

Sparkle Kitchen

Butternut Squash Mac and Cheese

Ingredients

2 tablespoons butter

2 cups onion slices (about $\frac{1}{2}$ a large onion)

1 large garlic clove, minced

1 pound macaroni

1 medium butternut squash

3 cups chicken stock

2 cups cheddar cheese

1 pound broccoli florets (fresh or frozen)

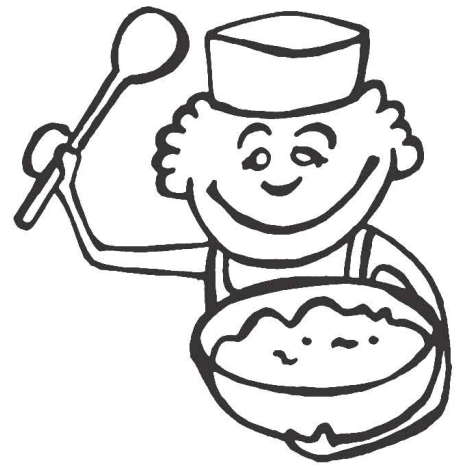
Salt and pepper, to taste

Chipotle pepper hot sauce (optional, for serving)

Directions

The onions and garlic will take the longest here, so start with them. Melt 2 tablespoons of butter in a large skillet and add the sliced onion and minced garlic in a single layer (as much as possible). Keeping the heat on medium-low and stirring often, allow the mixture to slowly caramelize over about 30 minutes. The onions will brown a little, but if they start browning fast or turning crispy, turn down the heat even lower.

Once the onions are on their way, bring a large, salted pot of water to boil. Cook the macaroni according to package directions.



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At the same time, prepare the butternut squash by peeling it, seeding it, and cutting it into 1-inch chunks. Put the squash chunks in a large saucepan and cover them with chicken stock. Bring the chicken stock to boil and cook until the squash is able to be easily pierced with a fork, which should take about 10 minutes once the stock starts boiling. Drain the squash, reserving the chicken stock.

Once the onions are done, remove them from the pan. Add the broccoli to the same pan — no need to dirty a new one — along with about a cup of water. Turn the heat up to medium, cover, and let the broccoli steam while you assemble the rest of the ingredients.

Put the butternut squash and onions back into the saucepan you cooked the squash in. Using an immersion blender, puree the squash and onions together, adding back in as much chicken stock as is necessary to make the mixture the consistency of cheese sauce. Add the cheddar cheese. Give the mixture a few more good pulses to incorporate it well.

Now, pour the sauce over the top of the macaroni. When the broccoli is done to your liking, add it to the pot, too. Mix everything together well. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Sprinkle a little extra cheese or hot sauce on top for serving and enjoy!