



Cheez-It Mac and Cheese

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After trying this recipe once, using Cheez-Its as a crust for your mac and cheese will be a no-brainer. Too much cheese, you say? Not even close. The salty, crunchy qualities of the crackers add a balance of texture and flavor to a creamy, mild, (and dare we say cheesy) mac and cheese.

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Notes

Special thanks to Patricia Stagich of [Comfy Cuisine](#) for helping us test this recipe.

Servings

12

Ingredients

- 1 Pound cavatappi pasta, cooked to package instructions
- 1/2 Cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 Teaspoon grated nutmeg
- 2 Cups shredded Gruyère cheese
- 1/2 Cup breadcrumbs
- 1 stick plus 1 tablespoon unsalted butter
- 4 Cups whole milk, at room temperature
- 2 Cups shredded Cheddar cheese
- 4 Cups shredded fontina
- 1/2 Cup Cheez-Its

Directions

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.

Add the cooked pasta to a greased 9-by-13-inch glass baking dish.

In a medium-sized saucepan, melt the stick of butter over low heat. When the butter is melted, slowly whisk in the flour and whisk well until its evenly incorporated into the butter. Let the roux cook, while whisking, over low heat, until a buttery-baked smell permeates and the roux starts bubbling all over the surface. Slowly add the milk, whisking constantly, and then increase the heat to medium. Season the bechamel with salt and pepper to taste, and then add the nutmeg. Let the sauce cook over high heat until boiling, and then remove from heat and add the cheeses (except the Parmesan). Stir well so that they're all completely melted.

Pour the sauce over the pasta in the baking dish and, using tongs or a spoon, toss well so that each piece of pasta is coated well with the sauce. In a small bowl, melt the tablespoon of butter and add the breadcrumbs. Stir well, and then add the crushed Cheez-Its. Sprinkle the breadcrumb mixture evenly on top. Bake the mac and cheese in the oven until bubbling and golden brown on top, about 30-45 minutes.