

SALTSA BESAMEL – for Mac n Cheese

This basic white sauce was actually invented by the Greeks, although most people think of Besamel (AKA Bechamel) sauce as a French creation. Stir in cheese when it's thickened and use as topping for pasta dishes, vegetable casseroles and to make a really rich macaroni and cheese! This recipe is enough for one average sized casserole dish.

INGREDIENTS

- ❑ 3 TBSPs UNSALTED BUTTER
- ❑ 1 TBSP OLIVE, SUNFLOWER OR GRAPESEED OIL
- ❑ 4 TBSP UNBLEACHED ALL PURPOSE FLOUR
- ❑ 2 CUPS SKIM (NON-FAT) or 1% MILK, **WARMED**
- ❑ ¼ tsp SEA SALT
- ❑ PINCH OR 2 OF WHITE PEPPER
- ❑ ABOUT ½ tsp NUTMEG (FRESHLY GROUND, PREFERABLY)
- ❑ **OPTIONAL:** 1 tsp cornstarch to hasten the thickening if your besamel is not thickening up as it should

PREPARATION

1. Melt the butter in a medium sized saucepan over medium heat until foaming.
2. REDUCE HEAT to medium/low, add the flour slowly and



whisk continuously until mixture is smooth.

3. Cook, **whisking**, until mixture begins to turn golden (about 1-2 minutes)



4. Slowly whisk in the warmed milk and salt and cook over medium heat, **whisking frequently** until thickened and creamy (10 -13 minutes). IF your sauce is not thickening,



or your time is short, whisk in the cornstarch now to help thicken it faster.

5. Remove sauce from heat and whisk in pepper and nutmeg, then stir in the cheeses until they melt. Incorporate into your pasta with whatever add-ins you are using.



Butternut-Spinach Mac & Cheese

The roasted butternut combined with the spinach is the perfect combination fresh nutmeg & pepper in the cheese sauce; this is my very favorite Mac & Cheese recipe!

INGREDIENTS

FOR MAC N CHEESE BASE:

- 2 ½ cups GEMELLI OR CAMPANELLE PASTA (OR SIMILAR SHAPED WHOLE GRAIN OR VEGGIE PASTA)
- 1 RECIPE BESAMEL SAUCE
- 1 & ½ cups BLEND OF GRATED CHEESES

ADD-INS:

- ABOUT 1 TBSP SUNFLOWER OR GRAPESEED OIL, FOR ROASTING SQUASH

- ABOUT 2 CUPS DICED BUTTERNUT SQUASH, ROASTED (½” dice)
- 1 FULL CUP BABY SPINACH LEAVES, HAND TORN

TOPPING:

- ABOUT ½ CUP SEASONED PANKO OR REGULAR BREAD CRUMBS
- 1 TBSP UNSALTED BUTTER, MELTED - **PLUS** • 1 TBSP OLIVE OIL

PREPARATION

1. START THAT WATER BOILING FOR YOUR PASTA!
2. ROAST THE BUTTERNUT SQUASH (ABOUT 15-18 MINUTES IN A 400° OVEN. WHILE THAT'S COOKING, CLEAN, DRY & TEAR SPINACH, REMOVING ANY LONG OR TOUGH STEMS.
3. COOK & STRAIN PASTA ACCORDING TO DIRECTIONS ON THE BOX - AL DENTE!!!! **DO NOT OVERCOOK THE PASTA! DO NOT RINSE PASTA! IF YOUR BESAMEL SAUCE IS NOT READY, TOSS THE PASTA IN A BIT OF OLIVE OIL SO THAT IT DOESN'T STICK TOGETHER**
4. MAKE RECIPE OF BESAMEL SAUCE AND REMOVE FROM THE HEAT, THEN STIR THE CHEESE INTO THE BESAMEL SAUCE UNTIL IT'S MELTED
5. STIR SAUCE INTO/THROUGHOUT THE COOKED PASTA , ADDING IN THE SQUASH & SPINACH AND COMBINING WELL.
6. MOISTEN THE BREADCRUMBS WITH THE OIL AND BUTER, THEN SPRINKLE OVER THE TOP OF THE MAC N CHEESE. BAKE IN **PRE-HEATED 375°** OVEN FOR ABOUT 15 MINUTES, CHECKING TO BE SURE CRUMBS AREN'T BURNING – BAKE UNTIL TOPPING IS LIGHTLY BROWNED AND THE MAC N CHEESE IS BUBBLING.

