RECIPE

Baked Macaroni and Cheese

A baked macaroni and cheese made with whole-wheat pasta, broccoli and a skim-milk cheddar sauce under a crisp cracker top, a family dinner that freezes in portions. About 480 mg sodium and 3.5 g saturated fat a serving.

MAKES

8 servings US Metric

TOTAL

55 min

Ingredients

- [ ] 12 oz whole-wheat elbow macaroni
- [ ] 2 tbsp olive oil: 1 tsp for the dish, 4 tsp for the sauce, 1 tsp for the topping
- [ ] ⅓ cup all-purpose flour
- [ ] 4 cups skim milk
- [ ] 2 tsp mustard powder
- [ ] ½ tsp garlic powder
- [ ] ½ tsp paprika
- [ ] ½ tsp salt
- [ ] ¼ tsp black pepper
- [ ] 6 oz reduced-fat cheddar, shredded (about 1½ cups), 4 oz for the sauce and 2 oz for the top
- [ ] 2 cups chopped broccoli, florets and peeled stems
- [ ] 8 low-salt saltine crackers, crushed

Method

1. Heat the oven to 350 °F. Wipe a 9 x 13-inch dish with 1 tsp of the olive oil.
2. Boil the macaroni in 4 quarts of water with 1 tbsp salt. Start tasting 1 minute before the package time and pull it while it still has a firm bite, since it cooks on in the oven; whole-wheat pasta needs a little longer than white. Water boils near 203 °F here, so go by the bite, not the clock. Add the broccoli for the last 2 minutes. Drain and leave it in the colander.
3. In the same pot, warm 4 tsp olive oil on medium. Add the flour, whisk, and cook 1 minute, until it smells a little toasty.
4. Pour in the skim milk a splash at a time, whisking, until smooth. Add the mustard, garlic powder, paprika, ½ tsp salt and pepper. Cook, stirring, 4 to 5 minutes, until the sauce coats the back of a spoon.

- [ ] 1 tbsp salt for the pasta water (about 2.7 g of it ends up in the pasta)

5. Take the pot off the heat. Stir in 4 oz of the cheese a handful at a time, until melted. Stir in the macaroni and broccoli.

6. Scrape it into the dish and sprinkle the last 2 oz of cheese on top. Toss the crushed crackers with the last 1 tsp olive oil and scatter them over the cheese.

7. Bake 25 to 30 minutes, until the edges bubble and the top is golden. Rest 5 minutes before you serve it.

8. Cool leftovers within 2 hours, then refrigerate. Reheat portions to 165 °F.