

Beside it.

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RECIPE 40

Epis-Brown Butter Skillet Mac & Cheese

Brown butter brings a nutty bass note to this skillet mac, while a freshly blended epis-style mixture adds scallion, parsley, pepper and garlic. Gouda, sharp cheddar and Monterey Jack each have a job: round flavor, a savory edge and a smooth melt. The top browns in the oven, but the middle should stay loose enough for a generous spoonful. This version builds on a recovered three-cheese skillet formula, adding the named brown butter and aromatic base.

8 side servings / ACTIVE 45 minutes / TOTAL About 1 hour 25 minutes

Equipment: Food processor or mini chopper, Pasta pot, Deep 12-inch / 30-cm ovenproof skillet with at least 3-quart / 2.8-liter capacity, Whisk, Instant-read thermometer

PASTA

12 ounces elbow macaroni (340 g)

PASTA AND SAUCE

1 teaspoon fine salt (about 6 g), reserved for sauce and added to taste, plus separate salt for the pasta water

EPIS-STYLE BASE

1/2 cup chopped flat-leaf parsley, tender stems included (20 g)

3 scallions, chopped (about 30 g)

1/3 cup chopped onion (60 g)

1/2 cup chopped green bell pepper (60 g)

4 garlic cloves (about 12 g)

1 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves (about 1 g)

1 tablespoon lime juice (15 ml)

1 tablespoon neutral oil (15 ml)

CHEESE SAUCE

4 tablespoons unsalted butter (56 g)

1/4 cup all-purpose flour (32 g)

2 1/2 cups whole milk (600 ml), warmed

1/2 cup heavy cream (120 ml)

Cheese sauce / continued

4 ounces Gouda, freshly grated (115 g)

6 ounces sharp cheddar, freshly grated (170 g)

4 ounces Monterey Jack, freshly grated (115 g)

1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper (about 1 g)

1/2 teaspoon sweet paprika (about 1 g)

Epis-Brown Butter Skillet Mac & Cheese

MAKE IT

- 01 Heat the oven to 375°F / 190°C. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Blend parsley, scallions, onion, bell pepper, garlic, thyme, lime juice and oil into a finely chopped paste, scraping down the processor as needed.
- 02 Cook macaroni about 2 minutes short of the package's al dente time. Reserve 1 cup / 240 ml cooking water, then drain. Mix the three grated cheeses in a bowl and reserve 1 cup / about 110 g for the top.
- 03 Melt butter in the skillet over medium heat. Cook, swirling, until milk solids turn golden brown and smell nutty, about 3-5 minutes. Reduce to medium-low and carefully add epis-style paste; it may sputter. Cook for 7-10 minutes, stirring, until vegetables soften and wet paste becomes a moist coating without pooled liquid. Do not let butter solids blacken.
- 04 Stir in flour and cook for 1-2 minutes. Gradually whisk in warm milk and cream. Bring to a gentle simmer, stirring along the base, and cook for 5-7 minutes until sauce lightly coats a spoon. Take off heat and wait for bubbling to stop. Stir in nonreserved cheese in small handfuls until melted; do not boil sauce after adding cheese.
- 05 Add pepper, paprika and 1/2 teaspoon salt, then taste before using the remaining salt. Fold in macaroni; if tight, add reserved pasta water a little at a time. The mixture should be creamy and loose before baking.
- 06 Scatter reserved cheese over top. Bake for 18-22 minutes, until bubbling at the edges, lightly browned and hot in the center at 165°F / 74°C. Rest for 8-10 minutes before serving; sauce should remain creamy.

Make ahead: Grate cheeses and blend the aromatic base earlier the same day; refrigerate separately. Assemble near baking time.

Store: Refrigerate promptly in shallow covered containers; follow the book's safe-kitchen cooling and storage limits.

Reheat / serve: Reheat covered with a splash of milk to 165°F / 74°C; uncover briefly to refresh the top.

