

# Mac and Cheese with Asparagus and Peas

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## **Servings: 4**

*Kosher salt*

*2 slices thick-cut bacon,  
chopped*

*2 scallions, sliced*

*2 tablespoons all-purpose  
flour*

*2 cups whole milk*

*1/2 teaspoon mustard  
powder*

*freshly ground pepper*

*8 ounces (2 cups) small  
pasta shells*

*1/2 pound thin asparagus,  
trimmed and cut into one-  
inch pieces*

*2 ounces cream cheese*

*1/4 cup grated Parmesan  
cheese*

*1 1/2 cups shredded  
Monterey Jack cheese*

*3/4 cup frozen peas, thawed*

Bring a pot of salted water to a boil. Cook the bacon in a Dutch oven over medium-high heat, stirring, until crisp, 3 to 4 minutes. Remove the bacon with a slotted spoon to a paper towel-lined plate.

Add the scallions to the Dutch oven (reserve one cup of the dark scallion greens for topping). Cook over medium heat until softened, about 1 minute. Add the flour and whisk until toasted, 1 minute. Slowly whisk in the milk. Whisk in the mustard powder, 1/2 teaspoon of salt and a few grinds of pepper. Bring to a boil. Reduce the heat. Simmer, whisking occasionally, until the sauce is thickened and smooth, about 5 minutes.

Meanwhile, add the pasta to the boiling water. Cook as the label directs for al dente, adding the asparagus to the pot in the last minute of cooking. Drain, reserving one cup of the cooking water.

Whisk the cream cheese into the sauce until smooth. Reduce the heat to low and add the Parmesan and Jack cheese, a little at a time, until fully melted. Remove from the heat if the pasta is not done yet.

Stir the pasta, asparagus and peas into the sauce. Season with salt and pepper. Thin with the reserved cooking water, if needed (the sauce will thicken as it sits).

Divide among bowls. Top with the bacon and reserved scallion greens.

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Per Serving (excluding unknown items): 344 Calories; 24g Fat (61.4% calories from fat); 20g Protein; 14g Carbohydrate; 2g Dietary Fiber; 74mg Cholesterol; 454mg Sodium. Exchanges: 1/2 Grain(Starch); 2 Lean Meat; 0 Vegetable; 1/2 Non-Fat Milk; 3 1/2 Fat.