



## **Melt: The Art of Macaroni and Cheese**

*Stephanie Stiavetti , Garrett McCord , Michael Ruhlman (Foreword)*

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**A cookbook that reinvents the American classic, macaroni and cheese, with gourmet ingredients, handcrafted artisan cheeses, and unique flavor combinations.**

MELT: THE ART OF MACARONI AND CHEESE is the first book to marry the American standard, macaroni and cheese, with handcrafted artisan cheeses and a wide array of pastas, producing dishes that are both classic and chic. Home cooks of all levels will be encouraged to incorporate fresh, simple ingredients into the everyday comfort food they know and love. Featuring such unexpected and delicious combinations as Beecher's Flagship Cheddar with Avocado, Lime, and Shell Pasta; Drunken Goat, Fennel, Edamame, Mint, and Rotini; and Pumpkin Stuffed with Fontina, Italian Sausage, and Macaroni, MELT takes mac and cheese out of the box and elevates it to a level that will delight even the most sophisticated palates.

With gorgeous color photography throughout, MELT is a compendium of inventive recipes that will add a fresh twist to the family dinner or play a starring role at your next dinner party.

## Melt: The Art of Macaroni and Cheese Details

Date : Published October 22nd 2013 by Little, Brown and Company (first published October 1st 2013)

ISBN : 9780316213370

Author : Stephanie Stiavetti , Garrett McCord , Michael Ruhlman (Foreword)

Format : Hardcover 224 pages

Genre : Food and Drink, Cookbooks, Cooking, Food, Nonfiction, Reference

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## **From Reader Review Melt: The Art of Macaroni and Cheese for online ebook**

### **Pattie Tierney says**

If one could acquire a degree in the art of making macaroni and cheese (yes, that's right, I said art), one would need to purchase and devour (if you'll pardon the pun) the new book by Stephanie Stiavetti and Garrett McCord, *Melt: The Art of Macaroni and Cheese*. In this valuable tome, no stone is left unturned when it comes to learning about this American favorite, from the pasta base, the process of making the cheese, the wide varieties, those best suited for combining with pasta, helpful wine pairings, and some of the most unique mac and cheese recipes that I have ever encountered along with mouthwatering photographs of these novel dishes. Consider if you will, Roquefort Macaroni with Beets, Shallots, and Poppy Seeds; Drunken Goat with Edamame, Fennel, and Rotini; Soba Noodles with Parmesan and Pan-Seared Brussels Sprouts, to name a few.

It is pretty to look at, informative, and unique. At first glance, it is overwhelming. Many of the pastas and cheeses (a good many of them only regionally available) are a bit obscure and not easily obtained by the average cook. Even in a city such as mine with a thriving Italian neighborhood and numerous Italian specialty markets, I was unable to find some of the pastas. A good many cheeses are unfamiliar as well, although a list of suggested substitutions appear at the end of each recipe, but even with various options I often came up empty. Many of the combinations are a bit odd, the addition of various fruits in pasta salads spring immediately to mind, as does a baked mac and cheese dish topped with raspberry jam. But it is a book such as this one that encourages the experimentation that allows us to reap the greatest rewards in our culinary endeavors. Fruit in pasta salad is good! It lightens, refreshes, and provides a hint of sweetness that brightens the dish.

The recipes are written in a form that is conversational. Something new can be learned in reading each one. If you thought that you knew macaroni and cheese, think again. But the value of a book such as this one is in its simplicity. Sandwiched in between some of the wilder concoctions are recipes for Tuna Noodle Casserole, a velvety Mornay Sauce that is spot on, a hearty Chicken Sausage Skillet casserole, a post-Thanksgiving charmer called Turkey and Robusto Mac and Cheeselets (individual pasta tarts baked in a muffin tin), and a soul soothing Gruyere and Emmentaler Macaroni with Ham and Cubed Sourdough. The recipe for Buffalo Chicken Macaroni with Buttermilk Bleu Cheese Sauce had my mouth watering; I'll be serving this for Super Bowl.

The appendices at the end of the book are ample and informative. Detailed information on both pasta and cheese will answer almost any question that may arise during reading. While I tried to be as authentic as possible when testing the recipes, it was good to know that when I couldn't find Gemelli that fusili would do. Still have a question? A website has been created to accompany the book. You can find it at:  
<http://meltmacaroni.com>

Disclaimer: I received a digital copy of this book, prior to its publication, from NetGalley. The opinions expressed in this review are my own.

