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From Foreign to Familiar: Mac and Cheese's Journey to America's Comfort Food

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Prologue

Like many Americans, I grew up with a love of macaroni and cheese. I have fond memories of going to my grandparent's home in high school to find a fresh dish of Mimi and Poppop's mac and cheese, which I'll share with you later in this work. In my senior year of college, I took a class on the history of food. One component of this class was to complete a research project and I chose to complete mine on macaroni and cheese.

This project originally began as a "mac and cheese through history" cookbook, but later evolved into the present edition. Of course, researching macaroni and cheese for a year called for some taste tests. The products of these cooking sessions were shared with friends and documented in the recipes section for you to see. One of my inspirations for this work was to inspire people to be passionate about history. Oftentimes we see history as something dead and boring. However, that is not the reality. I hope by looking at history through the lens of macaroni and cheese, more people will be inspired to learn more about something that peaks their interest. After all, like macaroni and cheese shows us, history is something that is alive and can be changed by our choices today.

Overview

Macaroni and cheese is one of America's classic dishes. From the familiar Kraft Mac and Cheese, to the homemade versions passed down through generations, macaroni and cheese has seen it all. Throughout America's history, macaroni and cheese has been present and has adapted to the times. Macaroni and cheese has undergone significant changes since it was first introduced in America, changes that can be linked to societal trends and norms throughout American history. This work will illustrate these trends and norms through macaroni and cheese's origins, its mass production, homemade versions, and the gourmet adaptations of today. After each section, there will be a collection of recipes that reflect macaroni and cheese that reflect each category. These recipes show the development of both macaroni and cheese in American history and the overall societal trends. Evaluating how macaroni and cheese recipes have changed through the years is a tangible example of the changes experienced by American society. From macaroni and cheese's origins in soul food and slavery, to gourmet versions that exemplify American overindulgence, it has been a reflection of the society that embraced it.

The Origin of Macaroni and Cheese

Macaroni and cheese is a dish that has become familiar to Americans over the years, but historians debate the origins of the dish. Some say that the dish originated in Northern Europe with Älplermagronen. Recipes call for elbow macaroni to be mixed with plenty of cream and identifying gooey cheese. The dish was created by the shepherds of the Alps. Shepherds had to carry their food, and the small dry pasta was a lightweight option.¹ However, many Americans today would cite macaroni as an Italian dish, not Swiss. The truth is, macaroni and cheese currently has no definitive country of origin. The International Pasta Organization has traced macaroni and cheese as far back as eleventh century Greece. A Vatican library curator wrote in the eleventh century that “macaroni with cheese was here a legacy from the kitchens of Genoa and Naples, where its inhabitants ate it frequently.”² While the earliest documented macaroni and cheese recipe was from Greece, Italy did have a hand in developing the dish. A fourteenth century Naples cookbook contains a recipe for ‘de lasanis.’ This dish called for cutting five centimeter squares of noodles and sprinkling them with grated cheese. Historians believe this is the first time a formal cookbook paired pasta and cheese together. However, there is little evidence showing the transition from noodles sprinkled with grated cheese to the noodles covered in cream sauce and baked version that is commonly known in America. A frequently overlooked link in the history of macaroni and cheese is the transition from Italy to France. French food connoisseur Alexandre Dumas claims in his *Grand Dictionnaire de Cuisine*, published in 1873, that the origin of macaroni and cheese is Naples, Italy. He credits Catherine

¹ Adam H. Graham, "Travel - Macaroni Cheese's Mysterious Origins," BBC News, <http://www.bbc.com/travel/story/20180130-macaroni-cheeses-mysterious-origins>, January 31, 2018.

²"History of the Pasta," The History of Pasta, <http://www.internationalpasta.org/index.aspx?id=6>, (accessed November 10, 2018).

de Medici with bringing the dish to France after marrying King Henry II in 1530.⁴ From here, it developed into a popular cuisine by the 1700s. Thomas Jefferson spent much of his time in France in the late 18th century as the US Ambassador to France, where he was exposed to macaroni and cheese.

This takes us to the next development in macaroni and cheese's globalization, and perhaps the most important in terms of American macaroni and cheese. Macaroni and cheese was an elite food in eighteenth-century Paris. Historians commonly credit Thomas Jefferson with bringing the dish to the United States from his visits to France. Jefferson picked up on the dish when visiting Paris with his slave, James Hemmings. He charged his aid, William Short, with acquiring a machine that could produce macaroni and shipping it to Monticello. In Jefferson's visit to Italy, he examined the production of macaroni and decided the Paris version was superior. Records show that even though Jefferson had the machine to produce macaroni at Monticello, he ultimately imported macaroni and Parmesan to make the dish in America. He even recorded a recipe, "nouilly a macaroni," that allowed for making macaroni without a machine.⁵ Jefferson served "a pie called macaroni" at an 1802 state dinner, showing the elevation of macaroni and cheese into the highest parts of American society.⁶

From the Jeffersonian popularization, we see macaroni and cheese move into higher society households. Mary Randolph published *The Virginia Housewife* in 1824, containing a recipe for macaroni and cheese. Randolph's brother was the son-in-law of Thomas Jefferson. After Jefferson's wife died, Randolph became the hostess of Jefferson's household. Scholars

⁴ Graham, Macaroni Cheese's Mysterious Origins.

⁵ Jack McLaughlin, *Jefferson and Monticello: the Biography of a Builder*, New York: Henry Holt, 1990.

⁶ Pierangelo Castagneto, "Dandy Yankee Noodle," *The New York Times*, <https://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/01/opinion/01iht-edCastagneto01.html>, March 31, 2011.

suspect Randolph's recipe was derived or even copied from the version James Hemmings made for Jefferson at Monticello.⁷ Macaroni and cheese then began to appear in restaurants across America. Taken from the dining rooms of elite families and into the hands of waiters at high-end restaurants, macaroni and cheese remained in the upper levels of society. Paul Freeman discusses the role of restaurants as a "quasi-public setting." Restaurant diners in the nineteenth century were able to show their status in public while also enjoying meals with those they chose.⁸ In another article, Freeman further discusses the prevalence of macaroni and cheese in these upscale establishments. At one of the grandest hotels in the 1800s, the Revere House Hotel in Boston, Massachusetts, baked macaroni was one of the most popular dishes between 1862 and 1865. Macaroni and cheese was an anomaly in the restaurant scene as no other Italian dishes were popular in high-end restaurants until the twentieth century.⁹ This prevalence might be explained by Thomas Jefferson's role in bringing the dish to America.