AT THE TABLE / Epis Fried Chicken with Tamarind Hot Honey (p. 78); Smothered Cabbage with Epis & Ginger (p. 177)

COME OVER / MENU 2

Sunday Supper

Fried chicken. All the company.



Set the table

Epis fried chicken anchors the table. Skillet mac brings the comfort, cabbage supplies a softer savory side, and sweet potato pie is ready before the final rush.

Epis Fried Chicken with Tamarind Hot Honey

p. 78 / 4-6 servings; about 8 chicken pieces

Epis-Brown Butter Skillet Mac & Cheese

p. 157 / 8 side servings

Smothered Cabbage with Epis & Ginger

p. 177 / 6 side servings

Caribbean-Spiced Sweet Potato Pie

p. 195 / 8 slices

Guava-Ginger Lemonade

p. 239 / 8 servings, about 1 cup / 240 ml each before ice

Portion plan: four adults, cooking one full batch of each listed recipe. Sides and desserts may yield planned extras. Batch yields appear in the recipes; the combined portion balance awaits a kitchen trial.

The shopping list

Equipment: Heavy frying pot; frying and instant-read thermometers; sheet pan and rack; oven with two usable rack levels; oven-safe skillet and cover for mac; covered cabbage pot; pie dish; blender or pitcher. A helper finishes cabbage during frying.

Full recipe batches. These are recipe-use quantities, not guaranteed package purchases. Check pantry stock, product labels, drained weights and edible yields. Water, frying oil and optional ingredients remain listed where included.

All-purpose flour / 272 g	Haitian rum / 30 ml
Bone-in skin-on chicken thighs and drumsticks / 1400 g	Heavy cream / 120 ml
Cayenne pepper / 0.125 tsp	Honey / 170 g
Cold drinking water / 1080 ml	Large eggs / 2 count
Cornstarch / 64 g	Lemon / 1 count
Cultured buttermilk / 480 ml	Light brown sugar / 55 g
Dried thyme / 1.5 tsp	Lime juice / 60 ml
Elbow macaroni / 340 g	Low-sodium vegetable stock / 120 ml
Evaporated milk / 120 ml	Monterey jack cheese / 115 g
Fine salt / 3.5 tsp	Neutral oil / 1575 ml
Flat-leaf parsley / 43 g	Orange-fleshed sweet potatoes / 800 g
Fresh ginger / 52 g	Red pepper flakes / 0.5 tsp
Fresh lemon juice / 240 ml	Scallions / 105 g
Fresh mint / 8 g	Sharp cheddar / 170 g
Fresh thyme leaves / 1 tsp	Sweet paprika / 1.5 tsp
Garlic / 36 g	Unbaked deep-dish pastry crust / 250 g
Gouda cheese / 115 g	Unsalted butter / 141 g
Granulated sugar / 250 g	Unsweetened strained tamarind cooking puree / 30 g
Green bell pepper / 210 g	Vanilla extract / 5 ml
Green cabbage / 900 g	Water / 255 ml
Ground black pepper / 1.25 tsp	Whole milk / 600 ml
Ground cinnamon / 0.5 tsp	Yellow onion / 210 g
Ground ginger / 0.25 tsp	
Ground nutmeg / 0.5 tsp	
Guava nectar / 480 ml	

A little ahead

Day before

01 Bake the pie and chill it according to its recipe. It should not be competing with the macaroni for oven space at the end.

02 Blend the chicken epis and measure the dry coating separately. Refrigerate the epis; plan the chicken's two-hour refrigerated marinade for serving day. Make tamarind hot honey separately from clean ingredients.

03 Make the lemonade base and chill it. Shred cheese, chop the cabbage and measure the macaroni ingredients. Keep perishables refrigerated.

Morning of

01 Check the oven-rack positions, frying-pot capacity and a safe landing place for the rack of hot chicken.

02 Begin the chicken's refrigerated marinade at least 4-5 hours before eating. Set out the measured coating separately from raw chicken, and keep the clean hot honey covered.