Mac & Cheese, Please!

If you like your mac'n'cheese really creamy tasting, this one's for you! Stir in a cup + of roasted broccoli or frozen peas or asparagus tips or can of rinsed, drained tuna or even leftover roasted chicken to give it an extra nutritional punch. (The tuna & peas and the broccoli combinations are really tasty.)

INGREDIENTS

- 2 ½ cups GEMELLI OR CAMPANELLE PASTA (OR SIMILAR SHAPED WHOLE GRAIN PASTA)
- 1 RECIPE BESAMEL SAUCE
- 1 & ½ cups CHEESE BLEND

ADD-INS:

- 2 CUPS TOTAL YOUR CHOICE - FROZEN BABY PEAS **OR** ROASTED BROCCOLI FLORETS **OR** ASPARAGUS TIPS, **AND/OR** 1 PACKET OR CAN DRAINED TUNA FISH...

PREPARATION

1. COOK & STRAIN PASTA ACCORDING TO DIRECTIONS ON THE BOX - AL DENTE!!!! **DO NOT OVERCOOK THE PASTA! DRAIN**, BUT DO NOT RINSE THE PASTA. THEN PLACE THE COOKED PASTA INTO A CASSEROLE DISH THAT HAS BEEN LIGHTLY BRUSHED WITH OLIVE OIL AND - **IF THE SAUCE ISN'T READY YET, TOSS** THE PASTA IN A BIT OF OLIVE OIL SO THAT IT DOESN'T STICK TOGETHER. IF THE SAUCE IS READY, PROCEED TO STEP 4.
2. MAKE THE BESAMEL SAUCE AND REMOVE FROM THE HEAT. STIR THE CHEESE INTO THE BESAMEL SAUCE UNTIL MELTED.
3. STIR SAUCE WELL INTO THE COOKED PASTA WITH YOUR ADD-INS, IF USING...POUR INTO A LIGHTLY OILED CASSEROLE DISH
4. PREP TOPPING: MOISTEN THE BREADCRUMBS WITH THE OIL AND BUTER, THEN SPRINKLE OVER THE TOP OF THE MAC N CHEESE. BAKE IN **PRE-HEATED 375°** OVEN FOR ABOUT 15 MINUTES, CHECKING TO BE SURE CRUMBS AREN'T BURNING - BAKE UNTIL TOPPING IS LIGHTLY BROWNED AND THE MAC N CHEESE IS BUBBLING.



MAC'N'CHEESE "El Greco"

This cheesy, creamy version of a classic comfort food features the flavors of Greece, but feel free to change up the veggies and cheeses to suit your tastes.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 & ½ cups gemelli, campanelle or rotini pasta (you want a shape that will really hold on to the sauce)
- 1 recipe besamel sauce
- ½ cup shredded cheese blend
- 1 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 1 cup tightly packed baby spinach leaves
- 3 stalks scallion, finely chopped
- 1 & ½ cups broccoli florets (small), steamed

FOR CRUMB TOPPING:

- about ¾s cup seasoned panko crumbs (or use day-old bread to make your own crumbs)
- 1 TBSP fresh dill, finely chopped
- 2 tsps melted butter + about 1 TBSP olive oil

PREPARATION

1. Cook and strain the pasta according to package directions for al dente - **DO NOT OVERCOOK THE PASTA! DO NOT RINSE THE PASTA!** If your sauce isn't ready yet, toss the pasta in a bit of olive oil so that it doesn't stick together and place into a lightly oiled 9 x 13 casserole dish.
2. Make the besamel sauce and remove from the heat. THEN, stir in the cheeses, with a rubber spatula or mixing spoon, until melted. (The feta will soften, but not totally melt.)
3. Stir the sauce and the veggies into the pasta until well incorporated; be sure that all the pasta and veggies are coated.
4. Lightly moisten the crumbs and dill with the butter and oil (until moist), then sprinkle evenly over the top. Bake on middle rack of preheated 375° oven for 15-20 minutes, checking to be sure that the crumbs aren't burning. Cover loosely with foil if they are. Bake until heated through and bubbly and the crumbs are browned. Cool down for 5 minutes before serving.

