

Bacon Jalapeno Mac & Cheese

- 8 ounces pasta
- 1/2 lb. bacon
- 1 or 2 jalapenos, diced
- 3 Tablespoons butter
- 1/3 cup flour
- 3 cups half/half
- 2 cups cheddar cheese, shredded
- 1 cup pepper jack cheese, shredded
- 1 cup Mozzarella cheese, shredded
- 1 teaspoon pepper, or to taste
- 1 teaspoon salt, or to taste



Panko topping

- 3/4 cup Panko bread crumbs
 - 1/4 cup shredded Parmesan
 - 3 Tablespoons butter
1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
 2. Cook pasta two minutes under al dente.
 3. Stir together topping ingredients and set aside.
 4. Chop bacon into small pieces and cook until crispy. Drain on paper towels.
 5. In the same skillet, drain all but three tablespoons of bacon fat. Add butter, diced jalapenos and cook a minute or two until soft. Add flour and whisk together about 30 seconds to cook flour. Reduce heat, add half/half and whisk until smooth, without clumps.
 6. Turn off heat, add cheeses and bacon and whisk until combined. Add cooked pasta, salt and pepper to taste to the cheese sauce.
 7. Pour mixture into baking dish, or leave in leave in cast iron skillet to bake if it fits.
 8. Bake for 20 minutes until top is golden.