

THE CULINARY

Playground



Sweet Potato Mac & Cheese

1/2 pound sweet potatoes, baked
5 ounces pennette (or other small, short pasta), cooked al dente (reserve some of the cooking water)
2 tablespoons feta cheese
2 tablespoons soft unsalted butter
1 1/2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1 cup whole milk
Heaping 1/2 cup cheddar (plus big pinch to sprinkle on top)
1/2 teaspoon dijon mustard
1/8 teaspoon paprika (plus another 1/8 teaspoon to sprinkle on top)
salt (to taste)
pepper (to taste)
3 fresh sage leaves

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Scoop the flesh out of the potato and add to a large bowl, mash the sweet potato and add the cooked pasta and the feta and stir to combine.

In saucepan, gently melt the butter and add the flour, whisking to form a roux, slowly whisk in the milk until it's all combined and smooth. Exchange your whisk for a spoon, and continue to stir until your gently bubbling sauce has lost any floury taste and has thickened. Remove from heat and add the Cheddar, mustard and the 1/8 teaspoon of paprika, and pinch of salt and pepper.

Add this sauce to pasta mixture and gently fold to combine. Adding some of the reserved pasta cooking water, if it needs loosening up. Transfer to baking dish.

Sprinkle the remaining Cheddar over and dust with the remaining 1/4 teaspoon of paprika, then shred the sage leaves and scatter the skinny green ribbons over the top, too.

Bake for 15 minutes until hot and bubbling.

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Sweet Apple Dip

2 oz cream cheese, softened
2 tablespoon brown sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
¼ teaspoon apple pie spice

Beat together the cream cheese, brown sugar, and vanilla extract until the sugar has dissolved, and the mixture is smooth. Serve with sliced apples or cinnamon sugar pita chips.

Cinnamon Sugar Crisps

Pita bread round
1 tablespoon melted butter
1 teaspoon cinnamon sugar

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper.

Cut pita into strips or triangles. Tear bread at the seam if double layered.

Lay bread rough side up in a single layer on prepared sheet. Using a pastry brush, brush each piece with butter. Using fingers, sprinkle each piece with cinnamon sugar.

Bake for 7 minutes until crisp and lightly browned.