Super Veggie Mac & Cheese

MMmmm, mmm, Good! Substitute your favorite veggies if you'd like; make it yours! I love broccoli & spinach, with feta cheese in the besamel sauce.

INGREDIENTS

- ½ BOX (2 CUPS) MINI CAMPANELLE, FARFALLE OR GEMELLI PASTA
- 1 RECIPE BESAMEL SAUCE
- 1 & ½ cups CHEESE BLEND

ADD-INS:

- ½ MEDIUM ZUCCHINI, CHOPPED - 1" CHUNKS
- 3 STALKS SCALLIONS, FINELY CHOPPED.
- 1 RED, YELLOW OR ORANGE SWEET PEPPER, CHOPPED ONTO MEDIUM SIZED PIECES

TOPPING:

- ABOUT ½ CUP SEASONED PANKO OR REGULAR BREAD CRUMBS
- ABOUT 2 tsps BUTTER, MELTED + 2 tsps OLIVE OIL

PREPARATION:

1. **COOK & STRAIN PASTA** ACCORDING TO DIRECTIONS ON THE BOX - AL DENTE!!!! **DO NOT OVERCOOK THE PASTA! DRAIN**, BUT DO NOT RINSE THE PASTA. THEN PLACE THE COOKED PASTA INTO A CASSEROLE DISH THAT HAS BEEN LIGHTLY BRUSHED WITH OLIVE OIL AND - **IF THE SAUCE ISN'T READY YET, TOSS** THE PASTA IN A BIT OF OLIVE OIL SO THAT IT DOESN'T STICK TOGETHER. IF THE SAUCE IS READY, PROCEED TO STEP 4.
2. SAUTÉ ZUCCHINI AND PEPPERS IN ABOUT A TBSP OF OLIVE OIL OVER HIGH HEAT, UNTIL BROWNED. REMOVE FROM HEAT - SET ASIDE.
3. MAKE BESAMEL SAUCE (RECIPE BELOW) AND REMOVE FROM THE HEAT, THEN STIR THE CHEESE INTO THE BESAMEL SAUCE UNTIL MELTED
4. STIR SAUCE INTO COOKED PASTA ALONG WITH YOUR PREPARED VEGGIES
5. TOP W/SEASONED PANKO (OR BREAD) CRUMBS THAT HAVE BEEN MOISTENED BY STIRRING IN THE BUTTER & EVOO
6. BAKE IN PRE-HEATED 375° OVEN FOR 15 MINUTES, CHECK TO BE SURE CRUMBS AREN'T BURNING - COVER LOOSELY W/FOIL IF THEY ARE...BAKE ADDITIONAL 5-10 MINUTES UNTIL HEATED THROUGH & CRUSTY ON TOP.

Knockout Seafood Mac & Cheese

This is a truly decadent treat with either straight up lobster meat, or a lobster-shrimp-scallop combination. I love to stir in a cup or two of roasted broccoli florets or baby spinach leaves for a nice taste contrast. WARNING: As delicious as this is, it is VERY rich. You might want to go easy on the portion size and consider this a "once-in-a-while" food!

