

BAKED MACARONI & CHEESE WITH KALE & MUSHROOMS

INGREDIENTS

- Kosher salt & black pepper
- 1 lb** Elbow macaroni
- 1/4 C** Olive oil (extra virgin) **(plus 3 T)**
- 12 oz** Shiitake mushrooms (stems discarded) (sliced 1/4 inch thick)
- 1 bunch** Kale (large) (stems discarded) (roughly chopped) (about 8 cups)
- 4 cloves** Garlic (minced)
- 2 1/2 C** Half & Half **OR** Almond Milk
- 1/8 t** Cayenne pepper (to taste up to 1/4 t)
- 1 lb** Neufatchel cream cheese (room temperature)
- 8 oz** Cheddar cheese (shredded) **OR** vegan cheddar cheese (about 3 cups)
- 3 oz** Swiss cheese **OR** vegan cheese (shredded) (about 1 cup)
- 1 C** Panko bread crumbs (gluten-free)



DIRECTIONS

- 1 Set an oven rack about 6 inches from the heat source & pre-heat the oven to 425 F
- 2 Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil
- 3 Add the macaroni & cook until it is al dente (about 6 minutes)
- 4 Strain, reserving 1 3/4 cups of the pasta water & then set macaroni aside.
- 5 Heat a large saucepan over medium-high heat
- 6 Add 3 T of the olive oil & shiitake mushrooms & cook
- 7 Stir constantly, until the mushrooms are lightly browned in spots & softened (4-6 minutes)
- 8 Lower the heat to medium & add the kale, garlic & 1/2 cup of water
- 9 Scrape up any browned bits at the bottom of the pan with the back of a wooden spoon
- 10 Add 3/4 t salt & 1/4 t pepper & stir to combine
- 11 Cook until the kale is wilted but still crisp-tender (about 3 minutes)
- 12 Remove the vegetables to a bowl & set aside
- 13 Carefully wipe out the saucepan & add the half & half & cayenne
- 14 Bring to a simmer over medium heat & cook until reduced to 1 1/2 C (about 15 minutes)
- 15 Add the cream cheese & stir until melted
- 16 Whisk the cheddar & swiss cheese until they're melted & the sauce is smooth
- 17 Add the macaroni & reserved pasta water to the saucepan
- 18 Stir to combine & don't worry if the mix is loose because it will get thicker as it bakes
- 19 Gently fold in the reserved vegetables & season to taste
- 20 Pour into a 13 x9 inch baking dish
- 21 Toss the crumbs, remaining 1/4 cup olive oil & a large pinch of salt & pepper in a medium bowl
- 22 Sprinkle evenly over the macaroni & cheese
- 23 Bake until the cheese is bubbly & the bread crumbs are lightly browned & crispy (10 minutes)



NOTE
Serves 8 - 12



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