



MACARONI CHEESE LASAGNE

Ingredients

2 tbsp olive oil
400g lean beef mince
50g smoked pancetta, chopped
or use smoked bacon lardons
½ onion, ½ celery stick, ½ carrot, finely
chopped
1 garlic clove, crushed
150ml red wine
1 tbsp tomato purée
400g can chopped tomatoes
250ml beef stock
2 bay leaves
1 rosemary sprig
1 tsp sugar
400g macaroni or any tube pasta
80g grated mozzarella

For the cheese sauce

50g butter
50g plain flour
2 tsp English or Dijon mustard
800ml semi-skimmed milk
small grating of nutmeg
100g grated parmesan
100g mature cheddar, grated

Method

Brown the mince and pancetta in half the oil. Transfer to a bowl with a slotted spoon and set aside.

Fry the onion, celery and carrot in the remainder of the oil for 10 mins until just softened. Add the garlic and cook for 1 min more, then return the meat to the pan. Tip in the wine, bring to a simmer and cook until the mixture is reduced by half. Stir in the tomato purée, tomatoes, stock, bay, rosemary and sugar. Simmer, covered, for 30 mins, then remove the lid and simmer uncovered for another 10 mins until reduced.

Meanwhile, make the cheese sauce. Melt the butter in a saucepan until foaming, then stir in the flour and cook for 2 mins. Stir in the mustard, then remove from the heat and gradually whisk in the milk in small additions. Return the pan to the heat and simmer for 5-6 mins, whisking continuously until thick and smooth. Add the nutmeg, parmesan and 80g of the cheddar, then season to taste.

Heat the oven to 200C/180C fan and cook the macaroni in a large pan of boiling water for 5 mins. Drain, then stir into the cheese sauce. Spread the ragu into the base of a large rectangular baking dish, then spoon over the mac 'n' cheese and gently spread out using the back of a spoon to cover the ragu. Top with the remaining cheddar and the mozzarella, and bake for 25-30 mins until golden and bubbling. Leave to rest for 5 mins and serve.

A lovely winter warmer for the darker nights!