INGREDIENTS

- ½ BOX (2 CUPS) GEMELLI OR CAMPANELLE PASTA (OR SIMILAR SHAPED WHOLE GRAIN PASTA)
 - 1 RECIPE BESAMEL SAUCE
 - ½ CUP SHREDDED SHARP CHEDDAR CHEESE, + ½ CUP SHREDDED GRUYERE OR COMTE CHEESE + ½ cup grated or crumbled FONTINA CHEESE
 - ABOUT ½ CUP SEASONED PANKO OR REGULAR BREAD CRUMBS
 - 1 tsp BUTTER, MELTED + ABOUT 2 tsps OLIVE OIL
 - 1 cup cooked lobster meat chunks
- **OR** ½ cup cooked lobster meat + ½ cup bay scallops (uncooked) - **DOUBLE UP ON THE LOBSTER IF YOU WANT TO GO WILD!**
 - **OPTIONAL:** 1 or two cups roasted broccoli florets OR baby spinach leaves
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PREPARATION

1. COOK & STRAIN PASTA ACCORDING TO DIRECTIONS ON THE BOX - AL DENTE!!!! **DO NOT OVERCOOK THE PASTA!** DRAIN, BUT DO NOT RINSE THE PASTA. THEN PLACE THE COOKED PASTA INTO A CASSEROLE DISH THAT HAS BEEN LIGHTLY BRUSHED WITH OLIVE OIL AND - **IF THE SAUCE ISN'T READY YET, TOSS** THE PASTA IN A BIT OF OLIVE OIL SO THAT IT DOESN'T STICK TOGETHER. IF THE SAUCE IS READY, PROCEED TO STEP 4.
2. MAKE RECIPE OF BESAMEL SAUCE AND REMOVE FROM THE HEAT, THEN STIR THE CHEESE INTO THE BESAMEL SAUCE UNTIL MELTED
3. STIR SAUCE INTO COOKED PASTA (ADD IN BROCCOLI FLORETS OR SPINACH IF USING) AND THE COOKED LOBSTER MEAT AND RAW SCALLOPS
4. TOP W/SEASONED PANKO (OR BREAD) CRUMBS THAT HAVE BEEN MOISTENED BY STIRRING IN THE BUTTER & OLIVE OIL
5. BAKE IN **PRE-HEATED 375°** OVEN FOR 15-20 MINUTES, CHECK TO BE SURE CRUMBS AREN'T BURNING - COVER LOOSELY W/FOIL IF THEY ARE...BAKE ADDITIONAL 5-10 MINUTES UNTIL HEATED THROUGH & CRUSTY ON TOP.



3-Cheese Mac & Cheese

This lighter, but very tasty version is lighter in fat and calories, but doesn't skimp on flavor! From Food Network

INGREDIENTS

- 1 large egg
- 1 12-ounce can evaporated whole milk
- Pinch of cayenne pepper
- Pinch of freshly grated nutmeg
- pinch each of Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 & 1/3 cups grated/crumbled cheese blend, plus 4 deli-thin slices of Muenster OR Swiss cheese
- ½ head cauliflower, cut into small florets (4 cups)
- 3 cups medium pasta
- ADD-INS:
 - 3 stalks scallion, finely chopped
 - 1 TBSP finely chopped flat leaf parsley
 - 2 tsps finely chopped dill
 - ¼ cup seasoned panko crumbs, sprinkled evenly over the top

PREPARATION

1. Preheat oven to 375°
2. Whisk the egg, evaporated milk, cayenne, nutmeg, and salt and black pepper to taste in a bowl. Toss the grated cheeses in a separate bowl.
3. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the cauliflower and cook until almost falling apart, about 7 minutes. Transfer with a slotted spoon to a bowl. Add the pasta to the same water and cook until **al dente**, about 8-10 minutes. Drain, **reserving ¼ cup cooking water**.
4. Combine the egg mixture and the grated cheeses in the empty pot and cook over medium-low heat, stirring constantly, until the cheeses melt and the sauce begins to thicken. Remove from the heat and add the cauliflower. Puree with an immersion blender until smooth and light (you can also use a regular blender). Stir in some of the reserved pasta water until creamy.
5. Toss the pasta in the sauce; season with salt and black pepper and stir in chives if using. Transfer to a shallow casserole dish and top with the cheese slices. Broil until golden brown, about 5 minutes.

