

Black mac

I hadn't eaten macaroni cheese for years and reading this recipe transported me straight back to my childhood, so much so I made the dish for supper the very same evening and could have eaten it every night for the entire week. Black garlic is stunning with cheese, and takes this retro iconic dish to a whole new level. Spectacularly simple to make and for those like myself who enjoy their comfort food, spectacular to eat!

Serves 4 - 6

3 cups macaroni pasta

6 cups milk

Cornflour to thicken

4¹/₂ cups tasty white cheddar cheese

1 cup quality parmesan

3 black garlic cloves, plus extra clove for garnish

Pinch salt and white pepper Sourdough breadcrumbs

In a saucepan over a medium heat bring the milk to a simmer and season with a pinch of salt and pepper. Remove the pan from the heat. In a small bowl or jug mix the cornflour with a little of the warmed milk then add to the milk in the pan. Stir the cornflour through with a wooden spoon or blend with a hand blender. Return the pan to the heat and cook, stirring constantly until the sauce is thickened (the amount of cornflour you put in will determine how thick your sauce will be). The sauce should have a smooth, thin chowder-like consistency.

Fill a large saucepan with water, add a pinch of salt and bring to the boil. Add the dried macaroni pasta (about ¹/₂ cup dried macaroni per person should be sufficient) and cook your pasta until al dente, about 7 - 9 minutes. Drain and cool in iced water and reserve.

Grate the cheddar cheese and ³/₄ cup parmesan cheese and finely chop the 3 black garlic cloves and add to the sauce over a low heat. Continue to stir until the cheese is melted. Transfer the sauce to a large heavy based pan on a low heat, add the pasta and sauté for a further 2 minutes to reduce the sauce and finish cooking the pasta.

To serve, place the 'black mac n cheese' into a large serving bowl or individual bowls and top with the breadcrumbs and a sprinkling of the remaining parmesan. Pop under a hot grill for 1 - 2 minutes to crisp, careful not to burn. Finely slice the remaining black garlic clove into slivers and sprinkle them on the top to garnish.

Serve with fresh crispy baby salad leaves from the garden. If you can't source black garlic, use confit, hot smoked or roast garlic instead.

Recipe by Louise Rickard-Simms, Black Garlic NZ