



Älplermagronen

(Swiss Alpine Macaroni and Cheese)

Serves 10 (or 16 depending on the plate size)

Ingredients

- Bacon Lardons (Optional)
 - 200g slices thick-cut bacon cut into 5mm wide strips
- Caramelized Onions
 - 75g unsalted butter
 - 750g onions, sliced lyonnaise
 - Kosher salt
- Applesauce
 - 500g apples peeled, and diced Granny Smith
 - Water as needed
- Macaroni
 - 3kg potatoes peeled and diced 7mm dice
 - 2kg elbow pasta
 - 500ml cream (18-22%)
 - 500g grated Appenzeller or Gruyère cheese (or other mature Swiss Alpine cheese)
 - Kosher salt and freshly grated nutmeg



Instructions

For the bacon lardons (optional)

Add the bacon strips to a cold frying pan and turn on the heat to medium heat. Cook lardons, stirring regularly, until the fat renders and the bacon is browned and crispy, about 8 to 10 minutes. Remove lardons with a slotted spoon and drain on a paper towel-lined plate.

For the caramelized onions

In a frying pan over medium-low heat melt the butter. Alternatively cook the onions in 2 tablespoons bacon fat if you are cooking bacon lardons for the garnish (just use the same frying pan and remove all but 2 tablespoons of the fat from the pan). Add the onions, season with salt, and cook, stirring regularly until soft and golden, about 30 minutes. Set aside.

For the applesauce

Place the apples in a saucepan and add water just to stop the apples colouring, and cover with a cartouche. Simmer gently until the apple are completely tender, about 20 minutes. Mash with a fork until smooth. Set aside.

For the macaroni

Add the diced potatoes to a large pan of cold water add salt to the ratio of 15g salt to every 1lt of water. Bring to the boil, and boil for 3 minutes before adding the macaroni and continue to cook until the macaroni is barely al dente, and the potatoes are tender, about 7 to 8 minutes. Drain the macaroni and potatoes. Return to the drained macaroni and potatoes to the pot, add the cream and return to medium heat. Stir until the cream starts to heat up (a minute or so) and then add the grated cheese, a little salt, and a bit of freshly grated nutmeg. Keep stirring until the cheese has melted into a thick sauce. Serve the cheesy Alpine macaroni on individual plates topped with caramelized onions, crispy bacon lardons (optional), and applesauce on the side.