



Sweet Potato Mac & Cheese

There are plenty of ways to upgrade mac & cheese, making it more nutrient-dense than any that comes in a box. The toss-it-all-in-a-bowl method is easier than making a cheese sauce from scratch, and allows you to use up the ends of whatever cheeses you happen to have in the fridge. To roast a sweet potato (buy the larger, rounder, darker-fleshed kind, which are more nutrient-dense), poke it with a fork and roast directly on the oven rack for an hour, or until soft. The skin will peel away easily with your fingers, and you can mash it with a fork.

Ingredients:

1/2 lb. macaroni or pasta shells (try corn, brown rice or quinoa)
1 container (about 1 1/2 cups) light Ricotta cheese
1 cup mashed roasted sweet potato (1 small potato - or pureed cooked cauliflower or squash)
2-4 cups grated aged cheddar, Gouda, or your favourite meltable cheese
1/2 cup finely grated Parmesan cheese, divided

Topping:

1-2 cups whole wheat breadcrumbs
1-2 tbsps. canola oil (or half canola, half flax oil)

Preheat the oven to 350° and spray a baking dish with nonstick spray.

Boil the pasta in a large pot of boiling salted water – allowing enough water to give the pasta space to move around – according to the package directions or until it's al dente (tender but still firm). Drain the pasta and set it aside.

In a large bowl, stir together the Ricotta and mashed sweet potato. Add the cooked pasta, grated cheese and half the Parmesan, and stir to blend well. Pour into a baking dish.

Mix together the crumbs, remaining Parmesan and oil, and scatter over the macaroni mixture. Bake until the pasta and cheese are bubbly and the crumbs are golden brown, 20-30 minutes. Serves 6.

Per serving (made with whole wheat pasta): 467 calories, 17.8 g fat (10 g saturated fat, 6 g monounsaturated fat, 1.7 g polyunsaturated fat), 50 mg cholesterol, 52 g carbohydrate, 24 g protein, 5 g fibre.

Recipe was reprinted with permission from Julie Van Rosendaal.