

GUASTELLO'S VILLAGE MARKET

Grown Up Mac and Cheese

Ingredients:

4 ounces thick-sliced bacon
Vegetable oil
Kosher salt
2 cups elbow macaroni or cavatappi
1 1/2 cups milk
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
4 ounces Gruyere cheese, grated
3 ounces extra-sharp Cheddar, grated
2 ounces blue cheese, such as Roquefort, crumbled
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
Pinch nutmeg
2 slices white sandwich bread, crusts removed
2 tablespoons freshly chopped basil leaves

Directions:

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F.

Place a baking rack on a sheet pan and arrange the bacon in 1 layer on the baking rack. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes, until the bacon is crisp. Remove the pan carefully from the oven - there will be hot grease in the pan! Transfer the bacon to a plate lined with paper towels and crumble when it is cool enough to handle.

Drizzle oil into a large pot of boiling salted water. Add the macaroni and cook according to the directions on the package, 6 to 8 minutes. Drain well.

Meanwhile, heat the milk in a small saucepan, but don't boil it. Melt the butter in a medium pot and add the flour. Cook over low heat for 2 minutes, stirring with a whisk. While whisking, add the hot milk and cook for a minute or 2 more, until thickened and smooth. Off the heat, add the Gruyere, Cheddar, blue cheese, 1 teaspoon salt, pepper, and nutmeg. Add the cooked macaroni and crumbled bacon and stir well. Pour into 2 individual size gratin dishes.

Place the bread slices in a food processor fitted with a steel blade and pulse until you have coarse crumbs. Add the basil and pulse to combine. Sprinkle the bread crumb mixture over the top of the pasta. Bake for 35 to 40 minutes, or until the sauce is bubbly and the macaroni is browned on the top.

~ Credit: Ina Garten