There are some arguments against Jefferson being the person to bring macaroni and cheese to America. In *The Founding Foodies* DeWitt argues that macaroni was already being imported into America during early colonial times. Therefore Jefferson did not introduce macaroni and cheese to America.¹⁰ However, even though macaroni appeared to Americans earlier, it does not necessarily mean it was a common dish. Cheese was not a common nor inexpensive ingredient at this time and was typically only purchased for special occasions. The elite households of the time would only settle for the best to be served at their table. The

⁷ Tangie Holifield, *The Hidden History of Macaroni and Cheese*, On the Menu @ Tangie's Kitchen, <https://qnholifield.com/culinary-history/the-hidden-history-of-macaroni-and-cheese/>, March 06, 2018.

⁸ Paul Freedman, *American Restaurants and Cuisine in the Mid-Nineteenth Century*. *New England Quarterly* 84, <https://login.proxy.lib.siu.edu/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edb&AN=71421982&site=eds-live&scope=site>, March 2011.

⁹ Paul Freedman, *Ten Restaurants That Changed America*. S.I.: Liveright Publishing Company, 2016.

¹⁰ Dave DeWitt, *The Founding Foodies: How Washington, Jefferson, and Franklin Revolutionized American Cuisine* (Naperville, IL: Sourcebooks, 2010).

Parmesan cheese and Italian noodles that had to be imported for the dish served as a substantial barrier to macaroni and cheese becoming common in America.¹¹ In addition, the macaroni and cheese dish that Jefferson served at his 1802 state dinner was not well received, with one guest noting that it was “not very agreeable.”¹² This suggests that the dish was not popular at the time. In addition, Jefferson was the first to import a pasta machine to America, meaning that macaroni production on a substantial scale was not present in America at that time.¹³ Jefferson was a member of high society, making the trends he started popular. In the case of macaroni and cheese, his enjoyment of the dish boosted it into American culture and marks its popularity in the country. Jefferson’s relation to the dish could have made it popular among the elite of the time. Even through macaroni and cheese's popularity would have been primarily with elite society that could afford the ingredients, this played a role in bringing it into mainstream America later.

While macaroni and cheese originated in high society, there is often an untold side to this story, its soul food connection. Soul food is defined by the African American Registry as food originating in the southeastern United States and the African American community. Soul food has integrated into southern food culture as a whole, but had its start in American slavery. In addition to cooking their own meals, slaves were often required to cook for their masters. This practice brought soul food into white kitchens.¹⁴ This was also the practice in Thomas Jefferson’s household where slaves like James Hemings would have prepared the macaroni and cheese dish he loved.¹⁵ The practice of having slaves cook for their owners resulted in cooking techniques

¹¹ Adrian Miller, *Soul Food: The Surprising Story of an American Cuisine, One Plate at a Time* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013).

¹² Miller, *Soul Food: The Surprising Story*, 2013

¹³ Justin A. Nystrom, *Creole Italian: Sicilian Immigrants and the Shaping of New Orleans Food Culture* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2018).

¹⁴“Soul Food” A Brief History,” African American Registry, <https://aaregistry.org/story/soul-food-a-brief-history/>.

¹⁵Bill Daley, "How America Developed Its Taste for Mac and Cheese," *Chicagotribune.com*, <https://www.chicagotribune.com/dining/ct-macaroni-and-cheese-timeline-20160229-story.html>, January 04, 2018.

from the African American community being brought into mainstream culture. Mary Randolph would have grown up surrounded by African American slaves cooking her meals. Cookbooks like Randolph's spread throughout the South. The hands of slaves created foods from recipe books that were British and French in origin and distributed to households throughout the South. White women took the actions of African American slaves and popularized them as a cuisine.¹⁶

Despite their preparing of the dish, there is little historical evidence that slaves ate macaroni and cheese themselves. Likely, because cheese was expensive and only consumed rarely on holidays. This was similar in impoverished communities across the United States and part of the reason macaroni and cheese initially failed to become a household dish.¹⁷ However, after emancipation, dishes like macaroni and cheese became more popular in the African American community. Italians had already begun immigrating to America several years before emancipation. The first macaroni factory was open by a French immigrant in 1848, but soon Italian immigrants followed suit.¹⁸ As the pasta industry grew throughout the 19th century, more and more Italian immigrants opened their own factories.¹⁹ New Orleans had seven macaroni factories located in the French Quarter, six of which were owned by Sicilians. As more newly freed African Americans relocated to urban areas, they commonly found themselves on the outskirts of society along with Italian immigrants. Both of these groups were considered to be a lower social status and therefore resigned to nearby areas of the city.²⁰ This proximity allowed for cultural exchange between the two groups and likely led to the introduction of macaroni and cheese into African American cuisine. The dish became both a special food, and a way to stretch

¹⁶ Michael W. Twitty, *The Cooking Gene: A Journey through African American Culinary History in the Old South*. (New York, NY: Amistad, an Imprint of HarperCollins Publishers, 2018).

¹⁷ Miller, *Soul Food: The Surprising Story*, 2013).

¹⁸ Corby Kummer, "Pasta," *The Atlantic*, July 01, 1986, <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1986/07/pasta/306226/>.

¹⁹ "History of the National Pasta Association, <https://ilovepasta.org/history/>.

²⁰ Nystrom, *Creole Italian*, 2018).

meals. Macaroni and cheese as a way to survive is tied to the rise of mass produced mac and cheese, which was cheap and easy to make. However, in more prosperous times, macaroni and cheese rose to a place of honor among side dishes and became a staple in many African American households.²¹ At its core, macaroni and cheese was made into the soul food it is today through the dissemination of African American slave cooking practices popularized by white women.

²¹ Adrian Miller, "Cheese IQ: A Side of Soul," Culture: The Word on Cheese, August 02, 2016, accessed December 7, 2018, <https://culturecheesemag.com/cheese-iq/side-of-soul>.

Original Mac and Cheese Recipes

The recipes in this section reflect some of the earliest versions of American macaroni and cheese. The first, from "The Virginia Housewife" is thought to be the original recipe Thomas Jefferson brought from France and served at Monticello. Other recipes include additions from early cookbooks and newspapers. Many of these recipes appear within a few years of each other, showing the rising popularity of macaroni and cheese in this time. A common trend in all of these recipes is their simplicity and tendency to have vague directions in comparison to modern recipes. For example, "The Virginia Housewife" says "to cheese and butter as in the polenta," which would use Parmesan cheese, but one would have to either know or research what this method entail. Essentially, the original macaroni and cheese were noodles, butter, milk or cream, and cheese, typically Parmesan.

"The Virginia Housewife" Macaroni²²

Boil as much macaroni as will fill your dish, in milk and water until quite tender, drain it on a sieve, sprinkle a little salt over it , put a layer in your dish, then cheese and butter as in the polenta, and bake it in the same manner.



