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# Creamy Baked Macaroni and Cheese with Bacon

*The Essential Southern Living Cookbook*

Servings: 10

Preparation Time: 30 minutes

Start to Finish Time: 1 hour 10 minutes

**1 pound large elbow macaroni, uncooked**  
**1 tablespoon + 1-1/2 teaspoons Kosher salt, divided**  
**3/4 cup fresh breadcrumbs**  
**2 ounces (1/2 cup) Parmesan cheese, shredded or grated**  
**6 thick cut bacon slices, cooked, crumbled and divided**  
**1/3 cup all-purpose flour**  
**1 teaspoon black pepper**  
**1 teaspoon dry mustard**  
**3 cups whole milk**  
**1 cup buttermilk**  
**1/3 cup unsalted butter**  
**12 ounces (3 cups) extra-sharp cheddar cheese, shredded**  
**2 large eggs, well beaten**

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.

Bring three quarts of water to a boil over high heat in a large stockpot. Stir in the pasta and one tablespoon of salt. Return to a boil. Cook, stirring, occasionally, until the pasta is tender but still firm, about 6 minutes. Reserve and set aside two cups of the cooking water; then drain the pasta. Return the pasta to the pot. Remove the pot from the heat. Cover to keep warm.

Generously butter a 13 x 9-inch casserole dish. Set aside.

In a bowl, toss together the breadcrumbs, Parmesan cheese and half of the bacon. Set aside. In a small bowl, stir together the flour, pepper, mustard and remaining 1-1/2 teaspoons of salt.

In a medium saucepan over medium heat, heat the milk and buttermilk, undisturbed, until barely steaming but not boiling, 4 to 5 minutes. Set aside.

In a large heavy saucepan over medium heat, melt the butter. Add the flour mixture. Cook, whisking often, until the mixture is smooth and thick and has a delicate golden color and toasted aroma, about 2 minutes. Slowly whisk in the warm milk mixture. Bring to a boil over high heat. Cook, stirring often, until thickened to the texture of cream, about 3 minutes.

Stir the shredded cheddar and Monterey jack cheeses into the milk mixture. Remove from the heat. Stir in the beaten eggs until the mixture forms a smooth sauce,

Uncover the cooked pasta and stir. (If the pasta sticks together, stir in the reserved warm cooking water and drain again.) Stir the cheese mixture and remaining bacon into the drained pasta in the stockpot.

Transfer the pasta mixture to the prepared casserole dish. Sprinkle evenly with the breadcrumbs mixture. Bake until firm, puffed up and lightly browned, 35 to 40 minutes.

## **Pasta**

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*Per Serving (excluding unknown items): 175 Calories; 12g Fat (62.1% calories from fat); 7g Protein; 10g Carbohydrate; trace Dietary Fiber; 74mg Cholesterol; 362mg Sodium. Exchanges: 1/2 Grain(Starch); 1/2 Lean Meat; 1/2 Non-Fat Milk; 2 Fat.*