

HAWAIIAN SPAM MAC AND CHEESE

This is another riff on SPAM Mac and Cheese that I have been meaning to write up for a while. I think I got the idea from my love of SPAM Hawaiian pizza. It has a little bit of a sweet flavor, but not overpoweringly so. The sesame oil, soy sauce, and sugar is a new addition, but gives it a nice little subtle extra flavor.

INGREDIENTS

Qty.	Unit	Item
1	12 oz. can	SPAM (Original)
1	15 oz. can	Whole Yellow Corn
2	8 oz. can	Pineapple Chunks
1	7.3 oz. Box	Kraft Mac and Cheese (Original)
4	TBSP	Land O' Lakes Salted Butter
¼	Cup	Whole Milk
8	Oz.	Sargento Shredded Mozzarella Cheese
AR	-----	Plain Panko
1	TBSP	Sesame Seed Oil
1	TBSP	Soy Sauce
1/2	TBSP	White Sugar
AR	-----	Neutral oil with high smoke point (e.g. Grapeseed Oil)

Make sure you get pineapple “chunks”. None of the other cuts seem to work for me

The amount of salt in salted butter may vary widely between brands, so I specified the brand I normally use. One of these days I'll get around to specifying unsalted butter and salt overall mix to taste

Insert standard disclaimer about shredding your own cheese here. I almost always use Sargento brand shredded cheese and have been pretty happy with it, but any type of good quality shredded cheese will work. I think Mozzarella worked particularly well in this application, but feel free to swap it out for another cheese.

You should be able to find Panko in most grocery stores these days. If not, regular old plain bread crumbs should work.

SPECIAL TOOLS

- NONE!

PREPARATION

- 1) Drain the corn and pineapple through metal strainers into 1 qt. measuring cups
- 2) Cover the strainers with saucers and set aside
- 3) Heat cast iron pan to clean
- 4) Wipe out any gunk or old oil
- 5) Apply a light coating of fresh neutral, high temperature oil and reduce heat to mediumish
- 6) Dice SPAM
- 7) Fry SPAM in cast iron pan over mediumish heat, stirring occasionally, until nicely browned [i]
- 8) Slice the pineapple chunks into 4 slices, or as thin as possible
- 9) Reduce cast iron pan heat to low and stir in corn and pineapple chunks
- 10) Add the sesame seed oil, soy sauce, and sugar to a small jar with a tight lid and shake vigorously until all components are mixed
- 11) Stir the mix into the SPAM, pineapple, and corn mix
- 12) Cover and stir occasionally
- 13) Cook the blue box mac and cheese
 - a. Bring water to a boil
 - b. Add mac to the water and cook for 4 minutes [ii], stirring occasionally
 - c. Drain the mac in a colander
 - d. In the meantime, reduce the mac pot to low
 - e. Add the $\frac{1}{4}$ milk and 4 TBSP butter to the mac pot and heat until the butter melts, stirring occasionally
 - f. Stir in the cheese powder a little bit at a time until everything is well incorporated
 - g. Add mac back to pot and stir gently until all the noodles are coated
- 14) Slowly fold in the SPAM, pineapple, and corn into the mac and cheese a little bit at a time
- 15) Cover and heat on VERY LOW, stirring occasionally
- 16) Preheat your oven to 425 deg. F
- 17) Set timer for 30 minutes
- 18) When the 30 minute timer has expired, spread the SPAM mac and cheese into a 13 x 11 glass pan
- 19) Spread $\frac{2}{3}$ of the shredded cheese over the SPAM mac and cheese
- 20) Spread panko over the SPAM mac and cheese making sure to cover any exposed noodles
- 21) Spread the rest of the shredded cheese over the SPAM mac and cheese
- 22) Apply another coat of panko, once again making sure to cover any exposed noodles
- 23) Put the SPAM mac and cheese in the oven and cook until cheese is melted and panko is browned, about 15 minutes
- 24) Remove from oven and let cool for about 5-10 minutes
- 25) Plate
- 26) ENJOY!!!

NOTES

- i. If it seems like it is taking too long to brown the SPAM, bump up the heat a tad
- ii. The box recommends 7 minutes 30 seconds, but the mac and cheese will continue to cook in later steps. It is best to under cook it a little bit at this step so it does not overcook in the later steps

PICTURES























