

Ultimate Bacon Loaded Mac 'n' Cheese: The Creamiest, Cheesiest Comfort Food

Here's everything you'll need for this decadent Bacon Loaded Mac 'n' Cheese:



OVEN
375°F

TIME
1-2 min

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INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound elbow macaroni noodles (or your favorite pasta shape)
- 6 slices of bacon, chopped
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 2 cups whole milk
- 2 cups shredded sharp cheddar cheese
- 1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
- Salt and black pepper to taste
- 1/2 cup plain breadcrumbs
- 1 tablespoon melted butter (for the topping, optional but recommended)

DIRECTIONS

1. Ready to dive into cheesy, bacony goodness? Here's how to make it:
2. Prep : Your Oven and Dish: Preheat your oven to 375°F (190°C). Lightly grease a 9x13 inch baking dish with butter or cooking spray.
3. Cook the : Macaroni: Cook the macaroni noodles according to the package instructions until al dente. Drain well and set aside. Don't overcook, as they will bake further in the oven.
4. Cook the : Bacon: In a large skillet (one that's deep enough to eventually hold your sauce), cook the chopped bacon over medium heat until it's deliciously crispy. Remove the cooked bacon with a slotted spoon and set it aside on a paper towel-lined plate to drain. Leave the rendered bacon grease in the skillet - this is flavor gold!
5. Make the : Roux: In the same skillet with the bacon grease, melt the 2 tablespoons of butter over medium heat. Once melted, whisk in the 2 tablespoons of all-purpose flour. Cook, whisking constantly, for 1-2 minutes until the mixture turns a light golden brown. This is your roux, which will thicken your sauce.
6. Whisk in : Milk: Slowly pour in the 2 cups of whole milk to the roux, whisking continuously to prevent lumps. Continue to whisk until the mixture is smooth and begins to thicken, about 3-5 minutes.
7. Melt the : Cheese: Reduce the heat to low. Add the shredded cheddar cheese and shredded mozzarella cheese to the thickened milk mixture. Stir constantly until both cheeses are completely melted and the sauce is smooth and creamy. Season with salt and black pepper to taste. Taste and adjust as needed - remember, the

bacon will add saltiness.

8. **Combine and : Transfer:** Add the cooked macaroni noodles and most of the cooked bacon (reserve a little for garnish if desired) to the cheese sauce in the skillet. Stir until the macaroni is completely coated in the glorious cheese sauce. Pour the entire mac 'n' cheese mixture into your prepared 9x13 inch baking dish, spreading it evenly.
9. **Prepare : Topping:** In a small bowl, combine the 1/2 cup breadcrumbs with the 1 tablespoon of melted butter. Mix well until the breadcrumbs are evenly coated.
10. **Add : Topping and Bake:** Sprinkle the buttered breadcrumb mixture evenly over the top of the mac 'n' cheese in the baking dish. Place the dish in the preheated oven and bake for 20-25 minutes, or until the breadcrumbs are golden brown and the cheese sauce is bubbly and hot.
11. **Cool and : Serve:** Remove the mac 'n' cheese from the oven and let it cool for a few minutes before serving. This brief cooling period helps the cheese set slightly, making it easier to serve. Dig in and enjoy your delicious Bacon Loaded Mac 'n' Cheese!

SWAPS & NOTES

This recipe is fantastic as is, but here are some ways to customize it to your liking: **Pasta:** While elbow macaroni is classic, feel free to use cavatappi, shells, or rotini for different textures that hold the sauce beautifully.

Bacon: If you want an extra smoky flavor, use thick-cut bacon.

You can also use pancetta for a slightly different savory note.

For a vegetarian version, simply omit the bacon and consider adding sautéed mushrooms or roasted red peppers.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Freshly Grated Cheese: Whenever possible, grate your own cheese from blocks.

Pre-shredded cheeses often contain anti-caking agents that can make your sauce gritty.

Don't Overcook Pasta: Cook your macaroni to al dente.

It will continue to cook in the oven, and you want it perfectly tender, not mushy.

More recipes: [ChefManiac.com](https://chefmaniac.com)

Original recipe: <https://chefmaniac.com/ultimate-bacon-loaded-mac-n-cheese-the-creamiest-cheesiest-comfort-food/>