Four-Cheese Baked Mac and Cheese

Make-ahead · Serves a crowd · Serves 8–10

Ken's note: TBD

Ingredients

- 1 lb dried pasta (elbows, shells, or cavatappi)
- 4 Tbsp unsalted butter
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 Tbsp all-purpose flour
- 1¼ cups whole milk
- 1¼ cups heavy cream
- A pinch of cayenne
- A pinch of paprika
- 9 oz sharp cheddar, grated
- 9 oz Red Leicester, grated
- 7 oz Gruyère, grated
- 10 oz low-moisture mozzarella, grated, plus extra, cubed, for layering
- Black pepper
- Salt
- Chopped chives, for serving (optional)

Method

1. Heat the oven to 350°F and butter a 9×13-inch dish. Set aside about a quarter of the grated cheeses for the top. Cook the pasta in salted water until just al dente; reserve 1 cup of the pasta water and drain.
2. Melt the butter, cook the garlic a minute, then stir in the flour. Whisk in the milk, then the cream, and cook until it thickens slightly. Add the cayenne, paprika, and pepper. Stir in a splash of the pasta water, then the grated cheeses (except the reserved topping and the mozzarella cubes) until smooth.
3. Toss the pasta with the sauce. Spread half in the dish, scatter the mozzarella cubes, then add the rest of the pasta and the reserved grated cheese. Bake 15 minutes, then broil about 4 minutes, until the top is golden. Rest 15 minutes before serving. Taste and salt at the table if it needs it — the cheeses are already salty. Garnish with chives if you like.