**Skillet Creamy Macaroni and Cheese**

**Ingredients**

* 3 1/2 cups water, plus extra if needed
* 1 (12-ounce) can evaporated milk
* 12 ounces (about 3 cups) elbow macaroni
* 1/2 teaspoon salt
* 1 teaspoon cornstarch
* 1/2 teaspoon dry mustard
* 1/4 teaspoon hot sauce
* 6 ounces cheddar cheese, shredded (1 1/2 cups)
* 6 ounces Monterey Jack cheese, shredded (1 1/2 cups)
* 2 tablespoons butter, cut into small chunks
* Ground black pepper to taste

**Directions**

1. Bring 3 1/2 cups water, 1 cup of the evaporated milk, the macaroni, and 1/2 teaspoon salt to a simmer in a 12-inch nonstick skillet over high heat. Cook at a vigorous simmer, stirring often, until the macaroni is tender and the liquid has thickened, 9 to 12 minutes.
2. Whisk the remaining 1/2 cup evaporated milk, the cornstarch, mustard and hot sauce together in a small bowl, then stir into the skillet. Continue to simmer slightly thickened, about 1 minute.
3. Off the heat, stir in the cheddar and Monterey Jack, one handful at a time, adding water as needed to adjust the consistency of the sauce (I didn’t need any additional water when I made it). Stir in the butter and season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve immediately.

**Notes**

**Ham and Pea Variation**: Follow the recipe, adding 4 ounces deli-style baked ham, diced medium, and 1/2 cup frozen peas to the skillet with the cornstarch mixture in step 2.

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