WITHOUT BREADCRUMBS: Per serving (about 1 1/3 cups): Calories 403; Fat 17 g (Saturated 10 g); Cholesterol 85 mg; Sodium 517 mg; Carbohydrate 41 g; Fiber 2 g; Protein 20 g

Cauliflower Mac N Cheese

Article printed from Hello Healthy: <http://blog.myfitnesspal.com>
URL to article: <http://blog.myfitnesspal.com/cauliflower-mac-n-cheese/>

INGREDIENTS

- 1 medium head cauliflower, broken into florets (about 3 cups)
- 16 ounces mini gnocchi
- 1 TBSP butter
- 1 TBSP minced garlic
- 1 TBSP all-purpose flour
- 1 ½ cups 1% milk
- 1/3 cup extra sharp cheddar cheese, shredded
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- ¼ cup whole wheat panko breadcrumbs

PREPARATION

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. **Lightly** coat a casserole dish with grapeseed, sunflower or canola oil and set aside.
2. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil, add cauliflower, then gnocchi. Cook until gnocchi float to the top.
3. Drain cauliflower and gnocchi in a colander, and rinse with cold water. Set aside.
4. In a small saucepan set over medium heat, melt butter and stir in garlic. Cook until aromatic.
5. Whisk in flour, then slowly whisk in the milk. Bring sauce to a **low** boil, whisking until thickened.
6. Stir in cheddar cheese until melted, remove from heat and season with salt and pepper to taste. Place gnocchi and cauliflower in the casserole dish, and coat with cheese mixture.
7. Top with breadcrumbs, and drizzle or mist with olive oil or cooking spray and bake 20 minutes, or until mac and cheese is bubbly and topping is browned.

Nutrition Information

Serves: 6 | Serving Size: 1/6 recipe Per serving: Calories: 287; Total Fat: 11g; Saturated Fat: 7g; Monounsaturated Fat: 1g; Cholesterol: 35mg; Sodium: 474mg; Carbohydrate: 33g; Dietary Fiber: 2g; Sugar: 5g; Protein: 12g
Nutrition Bonus: Potassium: 99mg; Iron: 3%; Vitamin A: 10%; Vitamin C: 101%; Calcium: 31%



Barnyard Meatloaf

Lighter in fat and calories than beef meatloaf, but bursting with juicy flavor, this turkey and pork version will leave you quite satisfied!

Eat as is or spoon on some turkey broth or BBQ sauce.

Perfect served with mashed potatoes.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb ground turkey
- ½ lb ground pork **OR** ground beef
- 2 TBSPs Dijon mustard
- 2 tsps fresh lemon juice
- 1 TBSP **finely** chopped fresh parsley
- 1 TBSP **finely** chopped fresh dill
- 1 TBSP finely grated parmesan cheese
- ½ tsp sea salt (fine)
- ½ tsp finely ground pepper
- 1 ½ TBSPs olive oil

- ¼ cup + 1 TBSP cornmeal, **separate**
- 2 large (preferably organic) eggs
- Olive oil to brush pans with

TOPPING

- ¼ cup grated parmesan (or Asiago) cheese
- ¼ cup seasoned whole wheat panko **OR** breadcrumbs

OPTIONAL: Turkey or chicken broth or tomato sauce

PREPARATION

1. Pre-heat oven to 400° and brush bread pans lightly with olive oil, then sprinkle with the 1 TBSP of coarse cornmeal.
2. Combine all ingredients in a large mixing bowl and mix together **thoroughly, but gently**; using your hands works very well for this step. Be careful not to **OVER-work** it, though!
3. Pack into a large loaf pan **OR 3** mini loaf pans - then press the mixture of grated cheese & seasoned breadcrumbs into meat a bit.
4. ➔➔ **Reduce temp to 375°** and bake for about 45-50 minutes (25-30 minutes for the mini pans) until the meat pulls away from the sides of the pan and is firm and browned on top.

! Soup & Sandwich !