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## **Kimberly Moore says**

This is not your Grandmom's Mac and Cheese! Stephanie and Garrett give ingeniously delicious spins on traditional favorites AND blow our minds with new combinations - Lincolnshire Poacher with Cotija, Chorizo and Penne!! Kokos and Banana Fried Wontons with Caramel Sauce!! I made the Gruyere and Emmentaler Macaroni with Black Forest Ham and Sour Dough Bread Cubes - the recipe was just right and the results were outstanding. Melt is on my gifts to give list this Christmas and some of these recipes will be appearing on our holiday table. Excellent!

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## **Rachel Neumeier says**

Okay, first, no question about it, this is a beautiful book, and beautifully designed. There's an inviting paragraph or two about every recipe, and plenty of pretty pictures, so you could find yourself kind of inclined to try this one . . . and then this one . . . well, fine, winter is a good time for pasta dishes, right?

Sections are sensibly arranged, with one on pasta salads, then dishes made completely on the stovetop, then baked dishes — like that. Paneer, pineapple, and cucumber pasta salad? Sounds good, but definitely not for December. But here's a stovetop dish with scallions and artichoke hearts; that sounds really good. And a cauliflower and gruyere macaroni gratin sounds inviting, too.

Now, you should keep in mind, this is all about gourmet mac 'n' cheese. Some of the ingredients are definitely not in my mother's kitchen. Or even mine. I do have truffle oil. But I had NO IDEA there was such a thing as chocolate pasta. Who thought of that one, I wonder? Come on, tell me you're not tempted to find some. I bet you can order it online.

There's an extensive explanation of types of cheeses, as you'd expect for a book this specialized. I have to say, wow, there are a lot of specialized artisanal cheeses out there, and they are very, very pricy compared to normal supermarket cheeses. Stivetti and McCord use them freely and give references so that you could track them down, and I did some looking, and wow. Lots of them are in the \$35 per pound range. I may try one or two of those . . . sometime . . . as a special treat.

This cookbook is definitely geared toward the urban gourmet foodie crowd. People who are tempted by radicchio and edamame and Brussels sprouts as well as chocolate pasta and cheeses with names like "Honey Bzzz". I'm kind of a foodie, and actually I am dying to try a cheese called "Honey Bzzz". But frankly I'm not even sure where to get edamame and . . . well, I'm sure radicchio is tasty, if you, you know, develop a taste for it.

What proportion of recipes in this book would normal people find tempting? Normal people who do cook, but who can't afford \$35 a pound for cheese, plus shipping because they don't happen to live in an urban area?

I'm guessing the answer to that is about 50%, maybe even more, but you have to be willing to take the recipes down a notch. Thankfully, Stivetti and McCord do offer suggestions in each recipe for more normal cheeses along with the artisanal varieties. And lots of the recipes do feel approachable. Chili-Mac with Smoked Cheddar? Who wouldn't like that, especially in the winter?

Anyway, I certainly tried out some of the recipes with ordinary cheeses. This, among other things, led to my discovering that I really like gruyere (I sort of thought I remembered hating it, but that must have been some other cheese. Or a past self with different tastes.)

So, for example, I tried Montgomery Cheddar Macaroni with Baked Apples. I used 20 oz of ordinary cheddar, the sharpest I could find in the store, and, as directed, 6 oz of gruyere. This was — you can probably see this coming — very, very rich. The apples were totally necessary to cut the richness of the macaroni and cheese and even there, I definitely would suggest small servings.

And I know I made something with gouda. Oh, right, it was this stovetop mac 'n' cheese with gouda, golden raisins, and pine nuts. Yeah, I remember that, all right: I burned the pine nuts and was really mad and threw them out and used walnuts. I don't know why I was so mad, I like walnuts better anyway. But it was good. Of course, I already knew I liked gouda, and I do like golden raisins in things like this, usually. Again, small servings, here.

But for me so far? The clear winner so far is the Rogue River Blue with Crab Sauce over Fettuccine. I used ordinary gorgonzola, not to mention tweaking the recipe pretty severely because I was out of this and that, but still, it was REALLY good. I will definitely be making it again, preferably after I renew my supply of smoked paprika.

Okay, one more note: the authors did send me a copy of this book. No quid pro quos were suggested, but obviously they hoped for a review. So, here. It was a pleasure to read and cook from.

