

Old Fashioned Macaroni and Cheese

By: Matt Gordon

The other day someone asked me to prepare a recipe that I thought would make a good addition to the Community Life website. When presented with this task I probably did what most of you would do and began to think about all my favorite recipes and which would be the best to share. The possibilities seemed endless (I'm a person who likes his food) as I continued my search for the best recipe of the bunch.

Frustrated with my lack of productivity, I began to think I was going about this in the wrong way. I realized that a great recipe should do more than simply fill your stomach with great food. A great recipe is the beginning of great community. The preparation of a recipe should bring together family and friends and provide an atmosphere of happiness and belonging to all involved.

Keeping this in mind, I realized that I did indeed have the perfect recipe to share. One that reminds me of family gatherings on cold winter nights at my Grandmother's house, where we would all gather in the kitchen to help her make one of her famous "comfort foods" – old fashioned macaroni and cheese.

The preparation process was always the same for macaroni and cheese. Each of us would be assigned a different task (cutting up the cheese, crushing the cracker crumbs, etc.) and over a few laughs and mugs of cocoa, the macaroni would begin to take shape.

Before we knew it the macaroni was ready to come out of the oven and be shared by family around our large dining room table. And since we all had a hand in making it, it tasted that much better. Growing up there was nothing I looked forward to more on a cold day than my Grandmother's macaroni and cheese. Each time we made it I was filled with a true sense of belonging and contentment that can only come from a shared experience with family and friends.

So next time you're craving some comfort food, invite over some family and friends and share my Grandmother's old fashioned macaroni and cheese with the people you care about. I'm sure you won't regret it.

P.S. It tastes really good too!!

Old Fashioned Macaroni & Cheese (*à la Marie Samson*)

Ingredients:

- 1 lb elbow macaroni
- 2 lb cheddar cheese (old)
- ½ sleeve soda crackers (salted or unsalted)
- butter
- milk
- salt and pepper (to taste)

Steps:

1. Cook, drain and rinse elbow macaroni and pour into a 13x9 in. pan.
2. Cube cheese and press in throughout pan of macaroni.
3. Add milk until macaroni is almost covered.
4. Crush soda crackers on wax paper with a rolling pin and sprinkle evenly over entire pan of macaroni.
5. Add salt and pepper and dot cracker crust with dabs of butter (approx. ¼ teaspoon each).
6. Bake macaroni at 400° for one hour or until golden brown.

Note:

I always thought that the macaroni was best when served with ketchup, however not everyone feels the same. The choice is really up to you. Bon Appétite.