Easy Tomato Soup

Sometimes a nice hot bowl of tomato soup with a grilled cheese sandwich is just what the doctor ordered. A rainy day, a brisk fall afternoon or on a day at home on the couch with a good book are some occasions – to me – that demand a grilled cheese sandwich and a cup of tomato soup, preferably topped with seasoned croutons.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 TBSP pure olive oil
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- ½ medium onion, finely chopped
- 1 tsp dried herbs, such as thyme, oregano, rosemary or basil
- ¼ tsp crushed red pepper (optional)
- 2 28-ounce cans crushed tomatoes
- 2 cups water
- 2 tsps sugar
- 2 ripe tomatoes, finely diced
- 2 TBSPs fresh chopped basil OR fresh chopped flat leaf parsley
- garlic and herb croutons to garnish

PREPARATION

1. Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add garlic, onion, herbs and crushed red pepper (if using). Cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 30 seconds.
2. Add canned tomatoes, water and sugar. Puree with an immersion blender and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 10 minutes.
3. Stir in the fresh tomatoes and the basil or parsley, top with croutons and serve with:

The Perfect Grilled Cheese Sandwich: *Fresh, good quality bread (my daughter loves the Pepperidge Farm Farmhouse Hearty White or Whole Grain White but I prefer any good quality multigrain bread; good bakery bread will also make a great sandwich), good quality cheese and low and slow cooking will guarantee a delicious grilled cheese sandwich. Taking the time to toast your grilled cheese sandwich over medium-low heat insures that the cheese will melt thoroughly and the bread achieves that perfect degree of crispiness without burning.*

1. Using **softened** unsalted butter, butter-canola oil blend or butter-olive oil blend. Generously slather one side of each piece of bread with your room-temperature butter. The buttered sides will be on the outside of the sandwich.
2. Cheese: I like a good quality extra sharp cheddar and a creamer cheese like muenster or havarti. Turn the bread over, unbuttered side up. Add a single layer of cheddar sliced 1/8-inch to 1/4-inch thick. Cover every last little bit of the bread, overlapping here and there if necessary. Then add your second cheese. NOW top the sandwich with the second slice of bread, buttered side up.
3. Place the sandwich on a pre heated sauté pan - medium/low heat- and let it cook for about 5 minutes, checking occasionally to make sure it's not burning. It's tempting, but don't press down on the sandwich! Unless you like your grilled cheese extra flat, in that case, go for it.
4. After the first five minutes, carefully flip the sandwich with a spatula and cook the other side for 5 minutes.
5. Flip and cook each side for a couple more minutes each. The bread should start to get golden brown and the cheese nice and melty. After about 15 minutes of cooking over medium-low heat, increase the heat to medium and, turning every so often, watch the sandwich carefully until the bread is perfectly toasted a golden brown.



Mashed Potatoes

How do like yours? Lumpy, or smooth? “Smashed”, skins on, or with pungent garlic? I’m partial to smooth and moist with a tiny touch of butter and a bit of salt. No lumps for me please! The perfect mashed potatoes can be very elusive, however. We’ll try to make it simple!

INGREDIENTS

- 5-6 medium OR 4 large Yukon Gold or russet potatoes
- 2 TBSPs unsalted butter
- 3 tsps extra virgin olive oil
- ½ tsp sea salt
- ½ tsp pepper
- ½ tsp garlic powder (optional)

FOR SERVING:

- 2 TBSPs chopped chives or scallions
- 2 TBSPs finely chopped flat leaf parsley
- Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- Butter

PREPARATION

1. Set up a steamer pot with about 3 inches of water on the bottom, then set steamer insert into pan and bring water to a **simmer**.
2. Peel the **potatoes** and cut each **potato** into 4 pieces. Turn water up to high to bring to a **boil**.
3. Once the water is boiling, place the **potatoes** in the steamer rack and cover. Steam the **potatoes** for about 10-15 minutes or until they pierce very easily with a fork. You shouldn’t have to exert any pressure on the fork for it to go through; they need to be soft enough to mash.
4. ☆ Remove potatoes and **RESERVE ½ cup of the water!!!** ☆
5. Using a potato masher, mash potatoes until smooth*, then gently stir the 2 TBSPs butter, 3 tsps oil, salt, pepper & garlic powder (if using) in with a fork. ☆ IF the potatoes seem dry or chunky, add the cooking water a little at a time until they smooth out a bit.
6. Serve with the chopped fresh herbs, EVOO and/or salted butter **on the side**.



