

Gail's Baked Mac 'n' Cheese from KellyintheKitchen

INGREDIENTS

1 lb (1 box) cavatappi or your favorite pasta
4 tbsp butter
olive oil
1 small onion, diced
3 tbsp flour
3 cups milk (approximately)
1 cup Gruyere cheese, shredded
1 1/2 cups cheddar cheese, shredded
nutmeg, salt, and pepper to taste
1 tbsp or more Sriracha or other hot sauce
3/4 tsp Dijon mustard
panko bread crumbs

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350 F.

Cook the pasta in boiling salted water until slightly underdone. Reserve 1 cup of the pasta cooking water (it's nice and starchy and is great to have on hand to add to the sauce later), and then drain the pasta and set it aside. It will finish cooking in the oven later.

Heat butter and a drizzle of olive oil over medium high. Add the onions. Cook until softened and translucent.

Add the flour and stir as it forms a paste. Let it cook for about 2 minutes, stirring the whole time.

Then grab your whisk and slowly pour in 1 cup milk, whisking vigorously to avoid creating any lumps.

Once this first addition of milk is incorporated, whisk in the rest of the milk. When all the milk is incorporated, switch to a spoon and keep stirring as the sauce thickens.

Once the sauce has thickened and coats the spoon thickly, stir in the cheese.

Add the nutmeg, salt, pepper, Sriracha, and Dijon mustard at this point, tasting and adjusting to get the flavor you want.

If the sauce has thickened too much at this point, add a bit of the pasta water that you set aside earlier. When the sauce consistency is to your liking, stir in the pasta and coat it completely in the sauce.

Pour the whole thing into a greased baking dish and spread it out evenly. Top with bread crumbs and drizzle with a bit of olive oil.

Bake for 20-30 minutes, or until the sides are bubbling and the topping is browned and crunchy. Serve immediately.