

Baked Italian Macaroni and Cheese from KellyintheKitchen

INGREDIENTS

4 cups macaroni
1 cup whole milk
2 cups chicken stock
2 bay leaves
1 1/2 cups cheddar, grated
3/4 cup parmesan, grated
1 1/2 tbsp corn starch
generous dash of dry mustard powder
generous dash of paprika
1 egg, beaten
3/4 cup fresh mozzarella, cubed
1 tbsp butter
salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 400 F.

Heat a pot of salted water for the pasta. Cook the pasta to a still-firm al dente (it's going in the oven, so it should still be slightly undercooked). When you drain the pasta, reserve 1 cup of the cooking water, to add to the sauce later if needed.

Now, the cheese sauce. In a large saucepan that'll be big enough to hold all the pasta, heat the milk, stock, and bay leaves and simmer for 5 minutes.

Meanwhile, put the cheddar in a bowl and toss it with the corn starch, mustard powder, and paprika. Then remove the bay leaves from the milk and stir in the cheddar. Turn the heat down to low, stirring as the sauce thickens, about 10 minutes.

In a separate bowl, add a spoonful of the hot cheese sauce to the beaten egg to temper, and use a fork to stir.

Take the sauce off the heat and whisk in the egg, mozzarella, butter, and salt and pepper. You'll probably need a bit more salt and pepper than you think you'll need, but be careful not to oversalt. Just try a bite after your first addition, and add seasoning as needed. Stir until melt-ily incorporated.

Toss the pasta in the sauce to coat, and then pour into a greased baking dish. Sprinkle with a handful of cheddar and/or parmesan, if you like. Bake about 15 minutes, until the top just starts to brown. Leave to cool and set for 5-10 minutes before serving.