Creamy Herbed Mashed Potatoes

Rich, creamy Greek yogurt is a great non-fat swap for the usual sour cream and fresh herbs, stirred in at the last moment add a bright note to this dish.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 ½ lb Russet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1½-inch chunks
- 1 cup non-fat, plain Greek yogurt, room temperature (**OR** low fat sour cream)
- ½ cup 1% milk, room temperature
- ½ tsp sea salt, plus additional, to taste
- ¼ cup chopped fresh chives
- 1 TBSP fresh, flat leaf parsley, finely chopped

PREPARATION

1. Peel the potatoes and cut each potato into 4 pieces. Place the potatoes in a steamer rack (or see notes above) and prop up in a large pot. Pour in 2" of water into a large pot, and bring to a simmer. Turn heat to medium-high and steam the potatoes for 20 minutes or until they pierce very easily with a paring knife.
2. In a large bowl, add sour cream, milk and ½ tsp salt to the potatoes. Mash with a potato masher to desired consistency. Stir in chives and additional salt, if desired. Be careful not too overmix.

TIP: OVERMIXING MASHED POTATOES can lead to a stiff, chewy, gummy texture. Keep them fluffy by mashing them through a ricer for smooth potatoes or using a hand-held masher for chunkier potatoes. This limits the amount that the potatoes are processed so the starches stay intact. If they're overwhipped, the starches break down further and give you a sticky result.

★ Oven Fried Chicken Tenders

Sauce-ibilities!

INGREDIENTS

MARINADE:

- ½ cup low-fat buttermilk
- ½ tsp paprika
- ¼ tsp sea salt
- ¼ tsp white pepper
- ½ tsp garlic powder

CHICKEN & COATING:

- about 1¼ - 1½ pounds chicken breast tenders **OR** boneless, skinless chicken thighs **OR** drumsticks
- ½ cup cornmeal
- ¼ cup seasoned whole wheat panko crumbs **OR** brown rice flour
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 TBSP minced dried onion
- 2 tsps sesame seeds
- 1 tsp paprika
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- ¼ tsp black pepper

FOR PAN/COOKING

- ¼ cup safflower, sunflower, grapeseed, avocado or canola oil

(COOKING AT THIS TEMPERATURE REQUIRES OIL THAT HAS A HIGH SMOKE POINT!)

PREPARATION

1. Preheat oven to 450°.
2. To prepare chicken, combine chicken and buttermilk in a shallow dish; cover and chill 15 minutes to an hour. Drain chicken, discarding liquid.
3. Prepare sauce or sauces.
4. Combine cornmeal and remaining ingredients in a large zip-top plastic bag; add 4 chicken pieces to bag. Seal and shake to coat. Repeat procedure with remaining chicken.
5. Spread oil evenly in a jelly-roll pan (¼ sheet pan), and arrange chicken in a single layer in pan. **REDUCE HEAT TO 425°** and bake for 5 minutes on each side or until done. ... usually about 18-20 minutes total for tenders and boneless thigh strips... bit longer for drumsticks. Serve with sauce.

HONEY-DIJON DIPPING SAUCE

WHISK TOGETHER WITH A FORK:

- ¼ cup honey
- ¼ cup dijon mustard



SWEET CHILI DIPPING SAUCE

WHISK TOGETHER WITH A FORK:

- 2 TBSPs Sweet Chili Sauce
- 2 TBSPs Honey
- 1 tsp finely ground roasted unsalted peanuts



SOY-GINGER-SESAME DIPPING SAUCE

WHISK TOGETHER WITH A FORK:

- ¼ cup low sodium soy sauce
- ¼ cup Tamari sauce
- ½ tsp sesame oil
- 1 TBSP Hoisin sauce
- ½ tsp rice wine vinegar
- 1 tsp finely ground ginger paste
- ½ tsp Chinese 5-Spice powder
- 1 tsp toasted sesame seeds



PIZZA~~~~~



1. Remove pre-made **dough** from fridge and get dough to room temp ... set on counter for about 30 minutes
2. Slice and dice the **veggies and meats** you plan to use for toppings and pre-cook ones that require it. Most veggies should be pre-cooked and drained. Set aside.



