

## Cauliflower Mac and Cheese

sweetbynurture.com

Serves 6

Adapted from epicurious.com

### Ingredients:

1 1/2lb. head of cauliflower  
1 ½ tablespoons olive oil  
½ teaspoon sea salt  
¼ cup unsalted butter (1/2 stick)  
5 tablespoons all-purpose flour  
1 cup milk  
3/4 cup crème fraiche  
2 scallions sliced on the diagonal (1/2 cup)  
2 medium tomatoes diced, or cherry tomatoes halved (1/2 cup)-optional  
3 cups grated cheese (I use a combination of sharp cheddar and gruyere)  
½ cups parmesan cheese- ¼ to add the sauce. ¼ for the breadcrumb topping  
3 ½ cups pasta -macaroni or penne  
1 tablespoon of unsalted butter  
1 cup breadcrumbs (not seasoned) I like panko

### Directions:

Preheat oven to 350°

Bring a large saucepan of salted water to a boil over high heat, add the pasta lower the heat just a bit and cook 2 minutes less than the packaged instructions (you want the noodles to be slightly underdone) drain in a colander, and rinse with cold water. Set aside to cool.

Cut off leaves of the cauliflower and break into florets. Break larger ones so that they are mostly all the same size. Toss with olive oil and salt and place on a parchment lined baking sheet. Bake for 20 minutes. You don't want them completely soft because they will be baked a second time. Place in a large bowl and toss with the pasta, scallions and diced tomatoes if using.

While the cauliflower is cooking make the cheese sauce. Measure out the butter, flour, milk, crème fraiche and both cheeses. In a medium sized saucepan melt the butter over low heat, add the flour and stir into a paste. Continue to stir over low heat for about 3 minutes. Slowly add the milk while whisking the lumps till the sauce is smooth. Continue to cook, stirring every couple of minutes for 7 to 8 minutes to thicken the sauce. Pull off the heat and add the crème

fraiche and the cheese. Whisk to combine. Place back on the heat and stir until ingredients have melted. Taste, the sauce should be cheesy and tangy. Add it to the cauliflower, pasta bowl and combine. Taste and season with salt and pepper. Spoon into a 9"x13" glass baking dish. Melt 1 tablespoon of butter in a sauté pan and toss in the breadcrumbs. Swirl around to coat the breadcrumbs and toast in the pan for about 1 minute, toss with the remaining ¼ cup of parmesan. Sprinkle the breadcrumb mixture over the entire dish. Bake for 35 minutes until bubbling.

You can make this 3 or 4 hours ahead-just leave it at room temperature. Make sure to preheat the oven to 350°