

# Fabulous Food

## Retro-Style Easy Mac And Cheese Makes A Comeback

(NAPSA)—Whether you long for the instant blue-box variety or the gourmet macaroni and cheese offered at many trendy restaurants today, one thing's for sure—mac and cheese is back and here to stay.

This recipe for Easy Mac and Jack offers gourmet flavors with blue-box prep time, featuring two kinds of flavorful California cheese.

In this version of the ultimate comfort food, California Pepper Jack and Colby Jack melt together perfectly for a creamy sauce with a bit of a bite.

To add color and extra spice, sprinkle with crushed red pepper flakes. Simply adjust the amount depending on the kick you're craving. For a golden texture, top with crushed seasoned croutons.

This recipe calls for simple staples such as pre-shredded cheese, milk, butter and flour, making it easy to prepare and get on the table in under an hour, requiring only 15 minutes of prep and 30 minutes to bake.

You can make this retro favorite ahead of time and refrigerate. Just remember to let it warm to room temperature before placing it in the oven. For an easy weeknight dinner, add chunks of ham or chicken and serve with a light green salad or make it as a side dish for your next family get-together.

According to the California Milk Advisory Board, Monterey Jack is a California original cheese and just one of the more than 250 different varieties and styles available in the Golden State.

California is the nation's leading milk producer and also produces more butter, ice cream,



**Two types of California Monterey Jack and crushed red pepper flakes add a tasty kick to this easy dish, ready in under an hour.**

yogurt and nonfat dry milk than any other state.

The state is also a leading producer of cheese and home to more than 50 cheesemakers. For more recipe ideas, visit [www.RealCaliforniaMilk.com](http://www.RealCaliforniaMilk.com).

### **Easy Mac and Jack**

*Yield: 8 servings*

*Prep time: 15 minutes*

- 8 ounces elbow macaroni, cooked and drained**
- 2 tablespoons butter**
- 2 tablespoons flour**
- 2½ cups milk**
- 2 cups shredded California Colby Jack cheese**
- 2 cups shredded California Pepper Jack cheese**
- 1 teaspoon salt**
- ¼ teaspoon pepper**
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard**

**Crushed red pepper flakes to taste**  
**2 cups crushed seasoned croutons**

**1. Preheat oven to 350°F. In a medium saucepan, melt butter. Stir in flour and cook, stirring for 1 minute.**

**2. Stir in the milk and bring to a gentle boil. Remove from heat and add shredded cheeses one cup at a time until completely melted.**

**3. Add salt, pepper, mustard and red pepper flakes and stir until smooth. Stir in cooked pasta and coat evenly with cheese, then pour into shallow 2-quart baking dish.**

**4. Sprinkle crushed croutons over top and bake for 30 minutes. Let stand 15 minutes before serving.**