



BACON JALAPEÑO MAC & CHEESE

with a Crispy Panko Topping

INGREDIENTS

2 PERSON | 4 PERSON



6 oz | 12 oz
Cavatappi Pasta
Contains: Wheat



4 oz | 8 oz
Bacon



4 oz | 8 oz
Cream Sauce Base
Contains: Milk



1 | 2
Jalapeño



¼ Cup | ½ Cup
Monterey Jack
Cheese
Contains: Milk



1 Cup | 2 Cups
Mexican Cheese
Blend
Contains: Milk



2 TBSP | 4 TBSP
Cream Cheese
Contains: Milk



1 TBSP | 2 TBSP
Flour
Contains: Wheat



1 TBSP | 2 TBSP
Southwest Spice
Blend



1 Clove | 2 Cloves
Garlic



¼ Cup | ½ Cup
Panko Breadcrumbs
Contains: Wheat



2 | 2
Scallions

HELLO

CRISPY SPICED PANKO

The perfect crunchy contrast to al dente pasta and gooey cheese



PREP: 10 MIN | COOK: 35 MIN | CALORIES: 1180



BACON ME CRAZY

Don't toss that extra bacon fat! Instead, let it cool slightly in the pan after cooking in step 1, then transfer to a small bowl. You can use it to sauté a side of veggies for a luxurious upgrade—we love spinach or broccoli for this. Or, use it to pop popcorn!

BUST OUT

- Medium pot
- Large pan
- Paper towels
- Strainer
- 2 Small bowls
- Butter (1 TBSP | 2 TBSP)
- Whisk
- Baking dish
- Kosher salt
- Black pepper

Contains: Milk



1 COOK BACON

- Bring a medium pot of **salted water** to a boil (**use a large pot for 4 servings**).
- Add **bacon*** to a large, dry pan over medium heat. Cook, turning occasionally and adjusting heat if browning too quickly, until crispy, 6-10 minutes.
- Turn off heat; transfer to a paper-towel-lined plate.
- Carefully discard all but a **thin layer of bacon fat** from pan (you'll use this to cook the aromatics later).



2 PREP

- While bacon cooks, **wash and dry all produce**.
- Halve **jalapeño** crosswise, removing ribs and seeds for less heat; thinly slice one half into rounds and finely dice remaining. Trim and thinly slice **scallions**, separating whites from greens. Peel and mince **garlic**.



3 COOK PASTA & MIX PANKO

- Once water is boiling, add **cavatappi** to pot. Cook until al dente, 9-11 minutes.
- Reserve **1 cup pasta cooking water (2 cups for 4 servings)**, then drain.
- While pasta cooks, place **1 TBSP butter (2 TBSP for 4)** in a small microwave-safe bowl; microwave until melted, 30 seconds. Stir in **panko** and **1 tsp Southwest Spice (2 tsp for 4)**. (You'll use the remaining Southwest Spice later.) Season with **salt** and **pepper**.



4 COOK AROMATICS

- Heat pan with **reserved bacon fat** over medium-high heat. Add **sliced jalapeño**; season with **salt**. Cook, stirring occasionally, until just tender, 2-3 minutes. Transfer to a second small bowl and set aside.
- Add **scallion whites, diced jalapeño,** and **garlic** to same pan. Cook until slightly softened, 2-3 minutes. Season with **salt** and **pepper**.



5 MAKE SAUCE

- Add **flour** to pan with **aromatics**; whisk until thoroughly coated.
- Cut top off carton of **cream sauce base** to open fully; pour contents into pan. Using a spoon or spatula, scrape any remaining sauce from carton into pan.
- Whisk in **cream cheese, ½ cup reserved pasta cooking water (1 cup for 4 servings),** and **remaining Southwest Spice**; reduce heat to low. Simmer, whisking, until sauce is smooth and slightly thickened, 2-3 minutes.
- Whisk in **Mexican cheese** and **Monterey Jack** until melted and creamy.



6 MIX MAC & CHEESE

- Heat broiler to high.
- Roughly chop **bacon**. Stir bacon and drained **cavatappi** into pan with **cheese sauce**. (**TIP: If your pan is not large enough, carefully transfer everything into pot used to cook pasta.**) If needed, stir in more **reserved pasta cooking water** a splash at a time until cavatappi is coated in a creamy sauce. Season with **salt** and **pepper**.



7 FINISH & SERVE

- Transfer **mac & cheese** to an 8-by-8-inch baking dish (**for 4 servings, use a 9-by-13-inch baking dish**). Sprinkle with **spiced panko** and **sliced jalapeño**.
- Broil until panko is browned and crispy, 2-3 minutes. (**TIP: Watch carefully to avoid burning.**) Sprinkle with **scallion greens**.
- Divide between plates or serve directly from baking dish.

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* Bacon is fully cooked when internal temperature reaches 145°.

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