winexpert

LE20

KIMCHI MAC & CHEESE

Most supermarkets carry this Korean condiment of spicy fermented cabbage and it adds a unique zip to this comfort food classic. Synergy's off-dry blend is the perfect complement to the creamy, rich flavours in this dish.

PAIR WITH: WINEXPERT™ LE20 SYNERGY

Yield: 4 to 6 servings

INGREDIENTS:

2 tbsp butter

1 tbsp all-purpose flour

1 large clove garlic, grated

1 1/2 cups milk
(whole or 2% preferred)

2 cups grated old Cheddar cheese

1/2 cup cream cheese

1/2 tsp each salt and pepper
(or to taste)

10 oz dry macaroni
(about 4 cups cooked)

1 cup chopped kimchi

1/2 cup chopped cooked bacon
(optional)

TOPPING:

3/4 cup panko bread crumbs

1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese

2 tbsp melted butter

Sliced green onions (optional)

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 400°F.

Melt butter in a medium saucepan set over medium heat. Add flour and garlic; cook for 1 minute. Whisking, add milk and bring to a simmer, stirring until thickened. Stir in Cheddar and cream cheese until smooth; season with salt and pepper and remove from heat.

Meanwhile, cook macaroni in a large pot of boiling salted water for 1 minute less than package timing indicates. Measure out and reserve 1/4 cup cooking water; drain well.

Stir macaroni with cheese sauce, kimchi, bacon (if using) and reserved pasta cooking water. Spread into a buttered, 8-cup casserole dish.

Topping: Toss panko with Parmesan and butter; sprinkle over dish. Bake for 20 minutes or until bubbling and golden. Garnish with green onions (if using).

TIPS:

• Pasta tends to soak up sauce as it sits so **for the gooiest Mac & Cheese**, it is best assembled and baked just before serving. To make ahead, prepare sauce, kimchi, macaroni and topping up to the point of mixing; reserve in refrigerator separately and combine just before baking. Bake, covered for 15 minutes, uncovered for 20 minutes or until browned and bubbly.

• **Kimchi can vary in heat intensity** so purchase one that suits your preference. Or, if using a mild kimchi, those who love more fire can add ground cayenne pepper or hot sauce to the sauce to taste.