



Macaroni and Cheese

Servings: 12 servings

Ingredients

8 tablespoons (1 stick) unsalted butter, plus more for dish
6 good white bread, crusts removed, torn into 1/4- to 1/2-inch pieces
5 1/2 cups milk
1/2 cup all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper, or to taste
4 1/2 cups grated sharp white cheddar cheese, (about 18 ounces)
2 cups grated Gruyere cheese, (about 8 ounces) or 1 1/4 cups grated Pecorino Romano cheese (about 5 ounces)
1 pound elbow macaroni

Directions

1. Heat oven to 375 degrees. Butter a 3-quart casserole dish; set aside. Place bread in a medium bowl. In a small saucepan over medium heat, melt 2 tablespoons butter. Pour butter into bowl with bread, and toss. Set breadcrumbs aside.
2. In a medium saucepan set over medium heat, heat milk. Melt remaining 6 tablespoons butter in a high-sided skillet over medium heat. When butter bubbles, add flour. Cook, whisking, 1 minute.
3. While whisking, slowly pour in hot milk. Continue cooking, whisking constantly, until the mixture bubbles and becomes thick.
4. Remove pan from heat. Stir in salt, nutmeg, black pepper, cayenne pepper, 3 cups cheddar cheese, and 1 1/2 cups Gruyere or 1 cup Pecorino Romano; set cheese sauce aside.
5. Fill a large saucepan with water; bring to a boil. Add macaroni; cook 2 to 3 minutes less than manufacturer's directions, until the outside of pasta is cooked and the inside is underdone. (Different brands of macaroni cook at different rates; be sure to read the instructions.) Transfer macaroni to a colander, rinse under cold running water, and drain well. Stir macaroni into the reserved cheese sauce.
6. Pour mixture into prepared dish. Sprinkle remaining 1 1/2 cups cheddar cheese, 1/2 cup Gruyere or 1/4 cup Pecorino Romano, and breadcrumbs over top. Bake until browned on top, about 30 minutes. Transfer dish to a wire rack to cool 5 minutes; serve hot.

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