



Mac & Cheese with a twist

*From Chef
Charlie Hodson*

Charlie Hodson is one of Norfolk's biggest characters, and over the past years he has worn many hats within the region's culinary and charitable channels with great aplomb. There's excitement around his latest venture, Hodson & Co "By Appointment Only", within the heart of the award winning market town of Aylsham in Norfolk.

See recipe overleaf.



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Preparation time 15 mins • Cooking time 30 mins • Serves 4

Ingredients:

375g Spirali pasta

50g butter

50g flour

175g mature Cheddar cheese

700ml fresh whole milk

50g grated Parmesan cheese

Smoked streaky bacon – two slices cut into lardons (thin strips)

Salt & Pepper – twist of each



Method:

1. Pre-heat the oven to 180c or Gas Mark 4.
2. Cook the spirali pasta (that's the twist) for 9–11 minutes in boiling water with a drop of rapeseed oil and a twist of salt and pepper. When cooked, drain and rinse in cold water and set aside.
3. Make a simple roux. Melt the butter in a medium sized pan, and when the butter is foaming, add the flour and cook while stirring with a spoon until its smooth.
4. Slowly add the milk to the roux mix, stirring thoroughly, until it leaves a super smooth texture on the back of the spoon.
5. Remove the sauce from the stove and slowly bind in the grated cheese and then set aside.
6. Place a frying pan on a medium heat, add the bacon lardons to the dry hot pan. Fry until golden but not crispy.
7. Place the pasta into a mixing bowl and add the cheese sauce and bacon, making sure that all the pasta is coated in the mix.
8. Spoon into an oven proof dish and sprinkle with parmesan.
9. Bake for 15–20 minutes in the oven.

Vegetarian/Vegan options:

For the milk equivalent – substitute with soya or oat milk.

For the roux, instead of butter, use pure dairy free sunflower or Olivio depending on what you have available.

Cheddar cheese and parmesan can be substituted with vegan cheese.