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## Caitlin says

I was attracted to *Melt: The Art of Macaroni and Cheese* by both the title and the great cover photo. Who doesn't like Mac and Cheese? Who doesn't want to find new ways to combine pasta and cheese? In this regard, the cookbook does not disappoint. There is a broad range of recipes for everything from pasta salads to stovetop dishes to baked casseroles to dessert and on and on. The recipes are clear and well-written, the photography is outstanding - there is lots to like here.

*Melt* is also full of good information about making different kinds of cheese sauces and about many different kinds of cheese, particularly artisanal cheeses. This is a great primer for those who aren't as addicted to food porn as some of us are (I've been reading cookbooks since I was 8 or 9 sitting on the floor watching my father cook or my mother bake bread). This is a fun read and the recipe for tuna noodle casserole turned out really nicely, although the next time I make it I'll be reducing the amount of bread crumbs dramatically.

This is the first time that I've cooked from a recipe on my Kindle and I have to admit that I much prefer printed matter for this task. I need bigger real estate for my recipes - it sucks having to page back and forth endlessly to get the information you need. I also think cookbooks should bear evidence of use - those spots and stains that let you know someone really used the book and what recipes they cooked. Old-fashioned, but there you have it.

My one quibble with *Melt* is the focus on artisanal cheeses. In many ways the book reads a bit like a brand-name advertising cookbook with its shout-outs to various brands of artisanal cheese. The authors do offer suggestions for alternative cheeses, although these are also sometimes difficult to find. As a Bay Area

denizen I knew immediately that these writers are from here due to their assumption that these cheeses would be available anywhere. In the Bay Area (and Seattle and other West Coast places) we have many food products readily available at our fingertips that just aren't available in other places and it's really easy to forget the relative food privilege that we enjoy. It's easy to forget that for a lot of people in a lot of places the variety of this kind of ingredient is far less broad. Our plenty in these areas makes us a little tone deaf - I'm as guilty of that as the authors. Despite this quibble, this is a fun cookbook and you should be able to find substitutes with either the authors' suggestions or your own research. Lots of great ideas - do try.

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### **Liz De Coster says**

I requested this on a whim - rare is the person who wouldn't be lured in with the cover photo - and am surprisingly glad I did, as this book has some real strengths. Stivetti goes into great depth about cheese and pasta, making bechamel and mornay sauces, and how to select an appropriate combination and cooking style. There was a surprising diversity of "styles", ranging from the casserole-style mac & cheese I crave to fried mac & cheese bites and mac & cheese rolls. Some of the recipes, especially the "sweet" ones, push the idea a little bit far for me, but certainly there's enough here to tempt most readers.

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### **Online Eccentric Librarian says**

*More reviews (and no fluff) on the blog <http://surrealtalvi.wordpress.com/>*

Melt takes macaroni & Cheese and turns it into something else completely - I think a better title would be "Macaroni, Cheese, + other exotic stuff" since a lot of the recipes really aren't even about that great American comfort food staple. I find the cover image, which looks fairly traditional, a bit misleading for that reason.

The recipes are quite diverse and encompass a lot of different pastas and shapes. They are clearly designed to make use of each of the different types of pastas and cheeses. Each recipe has an introduction of its origins/roots and cooking/preparing it. The ingredient list is off to the side margin and easy to read. There are alternatives for several of the different ingredients (though they can be as hard to find as the original). Two of my favorites were the pumpkin stuffed with Fontina, Italian Sausage, and Macaroni and the every faithful Tuna Noodle Casserole (one of the few traditional recipes)

The book is very educational as well - providing information from all kinds of pasta and cheese topics - from the pasta types, cooking, choosing cheese, to yankee doodle dandy.

Some (ok most) of the recipes are quite esoteric. e.g., Yogurt Chicken Salad with Abbaye De Bel'loc. Or Petit Basque With Roasted Garlic, Shallots, and Gemlli. Or Brigante with Tilapia, Shallots, Springs Herbs, and Fusilli. When I could find the ingredients, the dishes were very interesting and unique. But a lot of the recipes had ingredient lists lasting half the page, as well so cooking many of these can be a labor of love.

This is definitely a cookbook for those who like to cook - rather than something for a busy working adult who needs to get decent food on the table for the kids every night. I spent 3 hours at a Whole Foods one

night just trying to get the exotic ingredients for two recipes.

I'm going to give this 4 out of 5 stars for several reasons. First - the images. They aren't really matched up to the recipes and several are just 'garnishes' and not really finished results. When you have a cookbook with exotic ingredients and very avant garde recipes, you really can't guess what the end result should look like - or how it should be served. I found that frustrating. As well - good luck getting a lot of key ingredients in these recipes unless you live in a major metropolitan center on the East or West Coasts.

