

Macaroni and Cheese

Recipe By: Bub

Ingredients

- 1 (16 ounce) package elbow macaroni
- 12 ounces bacon saving the bacon grease for the roux
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- ¼ teaspoon dried or 1 teaspoon fresh thyme
- ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- ⅛ teaspoon ground black pepper
- ¼ teaspoon (smoked) paprika
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- ½ sweet onion, minced
- 3-4 cups milk
- 1 pinch ground nutmeg
- ¼ teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 12-16 ounces shredded sharp Cheddar and/or other cheese, divided
- 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 1 cup (panko) bread crumbs for the crust
- 3 tablespoons butter, melted for the crust

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400°.
2. Fill a large pot with lightly salted water and bring to a rolling boil over high heat.
3. Once the water is boiling, stir in the macaroni, and return to a boil.
4. Cook the pasta uncovered, stirring occasionally, until the pasta is cooked through but still slightly firm, about 8 minutes then drain well.
5. Cut the bacon into lardons and fry in a large pan on medium heat.
6. Remove and set aside the cooked bacon leaving about ¼ cup of grease in the pan.
7. Heat the bacon grease on medium heat and add the garlic and onion and cook until onions are translucent, about 5 minutes.
8. Stir in the flour and cook until flour just begins to turn pale yellow, 3 to 4 minutes.
9. Add thyme, cayenne pepper, paprika and ground pepper; cook and stir another minute.
10. Temper the roux by whisking in 1 cup of milk until smooth and then pour in remaining milk and whisk again.
11. Stir in nutmeg, Worcestershire sauce.
12. On medium-low heat, bring the sauce just to a simmer and whisk until thickened, about 8 minutes.
13. Turn heat off, then add ¾ of the cheddar cheese; stir until melted and combined.
14. Add in the Dijon mustard, and thoroughly combine the cooked bacon and the macaroni.
15. Transfer the mix into an oven safe to 400° casserole dish.
16. Mix panko bread crumbs and 3 tablespoons melted butter in a small bowl, and sprinkle crumbs on top of macaroni and cheese.
17. Sprinkle on the remaining cheddar cheese.
18. Bake in the preheated oven until bread crumbs and Cheddar cheese topping are golden brown, about 20 minutes.