
Sunny's Spicy Macaroni and Cheese

Recipe courtesy Sunny Anderson, 2017

Serves 6 to 8 (or up to 14)

For the croutons

1 tablespoon unsalted butter
4 slices white bread, cut into ½-inch squares
Kosher salt

For the pasta

1 tablespoon unsalted butter
8 ounces cheddar, shredded
8 ounces colby cheese, shredded
8 ounces monterey pepper jack cheese, shredded
2 cups elbow pasta, cooked until almost al dente

For the custard

2 teaspoons all-purpose flour
½ teaspoons kosher salt
½ teaspoon black pepper
½ teaspoon Hot Hungarian paprika
½ teaspoon dry mustard
1/8 teaspoon freshly ground nutmeg
4 tablespoons sour cream
1 large egg, beaten
¼ cup grated Vidalia or sweet onions
1 cup heavy cream
1 cup half-and-half

1. Make the croutons.

In a skillet over medium heat, melt the butter, add the bread cubes, and toast until lightly golden, about 4 to 6 minutes. Remove to a paper towel-lined plate and season with a pinch of salt. Set aside.

2. Prepare the pasta.

Butter the bottom and sides of a 13 x 9-inch casserole dish. In a medium bowl, toss together the cheddar, colby, and monterey jack cheeses. In a large bowl, add the cooked pasta and two-thirds of the blended cheese. Set aside.

3. Make the custard.

In a large bowl add the following ingredients, whisking between each addition to combine: flour, salt,

black pepper, cayenne pepper, dry mustard, nutmeg, sour cream, egg, onions, heavy cream, and half-and-half. Pour the custard over the pasta and cheese blend in the bowl. Toss to combine.

4. Bake the casserole.

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Pour the macaroni and cheese mixture into the prepared baking dish. Cover with the remaining shredded cheese blend.

Bake uncovered until the cheese is almost set and the top is just beginning to brown, about 35 minutes. Then remove from the oven.

Sprinkle the croutons on top of the macaroni and cheese. Return to the oven and bake until golden brown, about 10 minutes more.