

# DUNGENESS CRAB MAC AND CHEESE

SERVES 4

THIS IS A TRULY DECADENT DISH, but you won't want to save it for special occasions. Adding another Pacific Northwest flavor to our classic mac and cheese was easy; the base is a cheese sauce made from flavorful crab stock, and cauliflower balances the sweet crab flavor.

6 ounces penne	1/8 teaspoon chili powder
1/2 pound cooked lump crabmeat, preferably Dungeness, rinsed and drained (1 1/2 cups)	Dash of turmeric
5 tablespoons unsalted butter	2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1 cup roughly chopped cauliflower	1 1/2 cups Crab Stock (page 232)
1 ear fresh corn, kernels removed, or 2/3 cup frozen corn kernels	1 tablespoon pale dry sherry
3 tablespoons roughly chopped celery (about 1 rib)	1/2 teaspoon chopped fresh tarragon
1/4 teaspoon kosher salt	1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 teaspoon capers, drained	6 ounces semihard cheese (page 23), shredded (1 1/4 cups)
Dash of cayenne pepper	1 ounce hard cheese (page 23), chopped (3 tablespoons)
	3 tablespoons fresh bread crumbs

Heat oven to 375°F. Lightly oil an 8-inch baking dish.

Cook the penne 2 minutes less than package directions. (It will finish cooking in the oven.) Rinse the pasta in cold water and set aside.

Put the crabmeat in a large bowl and pick through it with your hands, removing any pieces of shell.

In a large skillet over medium-high heat, melt 1 tablespoon of the butter. Add the cauliflower and cook for 1 minute without stirring. The cauliflower will just begin to brown on the bottom. Flip the cauliflower, add the corn, celery, and salt, and sauté for another minute. Transfer the vegetables to a small bowl.

In the same pan over medium-high heat, melt 1 tablespoon of the butter. Add the capers and sauté until they are brown, about 1 minute. Remove the pan from the heat and add the cayenne, chili powder, and turmeric. Stir to combine. Gently fold in the crabmeat until it is fully coated. Transfer to a small bowl and set aside.

In the same skillet, melt the remaining 3 tablespoons butter over medium heat. Whisk in the flour to create a roux. Cook for 2 minutes, stirring constantly, and then slowly whisk in the stock. Continue whisking until fully combined, about 30 seconds. Add the sherry, tarragon, and pepper and stir. Remove from the heat and stir in the semihard cheese until it is completely melted, about 30 seconds. Mix in the pasta, vegetables, and the hard cheese.