

Macaroni and Cheese

Yield: 4 servings

2 cups	Elbow Macaroni Pasta
¼ cup	Unsalted Butter
½ cup	Finely Diced Onion
¼ cup	All Purpose Flour
2 cups	Milk
½ tsp	Salt
to taste	Freshly Ground Pepper
1 tsp	Dijon Mustard (or a pinch of Keen's Dry Mustard)
1 cup	Shredded Yellow Cheddar
1 cup	Shredded White Cheddar
1 cup	Shredded Gouda, Mozzarella or Swiss
1 cup	Shredded Cheese (for topping)
2 cups	Fresh Bread Crumbs (puree 2 slices white bread or white bun with crusts on by pulsing in food processor to make soft crumbs)
¼ cup	Unsalted Butter, melted

Cook pasta as per directions. My favourite method is: bring four litres of water to a boil. Add 1 tsp salt and 1 tbsp olive oil and pasta. Reduce heat so that water is at a rolling boil (but doesn't boil over) and stir occasionally. Fresh pasta will take 3 to 5 minutes to cook and dry pasta about 8 to 10. Always cook pasta 'al dente' or firm to the bite. Drain pasta and rinse with cold water. Set aside.

Preheat oven to 375 F. In a large (4 quart) saucepan, melt butter and sauté onions, until soft and lightly golden (about 3 to 5 minutes). Whisk in the flour to coat the onions and sauté for several minutes. Slowly pour in the milk and whisk until blended and there are no lumps. Continue to cook, stirring often until mixture is thick and bubbly (about 5 to 8 minutes) and coats the back of a spoon. Add salt, pepper and Dijon and stir well. Add 1 cup of yellow Cheddar, 1 cup of white Cheddar and 1 cup of other white cheese (saving the 1 cup of cheese for topping). Stir until cheese is blended and melted. Toss in the cooked elbow macaroni and heat through. Grease a 2 quart/8-cup casserole dish and pour in macaroni and cheese. Top with 1 cup of shredded cheese. Mix fresh breadcrumbs with the ¼ cup melted butter and spread on top of casserole. Bake for 30 minutes or until bubbly and lightly browned.

Options: add 2 cups cooked ham cut into ½" cubes; ½ cup of favourite chopped fresh herbs; ½ cup sautéed mushrooms; ½ cup chopped tomatoes.

Easy comfort food is on the menu today and what better comfort food than Mac 'n Cheese! Make a batch or two and freeze some servings for future lunch or dinners!