

Fogcrawler's Smokey Mac & Cheese

Ingredients:

1 -16 oz. package penne noodles
1- 20 oz. package apple wood smoked bacon, cooked & diced (2 packages if bacon lover)
1/4- cup butter (for sauce)
1/2- cup minced onion
1 1/2- tbsp. minced garlic
2- tbsp. all-purpose flour
1- cup half-and-half cream
1- cup milk (use additional 1/4 cup to 1/2 cup milk for creamier sauce)
1/2- tsp. dry mustard powder
1/2- tsp. nutmeg
1/2- tsp. liquid smoke flavoring
1- cup grated parmesan cheese
1- 8 oz. package cream cheese, cubed
1- cup shredded gruyere cheese
1- cup shredded fontina cheese
2- cups shredded smoked cheddar cheese
1- cup shredded smoked gouda cheese
salt and pepper to taste
2- tbsp. butter (optional - if pre browning bread crumbs)
1/2- cup bread crumbs
1/2- cup grated Parmesan cheese

Directions

Slowly brown bacon, blotter dry with paper towels, dice and set aside.

Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Add pasta and cook for 8 to 10 minutes or until al dente; drain and set aside.

Melt the butter in a 12-14" dutch oven over medium heat. Stir in the onion, and cook for 3 minutes until it begins to soften. Add the garlic, and continue cooking until the onion has softened and turned translucent. Slowly stir in the flour, and cook, stirring constantly for 5 minutes.

Stir in the half-and-half and milk, and bring to a simmer. Reduce heat to medium-low and stir in mustard powder, nutmeg and liquid smoke; simmer for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add 1 cup of Parmesan cheese, along with the cream cheese, gruyere cheese, fontina cheese, gouda cheese and cheddar cheeses; stir until melted. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Fold in diced bacon. Fold in the drained macaroni noodles. Optional - Melt butter in a skillet and slightly brown bread crumbs, otherwise, sprinkle over the macaroni mixture.

Tip: Withhold a portion of bacon and cheese of choice, (Other than Parmesan) to layer on top
Bake at 350F until bubbly and brown, about 30-45 minutes. Let set 5 to 10 minutes before serving.