Provided as an ARC from the publisher.

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### **Stephanie says**

An intriguing collection of recipes that include pasta and cheese, but might not all strictly be called macaroni and cheese.

This cookbook takes you through types of cheeses and pastas, how to choose them and their history before it delves into a broad range of recipes that range from exotic to home-style.

As a carb-junkie and macaroni and cheese fanatic, I can not wait to try the buffalo mozzarella caprese pasta salad, petit basque with roasted garlic, chili-mac with redwood hill smoked goat cheddar and roaring forties with honey-roasted delicata squash.

Also, some of these cheeses might be harder to find, but not to worry...alternative cheeses are listed.

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### **LaToya says**

Special thanks to NetGalley for the ARC!

I have to say, in the immortal words of Rachel Ray, "yum-o!!!" What's not to love about macaroni and cheese? When I saw an entire cookbook devoted to a variety of recipes from savory to sweet, I had to try them out. In addition to the tasty recipes, author Stephanie Stiavetti also includes a history of cheese, pasta, and cooking tools, along with basic sauce recipes, like mornay sauce. These are my favorite recipes from the cookbook: Buffalo Mozzarella Caprese Pasta Salad; Chocolate Pasta with Bucherondin, Hazelnuts, and Cherries; Toma Macaroni Egg Rolls with Spicy-Sweet Dipping Sauce; and the Paneer Korma with Idiyappam Noodles. All of these recipes were magnificent.

When this book comes out, I will be purchasing it. There are so many other dishes to try! I definitely recommend giving this book a try.

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## **Umer azaz says**

The first thing that gained my attention towards this book was the glazing and scrumptious book cover. Matt armendariz did an amazing job in snapping those delicious treats. A little history about what cheese is all about and how it can be formed in many different ways. From the beginning of cheese making till the unveiling of the final product , the whole process is overwhelming and insightful.

How to understand the piece of cheese you have got is part I enjoyed the most; sight , touch , smell and taste all senses works in their own to pick out the perfect cheese. Pasta type and textures have also been very informative.

Innovation with the mac and cheese has been so inspirational through out this book that I had to stop and think for a second that hey this could be the next food invention. It started with chocolated paste to Toma macaroni egg rolls, pasta frittata with mushrooms to chicken breast stuffed with star pasta, the list can go on and on and I could drool all over my kindle but all of those recipes stand in one line of exemplary taste.

Wine pairing, alternative cheese , special equipment and those organized instructions throughout the making of the dish is very helpful.

Appendices for cheese and their origins and pasta types are another touch to detailed writing and perfect describing.

If you are in any way a cheese lover you must check out the book and the book will make you the great chef in the world of macaroni and cheese.

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## **Soup says**

ARC provided by NetGalley.

An interesting little cookbook that takes liberties with the phrase ‘macaroni and cheese’ (more like ‘any dish in which cheese and pasta feature’) while exposing the reader to a wide variety of both not-so-common and highly uncommon cheeses. Readers outside of larger cities may have trouble tracking down certain cheeses, although the authors have taken the time to suggest alternatives (admittedly in some cases the alternatives may be just as hard to find). Caloric estimates are not provided which is a shame, although given all the dishes ultimately break down to carbs and cheese I suppose its just wishful thinking that any of the delectable renditions of an old favorite are actually ‘healthy’.

Although readers with moderate to advanced cooking skills will likely find these recipes easier to tackle, clear and concise instructions are given to the novice (or nervous) chef and should be sufficient to keep them on track. The pastas contained within could serve as either main courses or side dishes and more than a few should raise a few brows in surprise. Fans of cheese who don’t consider themselves big mac and cheese eaters should still consider this title – many of the recipes are so far removed from ‘mac and cheese’ that something is sure to still delight. There’s also quite a bit of interesting commentary on cheese types, cheese making, and the impact of the FDA on cheese availability in US (it turns out the FDA have been busily restricting Americans’ cheese eating options for years – who knew?!).



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## **Jilyn says**

Melt: The Art of Macaroni and Cheese is a cook book that specializes in various combinations of pasta and cheeses. The title is a bit misleading- this isn't just a collection of different American comfort food recipes. This book contains exotic and ethnic variations, including dishes from Greece, Mexico, and India.

