

# Creamy Baked Macaroni and Cheese

**Prep time** 20 mins **Cook time** 30 mins **Total time** 50 mins

This is a baked mac and cheese recipe that is rich and creamy, but can be made ahead of time and thrown in the oven when guests arrive.

Author: Basil and Bubbly  
Recipe type: Side Dish, Holiday  
Cuisine: American  
Serves: 8 servings

## Gather:

- 16 ounces macaroni
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup butter
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp white pepper
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp salt
- $\frac{1}{8}$  tsp cayenne pepper
- $3\frac{1}{2}$  cups 2% milk
- 8 ounces mozzarella cheese, shredded
- 8 ounces extra sharp cheddar cheese, shredded



## Make:

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1. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F.
2. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the macaroni, cook for 8 - 9 minutes. Strain and set aside.
3. In a heavy-bottomed large pot over medium heat, melt the butter.
4. Sprinkle the flour, white pepper, salt, and cayenne pepper over the melted butter, whisking until smooth.
5. Stir in the milk  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup at a time ( feel free to eyeball it ), only adding the next half cup once the previous one has been incorporated entirely.
6. Add all of the mozzarella cheese and half of the extra sharp cheddar cheese, stir into the milk/flour sauce until melted. Stir in the macaroni.
7. Pour into a 2 quart baking dish. Top with the remaining extra sharp cheddar cheese.
8. Bake at 375 F for 30 minutes.



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## Southern Baked Mac and Cheese

*Southern Baked Mac and Cheese – super creamy, cheesy, soulful baked mac and cheese filled with great Southern flavors topped with crispy bread crumb. You will never break open a box again!*

4.8 from 78 votes

Prep:58 mins Total:58 mins  
Southern

**SERVINGS 8 -10**

### Ingredients

- ☐ 3 tablespoons unsalted butter
- ☐ 2 tablespoons flour
- ☐ 1 12oz canned evaporated milk
- ☐ 1 cup half and half ( 1/2 cup cream and 1/2 cup milk)
- ☐ 1/2 -1 tablespoon onion powder
- ☐ 2 teaspoons garlic powder
- ☐ 1/2 -1 teaspoon [creole seasoning](#)
- ☐ 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- ☐ 1/2 cup mozzarella cheese , *grated*
- ☐ 1/2 cup sharp cheddar cheese<sup>[1]</sup><sub>SEP</sub> , *grated*
- ☐ 1/2 cup jack cheese
- ☐ Salt and pepper to taste
- ☐ 8 ounce uncooked Macaroni

**Metric**

## Instructions

1. Cook macaroni according to the package directions. Drain.
2. Add butter to skillet, as soon as butter melts whisk in flour. Continue whisking until flour is fully mixed with butter. Then cook for about a minute to get rid of the flour taste.
3. Slowly add evaporated milk a little at the time, followed by the half and half ; you do not want the mixture to form any lumps. Simmer for about 3-5 minutes until mixture thickens slightly.
4. Add seasonings, onion and garlic powder, creole seasoning and cayenne pepper.
5. Bring to a simmer and let it simmer gently for about 2 minutes.
6. Stir in the cheeses (reserve some as toppings later), and continue stirring until everything's melted and evenly combined and, smooth. Salt & pepper, to taste.
7. Then add the cooked pasta to the pot, stir to evenly incorporate.
8. Transfer the pasta mixture into a the pan or into a lightly greased 2-qt. baking dish; top with remaining cheese.
9. Bake at 375 Degrees F° for 20 minutes or until golden and bubbly.

## Tips & Notes:

### **Bread crumb topping (optional)**

- Place a small skillet on medium heat with 2 tablespoons butter, then toss in 1 teaspoon minced garlic, stir for about 30 seconds and throw in bread crumbs. Saute for about 3-4 minutes or until fragrant. Lightly season with salt and pepper, if desired. Then top the mac and cheese with the bread crumbs and bake.

### **If using an egg (optional)**

- In a medium bowl, beat egg then add about 1/2 cup of the sauce to the egg, return the egg mixture to the sauce, stirring to blend well. Proceed with the cheese and the proceeding steps.

### **Cheeses and Cheese Sauce**

- Don't use pre-shredded bagged cheese as it is drier. You have to get blocks of it and shred it yourself.
- Sharp cheddar cheese, mozzarella and jack cheese are my top fave. Or you can also use pepper jack cheese, gouda, fontina and Gruyere.
- More mozzarella cheese can be added for it gives it a nice gooey pull in every bite.
- Do not cook cheese sauce too long.

### **Add-ins**

- You can also throw in special ingredients such as garlic herbs, dried mustard, crispy fried onion strings and so on.
- For extra flavor, add chicken breast pieces, spinach, and red bell peppers.

### **Milk**

- In case you want to cut down on the calories, use low fat milk instead of evaporated milk and cut back on half of the cheese.
- It's best to warm milk. Cold liquid interrupts the cooking process. Heated milk also has a richer flavor than cold milk.
- To avoid lumps, try adding the milk about 2-3 tablespoons at a time. Whisk until it's incorporated before adding more. Once the can of evaporated milk is all mixed in, add in all the half and half at once.

### **Make Ahead Instructions**

- Mac and Cheese can be made ahead up to the point of baking, then bake about 30-40 minutes before serving, so it's hot and fresh. It can as well be made right in the morning and bake just before dinner time.
- It can also be made ahead and frozen, but the sauce has to be kept separate from the pasta. Mix together the sauce and pasta the day you want to bake.
- Reheat in the microwave if there are any leftover then spray the top with oil or butter for moisture.

### **More Baking Notes**

- Stick to the right pasta.
- You don't cover baked mac and cheese with foil as it would steam the inside and prevent it from achieving that slightly crusty golden bubbly top.
- If making for bigger groups of people, let's say 15 servings, triple the ingredients listed.

- In the absence of cast iron, Mac and Cheese can be baked in an oven safe pan and aluminum baking pans is also a good substitute.

Please keep in mind that nutritional information is a rough estimate and can vary greatly based on products used.

#### Nutrition Information:

Serving: 1cup| Calories: 492kcal (25%)| Carbohydrates: 47g (16%)| Protein: 19g (38%)| Fat: 24g (37%)| Saturated Fat: 15g (94%)| Cholesterol: 72mg (24%)| Sodium: 268mg (12%)| Potassium: 219mg (6%)| Fiber: 2g (8%)| Sugar: 1g (1%)| Vitamin A: 765IU (15%)| Vitamin C: 0.2mg| Calcium: 324mg (32%)| Iron: 1.3mg (7%)

**Author:** Imma

**Course:** Side

**Cuisine:** Southern

**Keyword:** mac and cheese

## Nutrition Facts

Southern Baked Mac and Cheese

Amount Per Serving (1 cup)

**Calories** 492Calories from Fat 216

% Daily Value\*

**Fat** 24g**37%**

Saturated Fat 15g**94%**

**Cholesterol** 72mg**24%**

**Sodium** 268mg**12%**

**Potassium** 219mg**6%**

**Carbohydrates** 47g**16%**

Fiber 2g**8%**

Sugar 1g**1%**

**Protein** 19g**38%**

**Vitamin A** 765IU**15%**

**Vitamin C** 0.2mg**0%**

**Calcium** 324mg**32%**

**Iron** 1.3mg**7%**

\* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2000 calorie diet.