03 Set the serving bowls and utensils out. Read the mac and cabbage methods together before turning on the heat.

Before the first knock

Before guests arrive

01 Allow about 3 1/2 hours before eating for these hot dishes. Bake the mac first. Then lower the oven to 200 F / 95 C; cover the mac to limit drying and keep its center at least 140 F / 60 C. Leave a second rack free for cooked chicken.

02 Allow 90-120 minutes for coating, oil heating and all chicken batches; use the recipe capacity and 165 F / 74 C check. Hold cooked pieces on a rack in a 200 F / 95 C oven, checking they stay at least 140 F / 60 C. Have a helper finish cabbage and watch the mac.

03 If chicken needs a hotter oven to finish its center, follow its recipe and pause the next frying batch while rearranging. Serve all hot dishes promptly. Pour cold lemonade near sitting down and leave the pie refrigerated until dessert.

Oven / stovetop check: Mac bakes first; the oven then holds covered mac and racked chicken at 200 F / 95 C. Both need centers at least 140 F / 60 C. A helper handles cabbage during frying. Long holding can firm the pasta or dry chicken: test quality and oven capacity before hosting.

Allow extra time for your equipment and pace. This combined plan awaits a cooking trial. Use the individual recipes' doneness checks and the safe-kitchen guidance on page 16. Keep cold food cold, keep hot food hot and refrigerate promptly.

GRITS & GRIOT

66 recipes bringing Haitian, Southern, and wider Caribbean flavors to your table - with the stories behind them and menus to help you host.

Berrie Brique

Before we cook

Good cooking begins with a little preparation.

This book brings together 66 contemporary recipes inspired by Haitian, African American Southern and named Caribbean food traditions. The introduction and features credit their sources; the recipes describe original combinations from this shared kitchen rather than claiming to be definitive traditional versions.

The recipes have received a source-based culinary review. Kitchen testing remains pending for all 66 recipes and the four complete hosting menus. The stated timings, yields, conversions and holding plans have not yet been confirmed through cooking trials.

Read each recipe through before starting. Check the ingredients, equipment and full elapsed time, including marinating, cooling and chilling. Use the doneness cues and food-temperature checks together. The safe-kitchen essentials on page 16 apply throughout.

Text and illustrations were developed with generative AI tools and editorial review. Illustrations depict the intended food and gathering; they are not photographs or evidence of a cooked result.

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A few safe-kitchen essentials

Time is a guide. A food thermometer checks the result.

Keep raw meat and its utensils separate from ready-to-eat food. Wash hands and working surfaces. Do not wash raw poultry. Reserve a clean portion of a sauce before it touches raw meat if it will be used at the table. [S1, S4]

Minimum internal temperatures: poultry and casseroles, 165 F / 74 C; ground beef, pork and lamb, 160 F / 71 C; whole cuts of beef, pork, goat and lamb, 145 F / 63 C plus a three-minute rest; fish, 145 F / 63 C; egg dishes, 160 F / 71 C. Cook shellfish until opaque and eggs until whites and yolks are firm. Follow higher recipe or label requirements. [S1, S2]

Refrigerate perishables within two hours, or within one hour above 90 F / 32 C. Keep the refrigerator at 40 F / 4 C or below. Divide large cooked batches into shallow containers; do not leave a deep pot on the counter to cool. USDA advises using refrigerated leftovers within three to four days and reheating them to 165 F / 74 C. [S3]

Cassava and taro-related products need appropriate processing. Follow the specific processed cassava and prepared callaloo product instructions in each recipe. Do not improvise with unidentified raw roots or leaves. Keep hot food at 140 F / 60 C or above. Alcohol does not make a creamy drink shelf-stable. [S3, S5]

Check every label for allergens and ingredient differences. This book contains dairy, eggs, wheat, peanuts, tree nuts, seafood and alcohol in various recipes. It does not claim to be allergen-free or suitable for a particular medical diet.