

A Recipe from **KNOPF**



CHEESY CORKSCREWS with crunchy bacon topping



©Shelly Strazis

When I was growing up in Memphis, everyone had their own special mac-and-cheese recipe.

Traditionally, the matriarchs used elbow noodles, but my girls love experimenting with different pasta, and we fell in love with cavatappi, because its tubular spiral shape holds plenty of cheese sauce, making every forkful a delight (of course, old-fashioned elbows will also work just fine.)

A piquant, cheesy white sauce and a crispy topping made from potato chips and bacon creates the best—and most indulgent—version of mac and cheese that we have ever tasted. Served alongside roast chicken, or with a simple green salad and a glass of great red wine, this is the ultimate comfort food.

INGREDIENTS

For the Cheesy Corkscrews

6 tablespoons butter, plus more for greasing
Kosher salt
1 pound cavatappi (or other tubular pasta)
½ cup all-purpose flour
4 cups whole milk, warmed
1 teaspoon dry mustard powder
1 teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper
Pinch freshly grated nutmeg

Dash hot sauce

Dash Worcestershire sauce

4 cups grated sharp white cheddar cheese

1 ¼ cups grated Pecorino Romano cheese

For the Crunchy Bacon Topping

1 ½ cups crushed potato chips

½ cup grated Pecorino Romano cheese

5 slices cooked bacon, crumbled

3 tablespoons chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

SERVES 6 TO 8

Preheat the oven to 375° F. Butter a 3-quart casserole dish.

Bring a large pot of generously salted water to a boil, and cook the pasta until it's al dente.

Melt the butter in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add the flour, and cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Whisk in the warmed milk, and bring to a simmer, whisking constantly (the mixture will thicken as the heat increases).

Stir the dry mustard, salt, black pepper, cayenne, nutmeg, hot sauce, and Worcestershire sauce into the thickened milk. Stir in 3 cups of the cheddar, and the Pecorino Romano, until the cheeses melt.

Add the cooked pasta to the cheese sauce, and toss to combine.

Pour the cheese-apalooza mixture into the prepared casserole dish.

Make the topping: In a medium bowl, combine the potato chips, Pecorino Romano, crumbled bacon, parsley, and the remaining cheddar. Sprinkle the crumb mixture on top of the macaroni and cheese, and bake for 35 minutes. For a crunchier topping, finish under the broiler for 3 minutes, until golden brown and crisp. Remove from the oven, and cool for 5 minutes before serving.