

1970

MACCHERONI QUATTRO FORMAGGI VILLA D'ESTE

MACARONI WITH FOUR CHEESES

Adapted from Villa d'Este, Cernobbio, Italy

SERVES 8 TO 10 (FIRST COURSE) OR
6 (MAIN COURSE)

ACTIVE TIME: 30 MIN START TO FINISH: 30 MIN

Purge all thoughts of gooey, saucy, fluorescent mac and cheese from your mind. This very grown-up pasta dish is from a story about the historic hotel Villa d'Este, on the west shore of Italy's Lake Como. The dish is seriously cheesy, but the bacon, herbs, and touch of tomato sauce add refinement and complexity as well. (Discriminating kids like it, too.)

6 bacon slices (6 oz), diced
1½ lb dried elbow macaroni

6 oz Italian Fontina, cut into ⅓-inch dice (1 cup)

6 oz Bel Paese cheese, cut into ⅓-inch dice (1 cup)

6 oz Gruyère, cut into ⅓-inch dice (1 cup)

3 tablespoons tomato sauce

¼ cup heavy cream plus additional if necessary to thin sauce

½ teaspoon minced fresh rosemary

½ teaspoon minced fresh sage

½ teaspoon minced fresh oregano

1 large egg yolk

2 oz finely grated Parmigiano-Reggiano (1 cup; see Tips, page 139)

► Cook bacon in a 10-inch heavy skillet over moderate heat, stirring frequently, until browned and crisp, about 5 minutes. Transfer with a slotted spoon to paper towels to drain.

► Cook macaroni in an 8-quart pot of boiling salted water (see Tips, page 139) until al dente, then drain pasta in a colander.

► While pasta cooks, heat first three cheeses with tomato sauce, cream (¼ cup), and herbs in a 5- to 6-quart heavy pot over moderately low heat, stirring, until melted and smooth. Put egg yolk in a cup and stir in ½ cup sauce (to temper), then whisk into remaining sauce in pot.

► Remove from heat and add macaroni, bacon, and parmesan to sauce, tossing to combine well. Season with salt and pepper and stir in more cream to thin sauce if necessary.

COOKS' NOTE: The egg yolk in this recipe may not be fully cooked, which could be of concern if salmonella is a problem in your area.