

# Jalapeño Bacon Mac & Cheese

THE SAUCE AND GRAVY



CHANNEL



<https://youtu.be/PD4hSJI9SNQ>

Serves 6 to 8 people

This jalapeño bacon mac and cheese is ultra creamy, cheesy, smoky, and loaded with flavor. Crispy bacon, fresh jalapeños, white cheddar, mozzarella, and a rich homemade cheese sauce come together to make the ultimate comfort food. Perfect for weeknight dinners, BBQ sides, game day food, or holiday comfort meals.

## Ingredients

1 lb (454 g) elbow macaroni	8 oz (226 g) white cheddar freshly shredded
6–8 slices bacon chopped (about 8 oz or 225 g)	8 oz (226 g) low-moisture mozzarella freshly shredded
2 fresh jalapeños finely diced	4 oz (113 g) cream cheese
2 cloves garlic minced (6 g)	1 tsp (5 ml) Dijon mustard
4 tbsp (56 g) unsalted butter	1 tsp (5 ml) Worcestershire sauce
4 tbsp (32 g) all-purpose flour	1/2 tsp (1 g) smoked paprika
1 can evaporated milk (12 oz or 355 ml)	Salt and black pepper to taste
2 cups (500 ml) whole milk	

## **To Make the Mac & Cheese**

Cook the bacon in a large saucepan over medium heat until crispy. Add most of the diced jalapeños and cook for 1 to 2 minutes. Stir in the garlic and cook for 30 seconds.

Add the butter to the pan if needed so you have about 4 tablespoons (56 g) total fat. Stir in the flour and cook over low to medium heat for 2 to 3 minutes to make the roux.

Slowly whisk in the whole milk and evaporated milk. Add the Worcestershire sauce, Dijon mustard, smoked paprika, black pepper, and a pinch of salt. Simmer over medium heat until slightly thickened.

Reduce the heat to low. Stir in the cream cheese until smooth. Add half of the white cheddar and half of the mozzarella and stir until melted and creamy.

Mix the cooked macaroni into the cheese sauce until fully coated.

Transfer to a buttered 9 x 13 inch (23 x 33 cm) baking dish. Top with the remaining white cheddar, mozzarella, and reserved jalapeños.

Bake uncovered at 400°F or 200°C for 15 to 20 minutes until hot and bubbly. Broil for 1 to 2 minutes if you want a more golden top.

Let rest for 5 to 10 minutes before serving.

## **Tips & Substitutions**

For extra heat, leave the jalapeño seeds and the white membrane in or add a pinch of cayenne pepper.

Pepper jack cheese can be substituted for the mozzarella for a spicier flavor.

Freshly shredded cheese melts smoother than pre-shredded cheese and gives the best creamy texture.

If you want an even smokier flavor, use smoked cheddar or add extra smoked paprika.

You can skip the baking step and serve it straight from the stovetop for a creamier mac and cheese.

Chicken, pulled pork, or extra bacon can be added to turn this into a full meal.