²² Lucy Lean, "Macaroni Cheese from Mary Randolph 1824 and from José Andrés 2011," January 16, 2017, <https://lucylean.com/macaroni-cheese-from-mary-randolph-1824-and-from-jose-andres-2011/>, (accessed November 10, 2018).

1810- Culina Famulatrix Medicine²³

Take a quarter of a pound of macaroni. Boil it till it become tender, but not dissolved; then put it upon a sieve to drain. Take a gill of cream, a piece of butter, with some Parmesan cheese nicely grated. Set all the ingredients on the fire to simmer till perfectly incorporated. Strew a little grated parmesan on the surface; then brown with a salamander and serve up.

1865- Macaroni with Parmesan- Godey's Lady's Book and Magazine²⁴

Half a pound of macaroni, two ounces of butter, and two ounces of grated Parmesan cheese. Boil the macaroni soft in salt and water; strain and put them in rows in a pie-dish with the butter and cheese, and salt according to taste. Bake them in a slow oven until they are a light yellow.

1858- To Make a Macaroni- The Homestead²⁵

To make a Macaroni- How few cooks know how to make a really fine macaroni! We present the two following receipt, but we do not like either of them. - We don't want "milk and cream to cover the whole," or any part of it. There should be alternate layers of fine old cheese, (Parmesan is the best,) macaroni and grated stale bread, the whole to be well seasoned with cayenne pepper and salt. The top should be covered with some slices of good butter and finely grated bread, and when taken out of the oven it should be not only moist but the top should be nicely browned.

Macaroni Milanese- Throw the macaroni in boiling water with some salt in it. Let it have plenty of room, and be well covered with water. Let it boil twenty-five minutes; drain it in a colander; then put it in a deep dish in alternate layers of macaroni and grated cheese; lay on the top slices of fresh butter: pour over it milk and cream enough to cover the whole, and place the dish in an oven where it can cook at the top and bottom equally. In fifteen or twenty minutes, it will be done. Serve it up immediately. Too much fire will make it dry.

Macaroni a l'Italienne- Take one quarter of a pound of macaroni and boil it in water till tender; thicken half a pint of milk with flour and a small bit of butter; add two tablespoonfuls of cream, half a teaspoon of mustard, a little white pepper, salt, and cayenne; stir into this a half pound of grated cheese; boil all together a few minutes, add the macaroni, make all quite hot, and serve. This is the mode adopted at the best tables in Florence.

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²³ Alexander Hunter, *Culina Famulatrix Medicine*, 1810.

²⁴ "Macaroni with Parmesan Cheese." Godey's Lady's Book & Magazine, <https://login.proxy.lib.siu.edu/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=wpd&AN=51356796&site=ehost-live&scope=site>, January 1865.

²⁵ "To Make a Macaroni." Homestead 3, <https://login.proxy.lib.siu.edu/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ane&AN=57288014&site=ehost-live&scope=site>, April 22, 1858.

Mass production into homes and hearts

In the throes of the Great Depression, mac and cheese burst into the everyday lives of Americans. Kraft Foods introduced a boxed mac and cheese in 1937 when everyday Americans were suffering from the country's economic downturn. For nineteen cents, a family of four could have a meal of mac and cheese.²⁶ The product exploded in popularity with eight million boxes sold in a year. During World War II, the mass produced mac continued to be a staple in American homes. A primary factor in this popularity was the increasing number of women in the workforce during World War II. States were called upon to draft eligible men to fight in the war, and to increase industrial production for war products. This left a significant labor shortage that was filled by women and African Americans. In 1940, only 27.8% of the workforce was female. However, by 1945 this number rose to 33.8%.²⁷ Mothers entering the workforce were able to have a simple dinner ready for children at the end of a day at work with boxed mac and cheese. The dish was also simple enough to where children could cook it on their own. With the rising number of latchkey kids during World War II, this also helped working mothers balance work and home life. In addition, the meal was ration-friendly. Two boxes only took one rationing coupon to prepare, which was incredibly helpful in the days of dairy rationing. Even after the war, it remained popular. In addition to its cost effectiveness, it was also convenient.

Kraft Foods marketed mac and cheese heavily. Children were encouraged to eat the mac and cheese that came in a brightly colored box and even had noodles in their favorite cartoon characters. Currently, boxed mac and cheese is still popular among children and college students

²⁶Jesse Rhodes, "Marvelous Macaroni and Cheese," <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/marvelous-macaroni-and-cheese-30954740/>, March 22, 2011.

²⁷ Taylor Jaworski, "'You're in the Army Now': The Impact of World War II on Women's Education, Work, and Family." (Journal of Economic History). <http://journals.cambridge.org.proxy.lib.siu.edu/action/displayBackIssues?jid=JEH>.

alike. The cheap and quick preparation is still a winning quality, as well as the nostalgia the dish holds for some.²⁸ Kraft did not stop with boxed mac and cheese however. Convenience was, and is a valuable criterion in a consumer's food selection. In 2006 Kraft released "Kraft's Easy Mac Cups", which was later renamed "Macaroni & Cheese Dinner Cups." Velveeta cheese is also an important development in mac and cheese in regards to convenience. Velveeta is a cheese product introduced by Kraft Food in 1928. It is known for its cheesy and melty qualities.²⁹ Velveeta is now used in countless macaroni and cheese recipes, despite some holding it to a loose definition of cheese. Kraft even released a boxed version of Velveeta mac and cheese in 1974 with its "Velveeta Shells & Cheese."³⁰ As an easy to melt, and cheap product, this mass produced cheese product made just as much of an impact on macaroni and cheese as Kraft's original boxed version. Countless macaroni and cheese recipes now call for the cheese product to be used, and many people even prefer it to regular cheese. Mass produced products, while popular, have still been subject to consumer adaptations. The meals are tasty, but not always filling due to the lack of food groups other than carbohydrates and dairy. Asking various college students revealed several adaptations to the classic boxed dish. Common additions include meat products, seasonings, extra cheese, and even vegetables.³¹

The introduction of macaroni and cheese into everyday homes also brought emotional attachment to the dish. Food is inherently emotional. Food historians have long discussed the link between food and memory. Macaroni and cheese is one food that holds an emotional connotation for many. Known as a comfort food, macaroni and cheese hold the power to

²⁸ Carolyn Wyman, *Better than Homemade: Amazing Foods That Changed the Way We Eat* (New York: Bristol Park Books, 2010).

²⁹"History of Velveeta," WayBack Machine, <https://web.archive.org/web/20081220173959/http://brands.kraftfoods.com/Velveeta/VelveetaFlashHistory>.

