

Baked Macaroni

Everybody thinks their mom makes the best macaroni and cheese, but my mom actually does. Really. The best in the whole world. You wanna fight about it? Meet you by the flagpole. The crunchy exterior crust is what really distinguishes this preparation from the rest. Comfort food at its finest. **MAKES 8 TO 10 SERVINGS**



1. Cook 1 pound of macaroni, such as elbows or penne, for 2 or 3 minutes less than the instructions on the box say. Drain the pasta.

2. Butter a 3-quart Pyrex or other baking dish. Place a layer of macaroni on the bottom and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Cover with diced or shredded Cheddar cheese (see Note) and insert a few dots of butter. Make another layer and repeat, and a third layer. Use cheese liberally. Do not tamp down the pasta; it will make the dish too dense.

3. Pour milk over the top until it is about 1½ inches deep at the bottom of the dish.

4. Bake at 400° F for 45 minutes to 1 hour, depending on how crisp you like the top.

NOTE: One 8-ounce package of shredded Cheddar cheese that is available at the supermarket fills the bill. Choose *sharp* Cheddar, not mild. It is tastier against the blandness of the pasta.

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MAKES 8 T

4 cups mil

1 cup suga
for the car

1. Stir the
over medium heat
then stir in the va

2. Beat the
the eggs slowly.

3. Preheat

4. Put the
and place over low
mitts, tilt the mol
solidify off the heat

5. Pour the
pan on a rack in t
ing pan to come a
until a cake tester
the mold from the
refrigerator.