

Crusty Macaroni & Cheese

Adapted from *Martha Stewart*

Serves 8:

Ingredients

1 stick (8 tablespoons) unsalted butter,
plus more for buttering dish
5 to 6 thick slices of country bread
5 1/2 cups milk, preferably whole
1/2 cup all purpose flour
2 teaspoons kosher salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/4 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
4 1/2 cups grated sharp cheddar cheese
2 cups grated gruyere
1 pound cavatelli macaroni

Preparation

Preheat oven to 375 degrees; butter a 3 quart casserole dish and set aside.

Cut country bread into 5 or 6 thick slices, and remove crust.

Cut slices into 1/2 inch cubes and toss in a bowl with 2 tablespoons melted butter.

In a 2 quart saucepan, heat milk over medium low heat; be careful not to boil.

Make roux: in a large skillet, over medium heat, melt 6 tablespoons of unsalted butter.

When butter foam subsides, add flour and whisk to incorporate for 1 minute.

Continue whisking while you slowly pour in hot milk.

Cook for several minutes, whisking constantly, until roux bubbles and becomes thick.

Remove from heat; add salt, ground black pepper, grated nutmeg, and a pinch of cayenne pepper.

Stir in 3 cups grated cheddar cheese and 1 1/2 cups grated gruyere and set sauce aside.

Boil salted water in a large pot; undercook pasta 2 or 3 minutes so that it's very al dente.

Drain and rinse macaroni with cold water; add to cheese sauce in the skillet and toss well.

Pour all into buttered casserole and top with remaining 1 1/2 cups cheddar and 1/2 cup gruyere.

Top with buttered bread cubes and bake until golden brown, turning once, about 30 minutes.

Remove to a cooling rack and let sit for 5 to 10 minutes before serving.

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