3. Make **tomato sauce** recipe - 1 recipe is good for 3 or 4 small pizzas.



4. Preheat oven to 490°F - make sure the vents are on HIGH!

5. Measure out your **cheeses** (3/4s cup per pizza, plus 2 TBSPs **parmesan** for dough)



6. Brush pizza pan **lightly** with **olive oil**



7. Sprinkle about 1 TBSP **cornmeal** over pan OR stone

8. Place dough in center of pan/stone and push GENTLY outward from the center toward the edges until pan is covered. **DO NOT STRETCH OR PULL!!! (YOU'LL END UP WITH HOLES)**



9. **VERY LIGHTLY** brush top of the crust with olive oil. Sprinkle the 2 TBSPs grated parmesan evenly over the dough and press into dough.

10. Pre-bake the crust for **EXACTLY 4 minutes**

11. Remove and top with **only 1 ladle** of sauce, your chosen toppings and cheese.

12. Bake for 12-15 minutes and let cool 3-5 minutes before slicing.

Basic Pizza Dough

Although a bit time-consuming, making your own pizza dough is fairly simple and allows you to be creative. Work your favorite fresh herbs or freshly grated cheeses into the dough for an extra tasty crust,

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tsp active dry yeast
- 2/3 cup warm water (105° to 115° F)
- 1 ¼s cup unbleached bread (or all-purpose flour)
- ¾s cup whole wheat bread flour
- 1 tsp salt
- olive oil for the bowl, crust and pan

PREPARATION

1. Sprinkle the yeast over the water. Let stand 1 minute, or until the yeast is creamy. Stir until the yeast dissolves.
2. In a large bowl, combine the 2 cups flour and the salt. Add the yeast mixture and stir until a soft dough forms. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface and knead, adding more flour if necessary, until smooth, soft and elastic, about 8-10 minutes.
3. Lightly coat a large bowl with oil. Place the dough in the bowl, turning it to oil the top. Cover with plastic wrap. Place in a warm, draft-free place and let rise until doubled in bulk, about 1 ½ hours.
4. Flatten the dough with your fist. Cut the dough into 2 pieces and shape the pieces into balls. Flatten the dough slightly. Dust the tops with flour. Place the balls of dough on a floured surface and cover each with plastic wrap, allowing room for the dough to expand. Let rise 60 minutes, or until doubled.
5. Flatten each ball, 1 at a time, and roll into a 6-inch round. Place each round in a single layer on a lightly oiled pizza pan sprinkled with a pinch or two of cornmeal. Pat out dough evenly with your fingers and stretch into a 14-inch round, re-flouring fingers if necessary.
6. Brush crust lightly with olive oil, sprinkle with a little parmesan cheese and bake for 3 minutes. Remove and cool for a minute before adding sauce and toppings.
7. Bake in middle of oven for 12-15 minutes Bake until dough is crisp and browned and cheese is golden and bubbling in spots. Let cool for 5 minutes before slicing.

Quick & Easy Pizza Sauce~~~~~

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups crushed tomatoes or tomato puree
- 1 TBSP tomato paste
- 2 large garlic cloves, smashed
- 2 TBSPs olive oil



- 4 basil leaves plus more for sprinkling
- 1 tsp oregano
- 1/4 tsp sugar



PREPARATION

1. Cook garlic in oil in a small heavy saucepan over medium-low heat until fragrant and pale golden, about 2 minutes.
2. Add tomato puree and paste, basil, oregano, sugar, and a pinch of salt.
3. Stir and simmer on low heat, uncovered. Stir occasionally, until the sauce has thickened a bit and reduced, about 20-30 minutes.
4. Taste and season if needed. Cool before putting on pizza crust.