped in simple teas. Its flavor is strong, distinctive and pleasant to most people.

Please note: Mature mushrooms produce spores. Reishi spores will appear as a reddish-brown dust or powder on the surface surrounding the Patch or on the Patch itself. Spores are easily wiped off of most smooth surfaces such as painted wood and Formica, but may stick to tablecloths or other highly porous surfaces. Please take this into consideration when selecting the ideal location for your Patch.

Thanks for purchasing our product! We wish you luck in this and all of your future fungal endeavors. Stay in touch with us for new developments in the field of mushroom cultivation.

The Folks At
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batch of tea. If you wait too long before re-using your mushrooms for tea, they might become moldy.

The overall yield of this Mushroom Patch is highly variable and comparatively small considering the mass of the sawdust. You can get several dried ounces per Reishi Mushroom Patch over a period of 3 months, depending upon care. Should no new growth be seen, fill the intact bag with water, allow to sit submerged overnight, and then drain. (If the bag leaks, you can put the whole thing in a bucket of water, using a brick or something similar to keep the Patch fully submerged. Remember to use spring, well, rain or boiled tap water to soak your Patch.) Return your Reishi Mushroom Patch to its original location, and mist daily to encourage more fruitings. One flush is normal; more than one is the exception.

When your Patch has ceased to fruit, you can break it up and use the material to inoculate logs outdoors using the “wedge technique”. We recommend using a hardwood—ideally oak, alder, cottonwood (poplar), aspen, elm, beech, walnut, or similar woods. Cut large wedges from the logs and fill the crevices with the loose material from your Reishi Patch (this material—wood or similar substrates colonized by mushroom mycelium—is what cultivators refer to as “spawn”). Then replace the wedges and secure them in place with nails, screws or straps. You may also wish to seal the cut sites with beeswax or cheese wax to help protect the mycelium. While helpful, this step is not absolutely necessary.

Reishi grow best on logs

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**Getting Started**

The block of sawdust and wood chips that composes your Reishi Mushroom Patch is fully colonized by a special strain of this noble fungus. The Patch needs to remain in the spawn bag for the first step: please keep it sealed until instructed to open the bag.

Included with the Patch is a plastic bag with holes punched in it; this is the humidity tent. The tent is used to maintain a high-humidity environment for your Patch. Simply roll the base of the humidity tent like a pant leg to keep upright and stable around the Patch (Figure 1). In addition, you will need a spray bottle and a shallow container in which to place the Patch. A plate, pie tin or similar container is ideal. (It is best to regularly dump out any water that accumulates in the container.) It is important though, that the container does not have high walls so the Patch receives proper air circulation later on. To induce fruiting, simply place it in an area that receives no direct sunlight (some light is required: if there is enough light to read these directions, there is enough light for your Reishi Patch), with a temperature range of 60–80 °F. Your mushrooms will grow more quickly at warmer temperatures than cooler ones within the given temperature range.

Your Mushroom Patch is contained in a spawn bag with a white filter patch, marked with a date and letter code denoting genus and species. At this point in its life cycle, your Reishi Patch is a self-sufficient environment, with humidity and air exchange that is ideal for the antler-like formations of the Reishi mushroom to develop. Once these “fingers” develop 1–3 inches in length from the top surface of the Patch it is time to open the bag (Figure 2). These baby mushrooms should have white tips and a reddish color at the base.
Cut a horizontal slice in the top of the bag containing the Patch. This provides a slight increase in the oxygen available to the Patch that stimulates growth and encourages the antlers to grow. Cover with the humidity tent and begin misting 2–3 times a day, using water that is neither chlorinated nor distilled. Spring, well or rain water work best, though boiled tap water may also be used. Boil tap water gently for 20 minutes to cause the chlorine to dissipate. Once cooled, you can fill your spray bottle and use this to mist your Patch.

After 2–3 days cut the bag horizontally below the filter patch, leaving at least two inches of sidewalls. (While it’s not critical, saving the filter patch that contains the inoculation date can be helpful for our customer service team in case you need to call in for support later on.) These sidewalls will collect condensation and help to keep the Patch moist. Again, cover the Patch with the humidity tent and continue to mist 2–3 times a day using non-chlorinated/non-distilled water.

Your Reishi will continue to grow, slowly, steadily, with the tips of the antlers typically whitish in color. After 1–2 months, flat saucer-shaped caps may fan out from the “antlers.” Not all antlers will produce caps. A white zone along the outer edge of the mushroom cap or antler is a sure sign of present and future growth (Figure 4). If this band of white becomes dry, dingy or waxy-looking, it is an indication that the Patch is too dry. Increase your watering by about 30 percent. When the antler tips or cap edges lose that white color, becoming chestnut reddish brown, and do not reappear in one week’s time, then, in most cases, this indicates that the time to harvest has come. Mature mushrooms will also be indicated by a dusting of reddish-brown spores on the surface of the cap. Your job is to encourage the full development of the antler-like knobs into the most robust saucer shaped conks possible. Reishi mushrooms usually take 2–4 months to reach full maturity.

Harvesting

To harvest, simply cut the woody mushroom from the base, taking care to cut it as close to the interface between mushroom and Patch as possible. We have found that pruning shears work best for this, but heavy duty kitchen shears will work as well. Whichever tool you use, make sure that it is clean. If the humidity is lower than 60%, then air drying is easily accomplished by suspending the mushrooms from a string in your kitchen. Reishi mushrooms also dry very well if placed outside on a sunny day, with the undersides turned upward. The dried mushrooms may be used as decoration or ground up in a blender for use in tea. Dried Reishi are very tough, and may not grind up completely, but large pieces can be used in conjunction with the powdered mushroom. 5 grams of dried Reishi is recommended per liter of water. Steep the Reishi in water for 10–15 minutes, strain and serve. You may elect to add other teas or herbs to the mixture to suit your taste. You should save the ground Reishi from your tea for reuse, in order to enjoy maximum benefit from it. Please note that if you are re-using your Reishi mushrooms, they should be immersed in boiling water within a day of the first
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that are buried horizontally in the ground, with only a third of their circumference showing above ground. Be sure to place your logs in an area where they will receive only indirect or dappled sunlight. You can cover them with shade cloth or dark screen to further protect them from sunlight and help them to retain moisture. (Do not cover them with plastic or other water- or vapor-proof material: this will encourage the formation of mold.) Water your logs once per day for the first two weeks (using regular tap water is okay), then leave them alone. Log cultivation of Reishi will take about 9 months to a year to produce mushrooms. After a year has passed, if mushrooms have not come up by themselves, water your logs twice per day for one week to induce fruiting.

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If you purchased this Fungi Perfecti® product from another retailer or catalog company, please offer them the courtesy of your continued business. Thank you!

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