Emeril Lagasse’s Better Than Mama's Chili Mac

* **Yield:** 6 to 8 servings
* **Use** 1 9 X 13 casserole or cut recipe in half to use an 8 X 8 dish.

Ingredients:

* 2 teaspoons olive oil
* 2 medium onions small diced, about 3 cups
* 2 jalapenos, stemmed and minced, optional
* 1 tablespoon salt, plus more for pasta cooking water
* 2 pounds extra lean ground beef Note: You may use ground turkey or ½ turkey and ½ beef.
* 5 tablespoons Mexican chili powder
* 1 tablespoon oregano
* 2 tablespoons minced garlic
* 1 (28 ounce) can whole plum tomatoes, broken with your hands, with juices
* 2 cans kidney beans, drained
* 1 pound elbow macaroni
* 1 pound medium cheddar cheese

Directions

* Heat olive oil over medium-high heat in a 6-quart soup pot. Add onions, jalapenos (if desired), and 2 teaspoons of the salt and cook until soft, 2 minutes. Add ground beef, chili powder, oregano, and garlic and cook, breaking up any clumps of meat with a spoon, for 5 minutes. Add tomatoes, beans, and 1/2 cup of water, stir, and bring chili to a boil. Reduce heat to a simmer and cook until thickened to chili consistency, about 20 minutes. Taste and add 1 more teaspoon salt, if needed.
* While the chili is simmering, cook macaroni according to package directions in boiling salted water, drain in a colander, rinse under cool running water and set aside.
* Grate cheddar cheese and set aside.
* Spray a 9 x 13.5-inch or other 3-quart casserole dish.
* Once chili has finished cooking, fold in the cooked macaroni and 1/3 of the cheddar cheese. Transfer chili-mac to the baking dish and top with remaining cheese.
* Wrap and freeze.
* To bake: Defrost in refrigerator overnight. Bake in a preheated 400º oven until heated through and cheese is melted, 10 – 20 minutes. Remove from oven and let cool 5 minutes before serving.

Label:

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**Better Than Mama's Chili Mac**

**Ingredients: olive oil, onions, salt, ground beef or ground turkey, chili powder, oregano, garlic, tomatoes, kidney beans, elbow macaroni. cheddar cheese.**

**To bake: Defrost in refrigerator overnight. Bake in a preheated 400º oven until heated through and cheese is melted, 10 – 20 minutes. Put a sheet pan beneath in case the cheese overflows. Remove from oven and let cool 5 minutes before serving.**

February, 2016