



Hawaii's Beloved Creamy Macaroni Side Dish

My First Taste of Paradise

I first tried this salad at a beachside BBQ. The creamy, cool pasta was perfect in the sun. It felt like a sweet, tangy hug from Hawaii itself. I knew I needed the recipe right away.

Ever wondered how to bring that island feeling to your next meal? This dish is your answer. It turns any dinner into a special occasion. Share your favorite potluck memory in the comments below!

A Kitchen Mishap and a Lesson

My first try did not go perfectly. I was in a rush and did not let the pasta

cool. The dressing became a little too runny. It was still delicious, just extra saucy.

This taught me that good food does not need perfection. Home cooking is about love, not stress. It brings people together around the table. That is what truly matters in the end.

Why This Salad Tastes So Good

Two things make the flavors here special. The vinegar and sugar create a sweet and tangy balance. The grated onion and carrot melt right into the creamy dressing.

They add a subtle flavor without any crunch. The soft macaroni soaks up all that goodness. **Which flavor combo surprises you the most in this dish?** Let me know what you think!

A Simple Dish's Big History

This salad came to Hawaii with plantation workers long ago. It became a staple of the local "plate lunch." This meal always includes rice, protein, and mac salad.

***Did you know the key is to dress the hot pasta?* This helps it absorb all the flavor. It is a simple trick with a huge payoff. What is your go-to side dish for summer parties?**

See also Juicy Turkey Burgers Your Family Will Love



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Ingredients:

Ingredient	Amount	Notes
Elbow macaroni	16 ounces	Cooked according to box directions, drained
Carrots	½ cup	Finely grated
Sweet yellow onion	¼ cup	Grated
Apple cider vinegar	3 tablespoons	
Kosher salt	1 teaspoon	
Fresh cracked black pepper	1 teaspoon	
Mayonnaise	2½ cups	
Whole milk	½ cup	
Granulated sugar	2 teaspoons	

Making the Perfect Hawaiian Macaroni Salad

Let's make a classic Hawaiian side dish. It is creamy, sweet, and tangy. This salad is perfect for any big meal. Everyone will ask for the recipe.

Step 1

Cook your elbow macaroni according to the box. Drain it well but do not rinse. While the pasta is still hot, add the grated carrot and onion. Also add the vinegar, salt, and pepper. (Hard-learned tip: The hot pasta soaks up that vinegar flavor best).

Step 2

Now, let's make the simple dressing. Whisk the mayonnaise, milk, and sugar together. Keep whisking until it is completely smooth. This

creamy mix is the heart of the salad.

Step 3

Gently fold the dressing into the macaroni mix. Be careful not to stir too hard. Cover the bowl and chill it for at least two hours. This wait makes all the flavors come together.

What is the key to the best macaroni salad texture? Share below!

Cook Time: 20 minutes

Total Time: 2 hours 35 minutes

Yield: 10 servings

Category: Side Dish, Salad

Creative Twists on a Classic

Love the basic recipe? Try these fun changes. They add new life to an old favorite. Each one brings a different taste to your table.

Spicy Kick: Add a tablespoon of sriracha to the dressing. Top with sliced green onions for a fresh bite.

Island Protein: Mix in one cup of chopped ham or Spam. It turns the side into a full lunch.

See also Zesty Lemon Brownies for Spring and Summer

Crunchy Delight: Stir in half a cup of crushed pineapple. Add some chopped celery for a nice crunch.

Which creative twist will you try first? Vote in the comments!

Serving Your Macaroni Salad

This salad is a team player at any meal. It pairs well with so many main dishes. The cool, creamy taste balances smoky and spicy flavors.

Serve it with grilled chicken or juicy hamburgers. It is also great with kalbi ribs or teriyaki beef. For garnish, a little paprika adds color. A sprinkle of fresh parsley works too.

For drinks, try a cold iced tea or a tropical punch. A light lager or a shandy also pairs nicely.

Which would you choose tonight: a BBQ plate or a potluck? Let me know!



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Storing Your Macaroni Salad

Keep your salad in a sealed container. It stays fresh in the fridge for up to four days. I do not advise freezing this salad. The mayo dressing will separate and become watery. For a big party, I always make this a day ahead.

Fixes for Common Salad Problems

Is your salad too dry? Just stir in a little more milk or mayo. If it tastes bland, add a pinch more salt and sugar. Salad too watery after chilling? Your noodles may have been overcooked. My tip is to chill it for the full time. This lets all the flavors blend together perfectly.

Your Mac Salad Questions

Can I make this gluten-free? Yes! Use your favorite gluten-free elbow macaroni. Cook it just until tender.

How far ahead can I make it? Making it the night before is best. The flavors get even better.

See also [Crispy Four-Ingredient Sourdough Discard Crackers](#)

What can I use instead of milk? You can use a plain, unsweetened non-dairy milk. It works just fine.

Can I double this recipe for a crowd? Absolutely. Use a very large bowl for mixing. This recipe feeds a crowd easily.

What other add-ins work well? Some folks love a bit of shredded

chicken or ham. What would you add to yours?

Share Your Aloha Plate

I hope this dish brings a taste of sunshine to your table. It is a true comfort food. I would love to see your creations. Please share your photos and tag **@SavoryDiscovery on Pinterest**. Happy cooking!
—Elowen Thorn.

You need to try !

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Hawaii's Beloved Creamy Macaroni Side Dish





Hawaii's Beloved Creamy Macaroni Side Dish | 13

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Author: Elowen Thorn



Hawaii's Beloved Creamy Macaroni Side Dish | 15

Cooking Method: [No-Cook](#)



Hawaii's Beloved Creamy Macaroni Side Dish | 16

Cuisine: [Hawaiian](#)



Hawaii's Beloved Creamy Macaroni Side Dish | 17

Courses: [Side](#)



Hawaii's Beloved Creamy Macaroni Side Dish | 18

Difficulty: **Beginner**



Hawaii's Beloved Creamy Macaroni Side Dish | 19

Prep time: **15 minutes**



Hawaii's Beloved Creamy Macaroni Side Dish | 20

Cook time: **20 minutes**



Hawaii's Beloved Creamy Macaroni Side Dish | 21

Chill time: **2 minutes**



Hawaii's Beloved Creamy Macaroni Side Dish | 22

Total time: **2 hours 35 minutes**



Hawaii's Beloved Creamy Macaroni Side Dish | 23

Servings: **10 servings**

Best Season: **Summer**

Description

Hawaiian macaroni salad is creamy, sweet, and tangy with soft pasta

and a simple mayo dressing. This easy side dish works great for BBQs, potlucks, and family dinners.

Ingredients

Macaroni Salad

- 16 ounces elbow macaroni (cooked according to box directions, drained)
- ½ cup carrots (finely grated)
- ¼ cup sweet yellow onion (grated)
- 3 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon fresh cracked black pepper

Dressing

- 2½ cups mayonnaise
- ½ cup whole milk
- 2 teaspoons granulated sugar

Instructions

1. While the cooked, drained macaroni is still hot, add the cooked macaroni, grated carrots, grated onion, apple cider vinegar, kosher salt and pepper to a large mixing bowl. Gently stir to completely incorporate the salad. Cover the mixing bowl and let the mixture sit for 10 to 15 minutes.
2. Using a small mixing bowl, whisk together the mayonnaise, milk and sugar until smooth.

3. Gently fold the dressing into the macaroni salad. Cover and chill in the refrigerator for 2 hours to overnight. Before serving, gently stir the macaroni salad.

Keywords: Macaroni, Salad, Hawaiian, Side Dish, BBQ, Potluck