³⁰ "Kraft Macaroni & Cheese: A History," *The Chicago Tribune*, August 14, 2010, <https://www.chicagotribune.com/business/ct-xpm-2010-08-14-ct-biz-0815-mac-side2-20100814-story.html>.

³¹ Kari Kelly, "Making Mac and Cheese," interview by author, December 1, 2018.

transport those eating it into their past. Memories of childhood and mixing together the orange powder of a boxed macaroni and cheese, a church potluck, Christmas dinner at a grandparent's house, and many more memories are prompted forth by macaroni and cheese. Warren Belasco recalls one of these moments in "*Madeleines: Food and Memory*" when an African American student discusses her grandmother's Sunday dinners, complete with macaroni and cheese and cornbread. These foods were also served for special events, such as football games. As the student says, it only takes "one bite" to transport her to these childhood memories.³²

Family is another common theme around macaroni and cheese. Mothers and fathers, grandmothers and grandfathers, aunts and uncles all have the "family" recipe that many bond behind. Macaroni and cheese is a dish often passed down in families and created for big meals or events. When asked about family recipes, people will sometimes refer to a specific person who makes macaroni and cheese regularly. Some of these use high-end cheeses and guarded techniques while others mix together the convenience of Velveeta with family experiences. Some are prepared on a stovetop and immediately served, while others are baked and topped. Butter, pasta, and cheese is a surefire way to get people around a table after all. The emotional connections that many people associate with macaroni and cheese is a large part of why the dish maintained its popularity after its first introduction to homes through mass production.

³² Warren Belasco, "Madeleines: Food and Memory," in *Food: The Key Concepts*, New York, 2008.

Mass Produced Recipes

The recipes in this section represent the ways in which mass produced macaroni and cheese products have assimilated into American culture. The section starts with the classic Kraft boxed mac and cheese, with some of the more common additions. This reflects both the prevalence of convince foods within American culture, and the trend of "improving" mass produced foods. To show the ease of boxed mac and cheese, a recipe from 8-year-old Colbie is included, featuring her method of making a boxed macaroni and cheese that she says is a favorite after school snack. Following the boxed version are recipes released from companies using their own products. Both Kraft and Velveeta have versions, using their respective cheese products. Velveeta's recipe also shows the trend of adapting mass produced food into a different version. Finally, the section concludes with individual mac and cheese recipes using Velveeta as a primary ingredient. These recipes tend to be short and simple to follow, showing the prioritization of convince in making mass produced mac.

Macaroni and cheese evolved from a mass produced commodity to a dish fondly enjoyed by everyday people. Many will recall their mother, or grandmother's amazing macaroni and cheese recipe. Oftentimes, these recipes have a special memory or story attached. The recipes in this section were collected from family recipes throughout the United States. These recipes mark a development in macaroni and cheese history where the dish becomes more complex than earlier versions that only included cheese, butter, macaroni, and milk or cream. The homemade versions tend towards calling for more complex ingredients, from cheese to sauces and flavors. Some even include special twists, like adding cornflakes as a crunchy topping (Kelly Family), or grating onions instead of dicing (Mimi and Poppop). An interesting development in many of these recipes is the use of a variety of cheese, from cheddar (Barkley Family) to Velveeta

(Clair's). Overall, each of these recipes reflects the diversity in America's homemade macaroni and cheese and how each family culture adapts the dish to their own preferences.

Kraft Boxed Macaroni and Cheese³³

Ingredients:

1.5 qt. (6 cups) water
1 pkg. (7 1/4 oz) Kraft Macaroni & Cheese Dinner
1/4 cup margarine, cut up
1/4 cup milk

Directions:

1. Bring water to boil in medium saucepan. Add Macaroni; cook 7 to 8 min. or until tender, stirring occasionally.
2. Drain. (Do not rinse.) Return macaroni to pan.
3. Add margarine, milk and Cheese Sauce Mix; mix well.

Additions:

1. Cut two hot dogs into pieces and heat in the microwave. Stir into the finished product.
2. Heat one cup of peas and stir into the finished product.
3. Add 1-2 tsp. of hot sauce when adding cheese packet.



³³ Kraft Heinz, "Kraft Macaroni & Cheese Dinner," <https://www.kraftrecipes.com/recipe/056248/kraft-macaroni-cheese-dinner> (accessed December 7, 2018).

Velveeta Shells and Cheese³⁴

Ingredients:

3 qt. (12 cups) water
1 pkg. (24 oz.) Velveeta Shells & Cheese

Instructions:

1. Boil 3 qt. (12 cups) water in saucepan. Stir in shell pasta; cook 8 to 10 min. or until tender, stirring occasionally. Note: Do not overcook pasta.
 2. Drain pasta. Do not rinse. Return to pan.
 3. Add cheese sauce; mix well.
- Makes about 6 servings.

Velveeta Shells & Cheese Cheeseburger Mac³⁷

Ingredients:

1lb lean ground beef
2-1/2 cups milk
1/4 cup HENIZ Tomato Ketchup
2 Tbsp. HEINZ Yellow Mustard
1 Tbsp. onion powder
1 pkg. (12 oz.) VELVEETA Shells & Cheese Dinner
1/4 cup BREAKSTONE'S or KNUDSEN Sour Cream
1 large tomato, chopped
1/4 cup sliced green onions

Directions:

1. Brown meat in large skillet; drain. Return meat to skillet.
2. Add milk, ketchup, and mustard and onion powder; mix well. Bring to boil. Stir in Shell Pasta; return to boil. Cover; simmer on medium-low heat 10 min. or until pasta is tender.
3. Stir in Cheese Sauce and sour cream until blended. Add tomatoes and onions; mix well.

Serves 6

³⁴ "Kraft Velveeta Original Shells & Cheese," Hy-vee.com, <https://www.hy-vee.com/grocery/PD1099055/Kraft-Velveeta-Original-Shells-Cheese> (accessed December 1, 2018).

³⁷ Kraft Heinz, "Velveeta Shells & Cheese Cheeseburger Mac," Recipes, <https://www.kraftrecipes.com/recipe/092267/velveeta-shells-cheese-cheeseburger-mac>.

*Clair's Macaroni and Cheese*³⁸

Ingredients:

4 oz. of Velveeta
1 cup of Macaroni
3-4 Tbsp. of milk

Directions: Cook macaroni according to package directions. Drain and mix in the Velveeta and milk. Serve.



³⁸ Clair Bammann, "Clair's Macaroni and Cheese," interview by author, December 15, 2018.

