

Authentic Hawaiian Macaroni Salad: A Creamy Island Classic

If there's one dish that instantly transports me to



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10 min

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INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb elbow macaroni (cooked until soft)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup carrot, grated
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup celery, finely chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup onion, finely chopped
- 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups mayonnaise (Duke's or Hellman's preferred)
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup whole milk
- 1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
- 1 tablespoon granulated sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon sea salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon black pepper
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon sweet paprika (optional, for garnish)

Step-by-Step Instructions:

1. Cook the Macaroni:
2. Make the Creamy Dressing:
 - Mayonnaise
 - Whole milk
 - Apple cider vinegar
 - Granulated sugar
 - Salt and black pepper
3. Add the Vegetables:
4. Mix in the Pasta:
5. Chill for Maximum Flavor:
6. Serve & Enjoy!:

Pro Tips for the Best Hawaiian Mac Salad:

Cook the Pasta Until Soft - Unlike traditional pasta salads, Hawaiian mac salad uses softer pasta to soak up the dressing.

Use High-Quality Mayo - Duke's or Hellman's mayonnaise works best for rich, creamy texture. Avoid Miracle Whip-it's too tangy.

Let It Chill Overnight - The longer the salad sits, the better the flavors meld together.

Add a Hawaiian Touch - Some versions include a splash of pineapple juice or a spoonful of pickle relish for extra sweetness.

Want More Protein? - Stir in chopped ham, shredded chicken, or hard-boiled eggs for a heartier version.

What to Serve with Hawaiian Macaroni Salad:

Huli Huli Chicken - A sweet and smoky Hawaiian grilled chicken.

Kalua Pork - Slow-cooked shredded pork with smoky island flavors.

Grilled Teriyaki Steak - The umami-packed glaze pairs perfectly with the creamy mac salad.

BBQ Ribs - A perfect balance of rich and tangy flavors.

Loco Moco - A Hawaiian classic with rice, a burger patty, fried egg, and brown gravy.

DIRECTIONS

1. **Cook the Macaroni:** For classic Hawaiian-style macaroni salad, I cook the elbow macaroni past al dente-until it's soft and tender. This helps the pasta absorb the dressing better.
2. I drain the pasta and rinse it under cold water to stop the cooking process. Then, I set it aside until needed.
3. **Make the Creamy Dressing:** In a large mixing bowl, I whisk together:
 4. Mayonnaise
 5. Whole milk
 6. Apple cider vinegar
 7. Granulated sugar
 8. Salt and black pepper
9. This creates a smooth, creamy, slightly tangy dressing that will soak into the pasta beautifully.
10. **Add the Vegetables:** To the dressing, I stir in the grated carrot, chopped celery, and finely diced onion. This adds a nice crunch and mild sweetness that complements the creamy dressing.
11. **Mix in the Pasta:** I gently fold the cooked macaroni into the dressing using a rubber spatula, making sure each piece is well-coated.
12. **Chill for Maximum Flavor:** I cover the bowl with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 2 hours, but overnight is best. This allows the pasta to absorb the flavors and get even creamier.
13. **Serve & Enjoy!:** Before serving, I stir the pasta well, then taste and adjust seasoning with extra salt and pepper if needed. A sprinkle of sweet paprika on top adds a nice touch of color and mild spice.

14. **Pro Tips for the Best Hawaiian Mac Salad:** Cook the Pasta Until Soft - Unlike traditional pasta salads, Hawaiian mac salad uses softer pasta to soak up the dressing.
15. **Use :** High-Quality Mayo - Duke's or Hellman's mayonnaise works best for rich, creamy texture. Avoid Miracle Whip-it's too tangy.
16. **Let :** It Chill Overnight - The longer the salad sits, the better the flavors meld together.
17. **Add a :** Hawaiian Touch - Some versions include a splash of pineapple juice or a spoonful of pickle relish for extra sweetness.
18. **Want :** More Protein? - Stir in chopped ham, shredded chicken, or hard-boiled eggs for a heartier version.
19. **What to Serve with Hawaiian Macaroni Salad:** This salad is a must-have side dish for Hawaiian-style meals and barbecues. It pairs beautifully with:
20. **Huli :** Huli Chicken - A sweet and smoky Hawaiian grilled chicken.
21. **Kalua :** Pork - Slow-cooked shredded pork with smoky island flavors.
22. **Grilled :** Teriyaki Steak - The umami-packed glaze pairs perfectly with the creamy mac salad.
23. **BBQ :** Ribs - A perfect balance of rich and tangy flavors.
24. **Loco :** Moco - A Hawaiian classic with rice, a burger patty, fried egg, and brown gravy.
25. **FAQs (From My Kitchen to Yours):** Q: Can I use another type of pasta?A: Elbow macaroni is traditional, but you can use small shells or cavatappi if needed. Just be sure to cook it soft, not al dente.

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