



No-Boil Overnight Mac & Cheese - Part II

September 28, 2023

When I learned about the scientific ingredient that will keep cheese emulsified even in water, I immediately thought of Elizabeth's original recipe. With the addition of Sodium Citrate—a salt you can easily find online—this easy, no-boil overnight mac 'n' cheese is the dream of dreams! It's both super creamy, and sturdy enough to cut into servings. If you'd like to add breadcrumbs—feel free! Most importantly, if you have 30 seconds to stir together the ingredients, after an overnight stint in the fridge, you'll have mac 'n' cheese perfection on your plate! A Magical Make-Ahead!!

Serves 6

Ingredients:

- 2 cups water
- 1 cup whole milk
- 2 teaspoons Sodium Citrate
- 1 teaspoon dry mustard powder
- ½ teaspoon Diamond Crystal Kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon white pepper
- ¼ teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
- 12 ounces shredded cheese (About 3 cups—any combination you like)
- 8 ounces dried pasta, like mini penne, elbows, or shells

Method:

1. In a medium bowl, whisk together the sodium citrate, dry mustard powder, salt, white pepper, and nutmeg until evenly combined. Add water and milk, and whisk thoroughly to dissolve the sodium citrate.
2. In a 2-quart baking dish (or 8" x 8" casserole dish), combine the dry pasta and a generous 2 cups of the grated cheese (reserve the rest for the top when you bake the Mac & Cheese). Gently toss the pasta and shredded cheese, so that they're evenly distributed in the dish.
3. Pour the milk and water mixture into the dish and make sure all the pasta is submerged. If not, add a little more liquid (milk or water). It will absorb the liquid and expand. Cover tightly with aluminum foil, and store in the refrigerator for 24 hours.
4. When ready to bake: Preheat the oven to 375°F. Just before placing in the oven, give the mixture a good stir in the baking dish. Re-cover the dish with aluminum foil, and place on a parchment-lined baking sheet in case it boils over during cooking.
5. Bake the casserole, covered with aluminum foil, for 45 minutes. After cooking, remove the foil and check to make sure that the pasta is cooked. The cheese sauce will be very loose and liquidy. Don't worry—it will thicken!



What's 4 Diner?

6. Stir the mac & cheese well, then sprinkle the reserved 1 cup of cheese on top. Return to oven on lined tray and bake for 15 more minutes, or until the cheese is lightly brown and slightly crusty.
7. Let sit for 10-15 minutes to thicken before serving.

***Notes**

Because of the sodium citrate, you can use any kind of shredded cheese—even the pre-shredded stuff. I think using a combo of sharp cheddar and another melty cheese (like gouda, fontina, monterrey jack, or mozzarella) is a winning formula. It's possible to make this without any milk, if you don't have any on hand—just use 3 cups of water. However, I think the flavor the milk imparts to the final dish is worth including.