McLaughlin Family Macaroni and Cheese³⁹

Ingredients:

1 tablespoon vegetable oil
1 lb macaroni
8 tablespoons butter
1 tablespoon butter
1/2 cup Muenster cheese, shredded
1/2 cup mild cheddar cheese, shredded
1/2 cup sharp cheddar cheese, shredded
1/2 cup Monterey jack cheese, shredded
2 cups half-and-half
8 ounces Velveeta cheese, cubed
2 eggs, lightly beaten
1/4 teaspoon seasoning salt
1/8 teaspoon fresh ground pepper

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350.
Lightly butter a deep 2 1/2 quart baking dish.
Fill a large pot with water and bring to a rapid boil.
Add macaroni and the 1 TB oil.
Cook for 7 minutes, or until somewhat tender.
Drain well, and return to the pot.
Meanwhile, in a small saucepan, melt 8 TB of the butter.
Stir into macaroni.
In a large bowl, combine all of the shredded cheeses.
To the macaroni, add 1 1/2 cups of shredded cheeses, half and half, the cubed cheese and the eggs, and the seasoned salt and pepper.
Transfer to the prepared casserole dish, and top with remaining 1/2 cup shredded cheese.
Dot with remaining 1 TB of the butter.
Bake for 30-35 minutes or until the edges are golden brown and bubbly.
Serve hot.
Serves 8.

³⁹ Joseph McLaughlin, "McLaughlin Family Macaroni and Cheese," interview by author, November 6, 2018.

Kelly Family Mac and Cheese⁴⁰**Ingredients:**

1 pound Elbow Macaroni
 2 cups Warm Milk (Whole Or 2%)
 ½ sticks Unsalted Butter
 3 Tablespoons All-purpose Flour
 5 cups Shredded Cheddar Cheese (I buy block and shred by hand for better melting) (Can do a mix of Monterey or Colby if preferred)
 1 teaspoon Seasoned Salt
 ½ teaspoons Ground White Pepper
 1-½ teaspoon Dry Mustard
 1 teaspoon Garlic Powder
 1 teaspoon Onion Powder
 ½ cups Crushed Corn Flakes (can increase to ¾ cup for more crunch)

Directions:

1. Set oven to 400 degrees.
2. Spray a 13" x 9" baking dish with butter flavored non-stick cooking spray.
3. Bring a large pot of water to a boil and add some salt. This will be your pasta water
4. Just before the water starts to boil, begin making your cheese sauce in a separate pot:
5. In a Pyrex measuring cup, measure out 2 cups of milk and put in microwave on high. Heat for four and a half minutes. You want the milk warm and steamy but not boiling hot.
6. In the separate pot, throw in the butter and melt, watching the heat so it doesn't burn. Once melted, add in the 3 Tablespoons of flour and whisk together quickly. You want to do this quickly so you end up with a nice smooth consistency, not lumpy and grainy. As soon as the milk is heated, pour it into your butter and flour mixture and whisk until smooth. Add in four cups of the shredded cheese and stir well until smooth. Remove from heat and set to the side.
7. Dump the macaroni into the boiling water and cook through until just "almost" done. Mine took less than 6 minutes to reach this stage. Once done, strain the macaroni and add it to a large mixing bowl. Immediately dump in all the dry ingredients EXCEPT the corn flakes, into the macaroni, and stir well. Add the cheese sauce mix and stir until fully combined.
8. Pour this into your baking dish and top with the crushed cornflakes, followed by the reserved cup of shredded cheese. Place into your hot oven and bake for 10 to 12 minutes, or until bubbly and the top has achieved a golden crust.

⁴⁰ Kari Kelly, "Kelly Family Mac and Cheese," interview by author, December 5, 2018.

Barkley Mac-N-Cheese⁴¹

Ingredients:

1.5-2 cups elbow macaroni
3 eggs, beaten
2 cups milk
1/4 cup flour
1/2 stick butter
1/2 teaspoon salt & pepper
4 cups sharp cheddar cheese (shredded)

Directions:

Cook macaroni according to package directions. Drain well. In sauce pan, melt butter and then add flour-stirring constantly to keep smooth. Add milk and eggs, stirring continuously until smooth and thickened. Add salt, pepper, and cheese (3 cups). After cheese melts and well mixed, stir in macaroni. Spoon into baking dish and top with remaining cup of cheese.

Bake at 300 for 30 minutes, then increase to 400 and bake 10 to 15 minutes more until lightly browned.

*Note: Sprinkle paprika over top before baking.

⁴¹ Susan Barkley, "Barkley Mac-N-Cheese," interview by author, November 6, 2018.

Youngblood Family Macaroni and Cheese⁴²

Ingredients:

1 Stick of butter
1 onion finely chopped
Dash of salt and pepper
1/2 cup flour
1/2 tsp dry mustard
A few dashes of Worcestershire sauce
4 1/2 c of milk
4 cups (5 cups total) of grated sharp cheddar cheese plus 1 cup for the top
1 lb of penne or elbow pasta (you can add another 1/2lb if needed)

Directions:

Preheat oven 350F

Start pot of water for pasta, cook pasta a minute under directions time. Pour in greased casserole dish (9x13)

In large sauce pan melt butter and sauté onions until translucent add salt, pepper, mustard, flour and Worcestershire cook for a few minutes. Take pot off eye and add milk gradually while whisking constantly. Return to the eye. Continue to stir til it thickens and coats spoon. Add 4 cups of cheese stir til melted pour over pasta add remaining cheese in the top.

Bake for 25-35 minutes til crispy on top.



⁴² Kaylyn Youngblood, "Youngblood Family Macaroni and Cheese," interview by author November 6, 2018.

Mimi and Poppop's Creamy Macaroni and Cheese⁴³

Ingredients:

8 ounces elbow macaroni
6 tablespoons butter
1/4 cup flour
1/8 teaspoon dry mustard
1 teaspoon salt
3/4 teaspoon pepper
3/4 teaspoon Worcestershire
3 cups milk
1 small onion, grated
3/4 pound sharp Cheddar cheese, shredded (3 cups)
3/4 cup soft bread crumbs

Directions:

Boil macaroni in boiling salted water until tender; drain. Put in 2 1/2 or 3 quart casserole. Melt 4 tablespoons butter in the microwave; blend in flour and seasonings; add milk and onion. Cook until thickened, stirring constantly. Stir in cheese; pour over macaroni, and mix lightly. Top with crumbs mixed with remaining 2 tablespoons melted butter. Bake in moderate oven 325 degrees Fahrenheit. 30 minutes, or until golden brown.

*Note- broccoli can be added

Makes 4 to 6 servings.



⁴³ Conrad Ross, Mimi and Poppop's Creamy Macaroni and Cheese, November 6, 2018, Recipe, Alabama.

