

Planting Tomorrow's Radio Show

Find more recipes at PlantingTomorrows.com

Marscapone Mac 'n Cheese

by Anita Heilig - The Fitzgerald Hartley Company
(Multi-top award winner Olivia Newton-John's agent)

"Here's a kid's "gourmet" recipe from my brother-in-law, Jakon Tolhurst, chef at LuLu's restarant in Reno."

1 pkg elbow macaroni
2 cups cheddar cheese
4 oz butter (1 stick)
Parmesan cheese
1 cup all-purpose flour
1 cup diced ham
1/4 tsp black pepper
8 oz. Marscapone cheese
1 tsp. salt
Zest of 1 lemon
Nutmeg (to taste)
1 cup sourdough breadcrumbs
3 cups whole milk

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Cook macaroni in salted boiling water until firm, yet tender, approximately 8-10 minutes. Drain pasta and rinse with cold water; reserve. In a saucepan, heat the cubed butter until it is just starting to melt, add flour, and stir with a whisk. When combined, toast until you have achieved a light blonde color (blonde rue). You should smell a slight toasty aroma. Slowly pour in the milk, whisking constantly. Add salt, pepper, and nutmeg and put on a low simmer. Cook approximately 10-15 minutes, stirring every few minutes. Slowly add cheddar cheese, ham, and half of the Parmesan. When incorporated, take off the heat and whisk in the Marscapone cheese and lemon zest. Add pasta and pour the mixture into a 13"x 9"x 2" casserole pan. Sprinkle with the reserved Parmesan and sourdough bread crumbs. Bake uncovered for approximately 20 minutes or until the breadcrumbs and Parmesan are golden brown.

Note: You can use store-bought bread crumbs or make your own using old or leftover bread. Simply put into a food processor and break down to size, toss with olive oil, salt and pepper. Spread over a baking sheet and toast in oven at 375 degrees until golden brown. Enhance your flavor with fresh herbs by adding parsley, thyme, or even a little lemon zest.