



Delightful Food Ideas



California Classic Macaroni & Cheese, A Comfort Food Favorite

(NAPSA)—Cold weather cooking is about indulging our cravings for comforting foods. Few dishes fulfill this need more than the ultimate comfort food—macaroni and cheese. This updated version of the classic cheese and pasta combination features the zesty flavors of California Cheddar in a satisfying dish like Mom used to make.

California Classic Macaroni and Cheese is a wonderful option for a delicious main course but it can also make a tempting side dish. In addition to flavorful California Cheddar, this dish gets an extra kick from Dijon-style mustard, cayenne pepper and Worcestershire sauce. Dried bread crumbs add a toasty texture and fresh parsley brightens the flavor and provides a touch of green.

This recipe is quick and easy to prepare, requiring only 10 minutes to assemble and 20 minutes to bake. You can also put this dish together the day before and refrigerate prior to baking, but let it warm to room temperature before placing it in the oven.

This recipe is easily adapted to include ingredients you already have in the pantry. Try California Monterey Jack or Gouda in place of Cheddar for a tasty twist. Or use traditional macaroni or vary shapes and textures with pastas such as rigatoni or fusilli. You also can add leftover meats or vegetables such as sautéed mushrooms, asparagus, smoked ham or roasted chicken for a one-dish meal.



Mac & Cheese is sure to please.

California is the nation's leading milk-producing state and one of the country's leading cheese producers. The state makes 250 varieties and styles of cheese and is home to more than 50 cheese-makers. For more information, recipes and serving ideas for Real California Cheese, visit www.RealCaliforniaCheese.com.

CALIFORNIA CLASSIC MACARONI & CHEESE

- ½ cup butter, divided**
- 1 medium onion, chopped**
- ¼ cup flour**
- 2 cups warm whole milk**
- 2 cups warm half-and-half**
- 2 teaspoons Dijon-style mustard**
- 2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce**
- 4½ cups (18 ounces) shredded extra-sharp California Cheddar**

Salt, cayenne and freshly ground black pepper to taste

1 pound elbow macaroni, cooked as package directs and drained

1½ cups fresh or dry bread crumbs

2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley

Preheat oven to 400°F. Grease a 13 x 9-inch baking dish. Melt ¼ cup of butter in large saucepan over medium heat; add onion. Sauté 3 minutes. Stir in flour; cook, stirring, 3 minutes.

Whisk in milk and half-and-half. Cook until slightly thickened, about 6 minutes. Stir in mustard and Worcestershire sauce. Remove from heat. Stir in 3½ cups of Cheddar until melted. Season with salt, cayenne and black pepper. Place cooked macaroni in prepared baking dish; pour sauce over and mix completely. Top with the remaining 1 cup of cheese. Bake for 20 minutes.

Meanwhile, melt the remaining ¼ cup of butter in large skillet over medium heat. Add bread crumbs; cook and stir until lightly toasted. When pasta is hot and bubbly, sprinkle crumbs over top. Broil until crumbs are golden brown, about 1 minute. Sprinkle with parsley. Serve hot.

Yields 4 main course or 8 side dish servings.