

Baked Butternut Squash Mac & Cheese

with Sage Breadcrumbs & Arugula Salad

Pasta served in a cheese sauce—or “mac and cheese”—has been a part of Thanksgiving dinners since the Victorian era. Traditionally, the dish is finished in the oven for greater textural complexity. Here, we’re making a seasonal and sophisticated version of the classic, using butternut squash and a Fontina béchamel (a classic white sauce with Fontina cheese melted in). A crispy topping of breadcrumbs, tossed with fresh sage and Parmesan, makes for the perfect finishing touch.



Ingredients

- ¾ Pound Rigatoni Pasta
- 4 Ounces Fontina Cheese
- ¾ Cup Milk
- 2 Ounces Arugula
- 1 Butternut Squash
- 1 Lemon
- 1 Bunch Sage

Knick Knacks

- 3 Tablespoons All-Purpose Flour
- ½ Cup Grated Parmesan Cheese
- ¼ Cup Dried Cranberries
- ¼ Cup Panko Breadcrumbs
- ¼ Cup Sliced Almonds

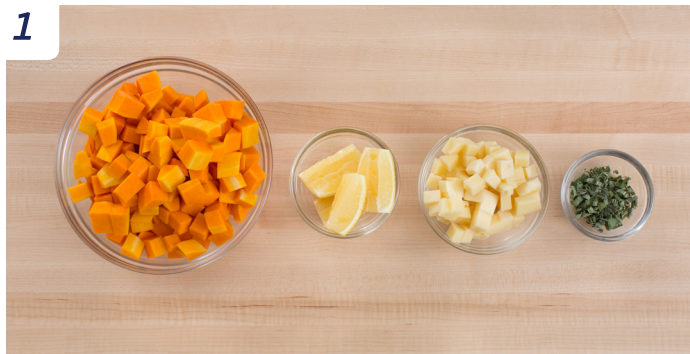
Makes 4 Servings

About 700 Calories Per Serving

Prep Time: 15 min | Cook Time: 30 to 40 min



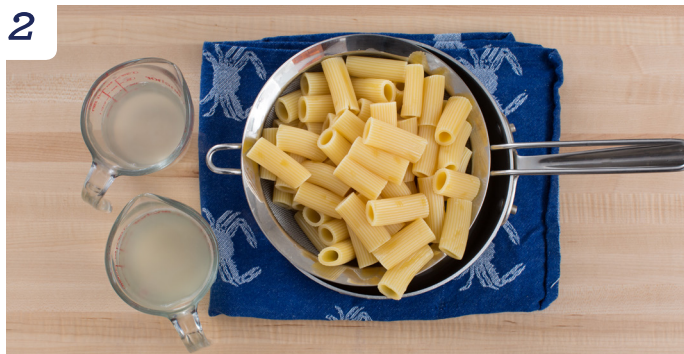
1



Prepare the ingredients:

Preheat the oven to 450°F. Wash and dry the fresh produce. Heat a large pot of salted water to boiling on high. Using a sturdy knife, cut off and discard the squash ends; peel the squash. Separate the neck and bulb; halve the bulb lengthwise. Remove and discard the pulp and seeds; small dice. Cut off and discard the Fontina cheese rind; small dice. Pick the sage leaves off the stems; discard the stems and roughly chop the leaves. Quarter and deseed the lemon.

2



Cook the pasta:

Add the **pasta** to the pot of boiling water. Cook 10 to 12 minutes, or until al dente (still slightly firm to the bite). Reserving **1½ cups of the pasta cooking water**, drain thoroughly; rinse under warm water to stop the cooking process. Rinse and dry the pot.

3



Cook the squash:

While the pasta cooks, in a large pan (nonstick, if you have one), heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil on medium-high until hot. Add the **squash**; season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, 8 to 10 minutes, or until lightly browned and tender. Remove from heat.

4



Make the béchamel sauce:

In the pot used to cook the pasta, heat **2 tablespoons of olive oil** on medium-high until hot. Add the **flour**. Cook, whisking constantly, 30 seconds to 1 minute, or until toasted and fragrant. Add the **milk** and **reserved pasta cooking water**; season with salt and pepper. Cook, whisking frequently, 2 to 4 minutes, or until slightly thickened. Add the **Fontina cheese**. Cook, whisking constantly, 30 seconds to 1 minute, or until thoroughly combined and the cheese has melted. Remove from heat and season with salt and pepper to taste.

5



Assemble & bake the casserole:

To make the filling, add the **cooked pasta** and **cooked squash** to the pot of béchamel sauce. Stir to combine; season with salt and pepper to taste. Transfer to a baking dish. In a medium bowl, combine the **breadcrumbs**, **Parmesan cheese** and **sage**. Stir in enough olive oil to moisten the mixture; season with salt and pepper to taste. Evenly spoon the mixture over the filling. Place the baking dish on a sheet pan. Bake 10 to 12 minutes, or until lightly browned. Remove from the oven and let stand for 2 minutes before serving.

6



Make the salad & serve your dish:

While the casserole stands, to make the vinaigrette, add the **juice of all 4 lemon wedges** to a small bowl; season with salt and pepper to taste. Slowly whisk in **2 tablespoons of olive oil** until well combined. In a large bowl, combine the **arugula**, **almonds** and **cranberries**; season with salt and pepper. Add as much of the **vinaigrette** as you'd like (you may have extra). Toss to combine; season with salt and pepper to taste. Transfer to a serving dish. Serve with the **baked casserole**. Enjoy!