



Easy Sheet Pan Mac and Cheese Recipe

Introduction

Sheet Pan Mac and Cheese is a comforting twist on the classic dish that is perfect for gatherings or a cozy night in. This recipe, inspired by Damn Delicious, brings together creamy cheese sauce and perfectly cooked macaroni, all topped with a crispy, golden breadcrumb layer. It's simple, delicious, and everything you want in a cozy meal.

Detailed Ingredients with measures

1 pound large elbow macaroni

4 tablespoons unsalted butter
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 medium shallot, minced
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon paprika
2 cups whole milk
1 cup heavy cream
2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
4 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups shredded extra-sharp cheddar cheese
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup freshly grated Parmesan
1 cup Panko breadcrumbs

Prep Time

15 minutes

Cook Time, Total Time, Yield

Cook Time: 20 minutes

Total Time: 35 minutes

Yield: Serves 6-8

Enjoy your delicious Sheet Pan Mac and Cheese!

Detailed Directions and Instructions

Cook the Pasta

In a large pot of boiling salted water, cook the macaroni according to

package instructions until al dente. Drain well.

Prepare for Broiling

Preheat your oven to broil on high. Position an oven rack about 6 inches from the broiler. Lightly oil a baking sheet or coat it with nonstick spray.

Make the Sauce

In a large skillet over medium-high heat, melt the butter. Add the minced garlic and shallot, cooking until fragrant, about 2 minutes.

Add Flour and Spices

Whisk in the flour and paprika, cooking until lightly browned, approximately 1 minute.

Incorporate Liquids

Gradually whisk in the whole milk, heavy cream, and Dijon mustard. Continue whisking until the mixture is slightly thickened, about 3-4 minutes. If the sauce becomes too thick, add more milk as needed. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

See also Chocolate Caramel Poke Cake

Add Cheeses and Pasta

Remove the skillet from heat. Stir in 2 ½ cups of the shredded cheddar cheese, the grated Parmesan, and the cooked pasta until well combined. Adjust seasoning with additional salt and pepper if necessary.

Prepare Topping

In a small bowl, combine the Panko breadcrumbs with the remaining 2 cups of shredded cheddar cheese.

Assemble and Broil

Spread the pasta mixture evenly onto the prepared baking sheet. Sprinkle the Panko and cheese mixture over the top. Place the baking sheet in the oven and broil, rotating the pan a few times, until the top is golden brown and crispy, about 5-6 minutes.

Serve

Remove from the oven and serve immediately.

Notes

Cheese Choices

For a different flavor, consider mixing in other types of cheese such as Gruyère or mozzarella.

Pasta Alternative

While large elbow macaroni is traditional, feel free to use other pasta shapes that you prefer.

Make Ahead

This dish can be prepared in advance. Assemble it, then cover and refrigerate for up to 24 hours before broiling.

Leftover Storage

Store any leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days. Reheat in the oven for best results.



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Cook techniques

Cooking Pasta

Cooking pasta al dente is crucial for sheet pan mac and cheese. It allows the pasta to absorb some of the cheese sauce without becoming mushy.

Making a Roux

Creating a roux with butter and flour serves as the base for your cheese sauce. Whisking until lightly browned ensures a nutty flavor and helps thicken the sauce.

Whisking for Smoothness

Gradually whisking in the milk and heavy cream is essential for a smooth, lump-free cheese sauce. This step helps to achieve the perfect creamy texture.

See also [One Pot Sausage Pasta Recipe Delight](#)

Layering Flavors

Adding ingredients like garlic, shallots, and Dijon mustard layers additional flavors into the cheese sauce, enhancing the overall taste of the mac and cheese.

Broiling for Crispiness

Broiling the mac and cheese at the end creates a crispy topping. Rotating the pan ensures even browning and prevents burning.

FAQ

Can I use other types of cheese?

Yes, feel free to mix different types of cheese such as Gruyère, mozzarella, or Monterey Jack for varied flavors and textures.

How long can I store leftovers?

Leftover mac and cheese can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to three days.

Can I prepare this dish in advance?

Yes, you can prepare the mac and cheese mixture in advance and store it in the refrigerator. Just add the topping just before broiling.

What can I substitute for Panko breadcrumbs?

Regular breadcrumbs can be used in place of Panko, though Panko provides a crunchier texture.

Can I add vegetables or protein?

Absolutely! Vegetables like broccoli or cooked proteins like chicken or bacon can be added for extra nutrition and flavor.

Conclusion

The Sheet Pan Mac and Cheese is a delicious, creamy twist on the classic comfort food that is perfect for gatherings or a cozy night in. The combination of sharp cheddar and Parmesan cheese, paired with a crunchy Panko topping, creates a satisfying dish that is easy to prepare and bursting with flavor. Serve it hot and enjoy the delightful cheesy goodness straight from the oven!

More recipes suggestions and combination

Buffalo Chicken Mac and Cheese

Add shredded cooked chicken and buffalo sauce to the cheese mixture for a spicy, tangy twist.

See also [Chicken Bacon Ranch Sliders](#)

Lobster Mac and Cheese

Incorporate chunks of cooked lobster into the pasta for a luxurious seafood version.

Vegetable Mac and Cheese

Mix in your favorite sautéed vegetables like spinach, broccoli, or bell peppers for a healthier option.

BBQ Pulled Pork Mac and Cheese

Top the mac and cheese with BBQ pulled pork for a hearty and flavorful combination.

Truffle Mac and Cheese

Drizzle truffle oil over the finished dish and mix in some truffle salt for an elegant touch.

Greek Mac and Cheese

Add feta cheese, spinach, and Kalamata olives for a Mediterranean-inspired flavor profile.



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Easy Sheet Pan Mac and Cheese Recipe | 10

Easy Sheet Pan Mac and Cheese Recipe