

Mac & Cheeze by John Powell

Ingredients:

- 1 pound elbow macaroni
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter, divided
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 2 cups milk
- 1 1/2 pounds grated sharp Cheddar cheese
- 1/2 teaspoon mustard powder
- 1/2 pound grated Gruyere cheese (see note above)
- 2 cups crushed Cheez-Its –enough to cover the top of the casserole
- Salt to taste

Steps:

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. In a medium pot of salted boiling water, cook elbow macaroni until al dente, about 2 minutes less than package cooking time. Drain, then transfer pasta to large mixing bowl. Set aside.
2. In a large saucepan, melt 2 tablespoons butter over medium-high heat (do not allow it to brown). Add flour and mustard powder and whisk to form a paste. Whisking constantly, add milk slowly.
3. Heat, stirring, until sauce comes to a simmer and begins to thicken slightly. Whisk in Cheddar cheese until a smooth melted cheese sauce forms.
4. Add cheese sauce into pasta and mix until evenly coated. Let cool slightly, then add grated Gruyere and mix well. Scrape pasta into a 9- by 13-inch baking dish and smooth surface to an even layer.
5. Add crushed Cheez-Its to a small mixing bowl. Melt the remaining tablespoon of butter, then add to Cheez-It and mix until evenly coated. Scatter Cheez-Its all over surface of mac and cheese in an even layer. Bake on top rack until browned and bubbling, about 45 minutes (ovens can vary, check often to prevent top from burning).
6. Let mac and cheese rest 15 minutes, then serve. Leftover mac and cheese can be refrigerated for up to 5 days.