Rise to Gourmet and Alternatives

Over time, macaroni and cheese has evolved from the cherished family recipes to what some would consider a gourmet dish. According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, gourmet is defined as “of, relating to, or being high quality, expensive, or specialty food typically requiring elaborate and expert preparation.”⁴⁴ Macaroni and cheese originated in America among the elite, appearing at state dinners and high-end restaurants. However, with the rise of boxed mac and cheese, it became a meal for the average person. Even those stretching their budget could afford the quick and cheesy pasta dish. Currently, gourmet versions have flooded the internet, from viral videos to online blogs, macaroni and cheese has adapted from its simple origins of pasta, parmesan, butter, and cream. These versions can be gourmet in the ingredients they use, or in their preparation techniques. The overall trend is to take the dish and add a twist to it, whether through adding or substituting ingredients or using a new technique in cooking. In February 2018, BuzzFeed’s cooking channel, “Tasty”, released a video entitled “25 Mac ‘N Cheese Recipes.” In an example of the gourmet mac and cheese trend, this video features recipes like lobster mac and cheese, fried Mac'n'Cheeze Sticks, Truffle Mac'n'Cheeze, and more.⁴⁵ Recipes like this elevate the classic macaroni and cheese by adding in extra ingredients to boost the flavor and add excitement to the classic dish. These aren’t the only example of gourmet macaroni and cheese. Some restaurants add macaroni and cheese to an existing dish. For example, the Cheesecake Factory has a macaroni and cheese “glamburger” that they describe as “charbroiled and topped with our creamy fried macaroni and cheese balls and cheddar cheese sauce.”⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Merriam-Webster, s.v. “Gourmet,” <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/gourmet>, (accessed December 7, 2018).

⁴⁵ 25 Mac 'N' Cheese Recipes, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LDVlaYYjf-w>, (accessed November 7, 2018).

⁴⁶ “Macaroni and Cheese Burger,” About The Cheesecake Factory, <https://www.thecheesecakefactory.com/menu/glamburgers-and-sandwiches/macaroni-and-cheese-burger/>.

These gourmet adaptations are a reflection of American culture's tendency towards overindulgence or overeating. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the average American ate almost twenty percent more calories in 2000 than in 1983. The rise in American obesity is linked to several causes, one of which is overconsumption and the rise in foods with less nutritional value.⁴⁷ The gourmet adaptations of macaroni and cheese show American's trend towards excessiveness, another cause of obesity. Gourmet versions of macaroni and cheese attempt to elevate what is usually considered normal. More cheese, adding meats like bacon, or even different seasonings all contribute to an elevated macaroni and cheese that also has a higher calorie count with little to no extra nutritional value. These adaptations also beg the question of why. Are the current versions not good enough? The answer is probably a combination of factors. Americans have a tendency to strive for improvement according to research in an article in *The New Yorker*. This, combined with a consumerist society that endorses improvement in all aspects of life have contributed to a desire to upgrade our food, as can be seen in macaroni and cheese.⁴⁸ This obsession with finding the next best thing has led to the creation of macaroni and cheese recipes that attempt to fill that need. Macaroni and cheese burgers, Tabasco macaroni and cheese, even beer macaroni and cheese all are examples of American overindulgence in food.

Macaroni and cheese has undergone other adaptations other than the gourmet trend. Health has increasingly become a concern among Americans. Among others, macaroni and cheese has been subject to the healthy alternative trend that is becoming popular. Recipes claiming to be a healthier version of the classic populate the internet. A common substitute is to

⁴⁷ "Why Are Americans Obese?" PublicHealth.org, <https://www.publichealth.org/public-awareness/obesity/>, (accessed December 6, 2018).

⁴⁸ Alexandra Schwartz, "Improving Ourselves to Death," *The New Yorker*, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2018/01/15/improving-ourselves-to-death>, (accessed December 8, 2018).

replace the macaroni with cauliflower, for those seeking low carb options.⁴⁹ Another is to use “zoodles,” or zucchini noodles in place of the traditional macaroni.⁵⁰ Other recipes focus on adding vegetables into the dish, or creating sauces that are lower in calorie.⁵¹ These adaptations of macaroni and cheese show that while society is changing, there is an effort to bring the traditional and loved dish along. In addition to health, there is the “leftovers” trend of macaroni and cheese. A dish that many love is often used as a vessel to adapt leftovers into something more appealing. For example, Wolfgang Puck has a recipe for macaroni and cheese using turkey leftovers, which are common following Thanksgiving.⁵² Other leftovers recipes use macaroni and cheese itself as the leftover. Instead of simply reheating leftover macaroni and cheese, these recipes call for anything from frying the macaroni and cheese to making a grilled cheese with it.⁵³ Of course, while these recipes are using macaroni and cheese leftovers, they are also upgrading them in some way and therefore taking part in the overindulgence trend.

⁴⁹Katrina Meynink, “Cauliflower mac ‘n’ three-cheese pie,” *Opposing Viewpoints In Context*, http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?p=OVIC&u=siuc_main&id=GALE|A547381464&v=2.1&it=r&sid=OVIC&asid=4481521e#, July 24, 2018.

⁵⁰Susie T. Gibbs, “Mac N Cheese Zoodles (aka Low Carb Macaroni and Cheese),” *Fluffy Chix Cook*, <http://fluffychixcook.blogspot.com/2014/01/mac-n-cheese-zoodles-aka-low-carb.html>.

⁵¹Abigale Thorpe, “26 Healthier Mac and Cheese Recipes That Still Taste Indulgent,” *Greatest*, <https://greatist.com/eat/healthier-macaroni-cheese-recipes>, February 08, 2018.

⁵² Wolfgang Puck, “Wolfgang Puck’s Baked Macaroni and Cheese with Turkey Leftovers,” *Day-After Comfort Food*, <https://abcnews.go.com/GMA/recipe/baked-macaroni-cheese-turkey-leftovers-recipe-wolfgang-puck-20857319>, (accessed November 11, 2018).

⁵³ Robin Shreeves, “9 Ways to Use up Leftover Macaroni and Cheese,” *MNN - Mother Nature Network*, June 05, 2017, <https://www.mnn.com/food/recipes/blogs/9-ways-to-use-up-leftover-macaroni-and-cheese>, (accessed December 6, 2018).

Gourmet and Alternative Recipes

This section provides examples of gourmet and alternative recipes. A variety of gourmet versions are offered, showing the potential of gourmet macaroni and cheese through both the ingredients and techniques used. These show the popular trend of improving macaroni and cheese, even making the "ultimate version" as one recipe claims. There are also alternative recipes included, such as the cauliflower macaroni and cheese and turkey leftovers macaroni and cheese. It should be noted, that several of the alternative recipes could easily fall into the gourmet category through their preparation techniques, like frying the dish or turning it into a grilled cheese sandwich. There is also a big difference between the recipes in this section compared to the first, which discussed the original versions. These differences include more detailed directions and more complex ingredients in the gourmet versions than the original, which tended to have sparse instructions and minimal ingredients.

