

Chef from the Hood Recipes



Chef:
Clark Wolf

Restaurant:
Producer of the Russian River Food & WineFest, Founder & President Clark Wolf Co., New York and Guerneville, CA

Recipe:
Mac & Cheese

1 cup diced onion ..
2 tablespoons unsalted butter (Clover brand) ..
2 tablespoons unbleached all-purpose flour ..
2 cups low-fat milk (Clover brand) ..
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard ..
10 ounces extra sharp aged white Cheddar ..
plus 2 more ounces, grated (Clark recommends Vella Raw Milk Sharp White Cheddar) ..
salt & freshly ground white pepper to taste ..
1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg ..
1/4 teaspoon hot pepper sauce (or to taste) ..
8 ounces dried cavatappi (or other corkscrew shaped pasta) ..
2 tablespoons of grated Parmigiana-Reggiano cheese ..

What could be better than Italian cavatappi (corkscrew shaped pasta) covered in melted Vella Sharp Cheddar? If you thought this was gonna be mac & cheese ala Kraft, think again. Clark Wolf says, "I developed this variation of an old favorite with John Shenk for the SoHo Grand Hotel in New York. Cookbook author Marian Burros adapted it for the most recent edition of her book *Elegant and Easy*, and...", Clark laughs, "I take it back on a regular basis. Add a salad of figs, young lettuce leaves and Laura Chenel's fresh chevre dressed with a pinot reduction dressing." If you want Clark's ideas on how to make the salad, you'll have to track him down at Fifes this Sunday where Clark Wolf and Scott Mitchell will be hosting the first ever Russian River Food and Winefest. Recipe serves 4.

Preheat oven to 400°. Place a rack in the bottom third of the oven. In a large saucepan, cook onion over low heat in melted butter until the onion is soft but not browned, 5 to 7 minutes. Stir in flour. Remove from heat and whisk in milk until thoroughly blended. Return to medium heat and cook, stirring, until mixture begins to thicken. Remove from heat and stir in mustard and 10 ounces of cheddar, salt, pepper, nutmeg and hot pepper sauce. Meanwhile, cook the cavatappi in boiling salted water until just al dente. Drain but do not rinse. Stir immediately into the prepared cheese sauce until well blended. Adjust seasonings. Spoon mixture into a 9 by 13 inch baking dish. Top with remaining 2 ounces Cheddar and the Parmigiana-Reggiano. Bake for about 30 minutes, until mixture is hot, bubbling throughout and golden. Notes: The finished casserole can be held in the refrigerator before baking. To serve, let dish return to room temperature before baking. The quality and sharpness of the cheese are all-important to the success of this dish. Use Vella or another white Cheddar that has been aged at least 2 years. (Grafton Village is another good choice).