

PUMPKIN MAC AND CHEESE

If you are looking for a unique twist on a classic dish, look no further. This pumpkin mac and cheese is a wonderful way to add a nutritional boost to your usual mac and cheese recipe. Pumpkins are rich in carotenoids, particularly alpha- and beta-carotene, high in fiber and provide 100% of your daily value of vitamin A in just one serving. This creamy, delicious dish is not only perfect for a fall dinner, but contains 14g of protein and 5g of dietary fiber.

Makes 4 Servings

Per serving: 340 calories, 13 g total fat (6 g saturated fat), 41 g carbohydrates, 14 g protein, 5 g dietary fiber, 250 mg sodium.

INGREDIENTS

Canola oil cooking spray	1-1/2 cups (2-1/2 oz.) sharp light (50 %) Cheddar cheese
1/2 cup panko bread crumbs	1 cup canned unsweetened pumpkin
1/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese	1/2 tsp. mustard powder
1 Tbsp. canola oil	1/4 tsp. ground black pepper
8 oz. whole-wheat pasta	Pinch of cayenne pepper
1 cup low-fat (1%) milk	1/8 tsp. ground nutmeg, optional
1 Tbsp. unsalted butter	
1 Tbsp. all-purpose flour	

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Coat 6 cup baking dish with cooking spray and set aside.
2. In a separate bowl mix together breadcrumbs and Parmesan cheese and toss to combine. Add oil and using your fingers, toss to coat breadcrumbs, then set mixture aside.
3. In large pot, boil 4 quarts of water. Add pasta and cook for 10 minutes, until slightly al dente. Drain in colander, and set aside.
4. While pasta is cooking, heat milk in microwave or small saucepan, until it steams, and set aside.
5. In large saucepan, melt butter over medium heat. Whisk in flour and cook for 1 minute, whisking slowly. Remove from heat and gradually add milk while whisking to avoid lumps. Return pot to medium-high heat and simmer sauce until it thickens to consistency of stirred yogurt, about 3 minutes.
6. Add Cheddar cheese, pumpkin, mustard, black and cayenne peppers and nutmeg (optional), and stir until cheese melts completely.
7. Mix in cooked pasta to cheese mixture. Spread mac and cheese in prepared baking dish and sprinkle with breadcrumb and parmesan cheese mixture over top.
8. Bake 15-20 minutes or until breadcrumbs are crisp and golden brown. Serve immediately.