Ultimate Three Cheese Gruyere Mac and Cheese⁵⁴**Ingredients:**

8 ounces dried macaroni (cellentani, elbow, spiral, etc. I used Cellentani by Barilla)
4 tablespoons unsalted butter
1/2 cup fresh bread crumbs
1/4 cup all-purpose flour
3 cups milk
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper
2 1/2 cups coarsely grated, sharp white cheddar cheese
1 cup coarsely grated Swiss-style Gruyere cheese
1/4 cup finely grated dry Jack cheese (can use Monterey Jack if you can't find the dry Jack)

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 375°.
2. Grease a 1 1/2 quart souffle baking dish. Set aside.
3. Boil large pot of water to cook macaroni according to package directions. But stop cooking about two minutes early. (Pasta should be slightly underdone.)
4. Drain and rinse pasta with cold water and set aside.
5. In large saucepan, melt 1 tablespoon of the butter.
6. Add fresh breadcrumbs and stir until thoroughly coated. Set aside.
7. In a small sauce pan or microwave, heat milk until very hot but not scalded.
8. Meanwhile, in the pan you used for the bread crumbs, melt remaining 3 tablespoons butter over medium heat. When butter is bubbling, add flour and stir until cooked, about 1 minute.
9. Slowly whisk in hot milk, whisking continuously until all milk is incorporated and sauce begins to thicken, about 5 minutes.
10. Remove pan from heat and stir in salt, black pepper, cayenne, 1 1/2 cups of cheddar, 3/4 cup of Gruyere and all the dry Jack cheese.
11. Mix well until all the cheese has melted.
12. Add cooled macaroni to the cheese sauce and pour mixture into the buttered casserole dish.
13. Sprinkle with remaining cheddar and Gruyere cheeses, then top with buttered bread crumbs.
14. Bake, uncovered, for 25-30 minutes, or until the breadcrumbs are golden brown and casserole is bubbling.
15. Let sit for 5 minutes, then serve.

⁵⁴ Allie Taylor, "Ultimate Three Cheese Gruyere Mac and Cheese," Through Her Looking Glass, September 27, 2018, <https://www.throughherlookingglass.com/gruyere-mac-cheese/>, (accessed December 10, 2018).



Ina Garten's Lobster Mac and Cheese⁵⁵

Ingredients:

Kosher Salt
Vegetable oil
1 pound cavatappi or elbow macaroni
1 quart milk
8 tablespoons (1 stick) unsalted butter, divided
1/2 cup all-purpose flour
12 ounces Gruyere cheese, grated (4 cups)
8 ounces extra-sharp Cheddar, grated (2 cups)
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
1 1/2 pounds cooked lobster meat
1 1/2 cups fresh white bread crumbs (5 slices, crusts removed)

Directions:

Step 1:

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F.

Step 2:

Drizzle oil into a large pot of boiling salted water. Add the pasta and cook according to the directions on the package, 6 to 8 minutes. Drain well.

Step 3:

Meanwhile, heat the milk in a small saucepan, but don't boil it. In a large pot, melt 6 tablespoons of butter and add the flour. Cook over low heat for 2 minutes, stirring with a whisk. Still whisking, add the hot milk and cook for a minute or two more, until thickened and smooth. Off the heat, add the Gruyere, Cheddar, 1 tablespoon salt, the pepper, and nutmeg. Add the cooked macaroni and lobster and stir well. Place the mixture in 6 to 8 individual gratin dishes.

Step 4:

Melt the remaining 2 tablespoons of butter, combine them with the fresh bread crumbs, and sprinkle on the top. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes, or until the sauce is bubbly and the macaroni is browned on the top.

Yield: 6 to 8 servings

⁵⁵ Ina Garten, "Lobster Mac and Cheese," Food Network, <https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/ina-garten/lobster-mac-and-cheese-recipe-1948798>.

Tabasco's Buffalo Chicken Mac & Cheese⁵⁶**Ingredients:**

1/4 cup TABASCO brand Buffalo Style Hot Sauce
1 pound dried elbow macaroni
4 tablespoons unsalted butter
3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
3/4 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon black pepper
3 cups whole milk
6 ounces shredded sharp Cheddar cheese (about 1 1/2 cups)
6 ounces shredded mild Cheddar cheese (about 1 1/2 cups)
5 ounces crumbled blue cheese (about 1 1/4 cups)
12 ounces cooked chicken, cut in 1/2-inch pieces
1/2 cup chopped green onion
1 1/2 cups Panko bread crumbs

Preparation:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Cook macaroni to al dente according to package instructions and drain.
2. Meanwhile, melt butter in a large heavy saucepan over medium-low heat. Stir in flour, salt, and pepper and cook 1 to 2 minutes. Whisk in milk and cook over medium heat until thickened and bubbly, stirring constantly.
3. Reduce heat to low and stir in cheeses until melted. Add TABASCO® Buffalo Style Sauce, chicken, green onion, macaroni and additional salt and pepper to taste; mix well.
4. Spoon into an ungreased 2-quart casserole dish and top with bread crumbs. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes or until heated to an internal temperature of 165°F.

Servings: Makes 8 servings

⁵⁶ "Buffalo Chicken Mac & Cheese," Tabasco, <https://www.tabasco.com/recipe/buffalo-chicken-mac-and-cheese/>.

Beer Mac and Cheese⁵⁷**Ingredients:**

1 pound DeLallo macaroni noodles
12 ounce bottle beer
8 ounces cream cheese
1 pound shredded cheddar, off the block (not pre-shredded)
1 cup crumbled bacon

Directions:

1. Place a large pot of salted water on the stove to boil. Once boiling, cook the macaroni according to package instructions. Drain and set aside.
2. Meanwhile, pour a bottle of beer in a second large pot. (Choose a light crisp beer that you like to drink.) Place the pot over high heat, and add the cream cheese. As the beer starts to simmer, break the cream cheese into pieces with a whisk and whisk into the beer. Add the shredded cheddar. Warm and whisk until completely smooth.
3. Once the pasta is cooked and drained, pour it into the cheese sauce. Reduce the heat to low, then stir and cook another 3 minutes to thicken. Salt and pepper to taste.
4. To serve, scoop the beer mac and cheese into bowls and sprinkle with crumbled bacon.



⁵⁷ Sommer Collier, "Beer Mac and Cheese Recipe," <https://www.aspicyperspective.com/beer-mac-cheese-recipe/>, (accessed November 30, 2018).

