



Ultimate mac 'n' cheese

SERVES 6 TIME 50 minutes

Why "ultimate"? Because the sauce is creamy, not grainy; it's flavored with shallots, gruyère, and white wine, like fondue; and it's topped with crunchy crumbs.

8 oz. cavatappi, macaroni, or other tube-shaped pasta

1/2 tsp. kosher salt, plus more for cooking pasta

3 1/2 tbsp. butter, divided

1/2 cup finely chopped shallots

2 tbsp. flour

1 1/4 cups dry white wine

2/3 cup whipping cream

7 oz. gruyère cheese, shredded

3 oz. aged gouda cheese, shredded

2 tbsp. plus 1 tsp. minced fresh chives

1 tbsp. Dijon mustard

1/8 tsp. each cayenne and nutmeg

4 oz. crusty sourdough bread (about 1/4 loaf), torn into large pieces

1. Preheat oven to 400°. Cook pasta according to package directions until tender to the bite, 7 to 12 minutes. Drain, but do not rinse.

2. In a large frying pan over medium-high heat, melt 2 tbsp. butter. Add shallots and cook until light golden, about 3 minutes. Sprinkle with flour; cook, stirring often, 1 minute. Add wine and stir, picking up any browned bits from pan bottom. Stir in cream. Sprinkle in cheeses, 1 large handful at a time, stirring until each handful is mostly melted before adding the next. Stir in 2 tbsp. chives, the mustard, 1/4 tsp. salt, the cayenne, and nutmeg. Stir cooked pasta into cheese mixture, then pour all into a 2-qt. baking dish.

3. In a food processor, pulse bread with remaining 1 1/2 tbsp. butter, 1 tsp. chives, and 1/4 tsp. salt until coarse bread crumbs form. Sprinkle bread crumbs over pasta and cheese and bake until top is browned and cheese is bubbling, 15 to 20 minutes.

—AMY TRAVERSO

PER SERVING 586 CAL., 49% (288 CAL.) FROM FAT; 21 G PROTEIN; 32 G FAT (19 G SAT.); 44 G CARBO (1.6 G FIBER); 739 MG SODIUM; 107 MG CHOL.