Katrina Meynick's Cauliflower mac 'n' three-cheese pie⁵⁸

Ingredients:

1/2 head cauliflower, chopped into florets
1/2 tbsp. olive oil
1 tsp smoked paprika
2 cups cooked macaroni (from about 125g uncooked pasta)
1/2 cup smoked Gouda, grated
1/2 cup mozzarella, grated
1 cup cream
1/2 cup milk
1 tsp mustard powder dissolved in 1 tsp hot water
445g puff pastry sheet, defrosted in the fridge (we used Careme)

Egg wash

1 egg and 1 tbs milk, whisked together

Method:

Step 1:

Preheat oven to 150C. Place the cauliflower florets on a roasting tray. Drizzle with olive oil and add the paprika. Use your hands to massage the oil and paprika into the cauliflower until thoroughly coated, then roast until golden, about 30 to 40 minutes.

Step 2:

Add the roasted cauliflower, macaroni and grated cheeses to a large saucepan. In a separate bowl, combine the cream, milk and mustard powder mixture, then add to the saucepan. Cook over low-medium heat, stirring to coat, until the cheese has completely melted. Season generously with salt and pepper then transfer the filling into a six-cup capacity pie dish.

Step 3:

Increase the oven to 180C. Gently cover the cheesy filling with the pastry sheet and use a fork to press down the edges around the pie dish. Generously brush the pastry with the egg wash and bake for 20 to 30 minutes or until the top appears puffed and golden.

Serves 4-6

⁵⁸ Katrina Meynick, "Cauliflower mac 'n' three-cheese pie,"



Wolfgang Puck's Baked Macaroni and Cheese with Turkey Leftovers⁵⁹**Ingredients:**

8 ounces elbow macaroni
3 tablespoons butter
3 tablespoons flour
3-1/2 cups milk
1/2 medium white onion
1 bay leaf
1 teaspoon kosher salt
1 teaspoon black pepper
Pinch cayenne
8 ounces cooked turkey, coarsely chopped
10 ounces sharp aged white cheddar, grated
3 ounces Gruyere cheese, grated
1 ounce Parmesan cheese, grated
3 tablespoons butter
1 cup brioche bread crumbs
2 tablespoons chopped parsley

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
2. In large pot of boiling salted water, cook the macaroni to al dente (approximately 7 minutes). Strain and place on a lightly oiled sheet pan.
3. While the macaroni is cooking, in a separate pot, melt the butter and whisk in the flour. Continue to cook over low heat for 4 minutes stirring constantly. Add the milk, onion, bay leaf, salt, pepper and cayenne. Simmer for 10 minutes. Add the chopped turkey and cook 1 or 2 minutes more. Remove onion and bay leaf.
4. Turn off the heat and add 3/4 of the aged cheddar and all of the other cheeses. Fold in macaroni. Pour into a 2-quart casserole dish. Top with remaining cheddar.
5. Melt the butter in a sauté pan and toss bread crumbs and parsley to coat. Top the macaroni with bread crumb mixture. Bake for 30 minutes. Remove from the oven let stand for about 5 minutes.

⁵⁹ Puck, "Wolfgang Puck's Baked Macaroni and Cheese with Turkey Leftovers."

Next Day Mac and Cheese "Toast"⁶⁰**Ingredients:**

Leftover baked macaroni and cheese, refrigerated for at least overnight
 1 cup all-purpose flour
 1 teaspoon salt
 1 teaspoon pepper
 1 teaspoon cayenne
 1 egg beaten with 2 ounces water
 1 cup panko bread crumbs
 Oil for deep frying, preheated to 375 degrees

Directions:

Cut refrigerated macaroni and cheese into slices or bite size pieces.

Season the flour with salt, pepper and cayenne. Dredge each piece through the flour and gently tap off excess. Dip in the egg wash and then coat with the bread crumbs. Allow them to rest for 5 minutes so the crust can set. Very carefully drop into the oil and fry until golden brown. Remove to a baking sheet fitted with a rack and rest for 2 minutes before serving.

Grilled Macaroni and Cheese Sandwich with Broccoli⁶¹**Ingredients:**

2 slices Texas toast (thick cut)
 2 to 3 oz. cheddar cheese
 1/3 cup mac n cheese (leftover)
 2 tbsp. broccoli (cooked and chopped)
 2 tsp butter (salted)

Directions:

1. Gather the ingredients.
2. Begin by taking one piece of Texas toast and covering it with half the cheddar cheese. Then take a scoop of the macaroni and place it in the middle of the bread. Gently spread it out but make sure to keep the macaroni and cheese close to the center of the bread - so it doesn't spill out while cooking. Push the broccoli into the mac n cheese and add the remaining cheddar cheese on top. Place the other piece of bread on top and butter both sides of the sandwich
3. Place the buttered sandwich in a medium sized frying pan and turn the heat to medium. Cook for a few minutes on each side until it's all golden and brown and the cheese has completely melted.
4. Remove the grilled cheese from heat and let sit for a few minutes before serving.

⁶⁰ Alton Brown, "Next Day Mac and Cheese "Toast"," Food Network, <https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/alton-brown/next-day-mac-and-cheese-toast-recipe-2013511>, (accessed December 4, 2018).

⁶¹ Mackenzie Smith, "Grilled Macaroni And Cheese Sandwich with Broccoli," The Spruce Eats, <https://www.thespruceeats.com/macaroni-and-cheese-sandwich-with-broccoli-2937670>, (accessed December 10, 2018).

Conclusion

Macaroni and cheese has undoubtedly undergone changes since it was served at Thomas Jefferson's state dinner in 1802. Even though historians often credit Jefferson with creating the first macaroni and cheese dish, the reality is that this dish originates in slavery. Slaves who prepared the first macaroni and cheese dishes created what Americans know and love as mac and cheese. Slaves made macaroni and cheese into a soul food by using African cooking techniques and practices while preparing it for members of elite society. Through time, macaroni has evolved from an elite dish to one that lives in the homes of Americans. Mass production of Kraft mac and cheese, starting in 1937, brought mac and cheese to the everyday person's dinner table. This quick and easy dish allowed women to join the workforce by helping reduce their household responsibilities. Mass production brought mac and cheese into homes, and families then began adapting it to their tastes, including ingredients like certain cheeses, onions, and breadcrumbs. Many people have fond memories of macaroni and cheese, and continue to serve it as a family dish. From holiday meals, to college dinners, macaroni and cheese has multiple forms and memories associated with it. As the world moves forward into innovative food trends, there is an effort to bring macaroni and cheese along. Gourmet recipes have risen in popularity, but these dishes come at a caloric cost that is indicative of America's trend of overindulgence. Adapting recipes to be more exciting, unusual, or even healthier are all ways that American society is holding onto the nostalgia of macaroni and cheese while putting modern twists on it. Only time will tell what is in store for this dish.

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