This book is divided into sections: Always Refreshing, Stovetop Delights, Hearty & Satisfying, & On the Sweet Side. I really like this organization, because whether you want a filling casserole or a light summer pasta salad, you know what section to look in.

Though this cook book does not have a picture for every recipe, it does have quite a few, and the quality of these pictures is fantastic. If you didn't want to try these recipes just by reading their names and ingredients, the pictures will make you want to cook them immediately. For me, pictures are crucial for a good cook book, and Melt definitely has them.

Readers should take note that, as I mentioned above, this is definitely not just a comfort food book as the title suggests. There are a lot of gourmet dishes, with a lot of gourmet ingredients to match. Among them, there are a lot of name brand cheeses that are mentioned that might not be readily available to the average home cook. I personally live in a big city, so it wouldn't be too big of an issue, but not everyone lives so close to specialty shops.

That being said, the authors do try to remedy this by adding a list of acceptable substitute cheeses at the end of each recipe. Also at the end of each dish is a list of other flavors that work with the ingredients in the recipe, and a few wine pairing suggestions. I found that to be extremely helpful, because I have no idea how to pair wines (and I openly admit it!).

The instructions are clear and concise, and the authors include facts and tips for cooking/selecting both cheese and pastas alike.

Some of the dishes from this book that I'm the most excited to try are:

Chicken Breast Stuffed with Leonora Goat Cheese, Star Pasta, and Gingersnaps  
Cahill's Irish Porter Cheddar with Bacon and Stout  
& Pumpkin Stuffed with Fontina, Italian Sausage, and Macaroni

This is a cook book that I would definitely keep handy in my kitchen, despite the misleading title. There is a huge variety of ethnicities, ingredients, and cooking techniques at work here, and as an avid cheese aficionado I recommend this to cooks, cheese lovers, and pasta lovers alike.

Thanks to Netgalley and Little, Brown and Company for my copy. This review can also be found on my new blog, Bitches n Prose.

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## **Alex McGilvery says**

Melt is a cookbook that focuses on Macaroni and Cheese. At first it seems a little crazy to need an entire book to cook mac and cheese. Then you start reading the book and learning about the man

y different cheeses with the wide variety of flavours and textures. You learn about exotic pasta; things like squid ink pasta and chocolate fettuccine.

We tried the drunken goat with fennel salad which is very simple with just lemon juice and a dash of oli

ve oil for dressing. It was delightful. Next was a substitution as I couldn't find the garrotxa cheese from Spain and I used a manchego with the ham and sun-dried tomatoes in penne. This is when our eyes started rolling back in our heads at the flavours. The last one that we managed to find the cheese for was the beef stroganoff with moody blue. This was another dish that had different flavour exploding and blending in our mouths.

Unless you live near a very good cheese shop you are going to look at some dishes wistfully or try them with distant substitutions. Even though we live in Flin Flon, our local Co-op carries eno

ugh variety of cheese that we plan to try several more of these recipes. We also found some in our travels. You will be amazed that mac and cheese can run the gamut from salad to vegetable to meat to desert. This is an extraordinary book. While you are looking at recipes and the mouthwatering pictures that accompany them, you will also take a tou

r through the very broad world of cheese both goat and cow's milk.

I recommend Melt to anyone who loves cheese, or has an adventurous spirit.

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### **Sarah says**

YUM YUM YUM..... What a lovely recipe book. Comfort food at its finest.

ARC provided by NetGalley.

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### **Chris says**

One of my passions other than my family, books and movies is cooking. I love to cook, and the more difficult the recipe the more I want to challenge myself to make it. I also have learned how to fix a recipe if it is not as tasty as I think it should be. Enough with tooting my own horn. Cooking is relaxing for me. No matter how stressful a day at work might be I like coming home and putting together a nice meal for my family.

I have been a member of NetGalley for awhile now and gotten some amazing books to review. It never occurred to me to look through the cookbook section. When I saw this I thought "Who doesn't love Mac and Cheese?" I was very excited when I was approved for this title. There are a ton of recipes in this collection, but for the most part they are not at all what I was expecting. I was expecting twists on a classic favorite, there are a few recipes, but for the most part this is more of a pasta cook book. Pasta salads and soup are just a few recipes that I was not expecting.

As much as I love to cook I am a very picky eater, and there are some cheeses that make my stomach turn just at the mention of them. This being said I didn't find a recipe that I was willing to rush out and cook. I really wanted to have pictures of the finished product so I could show off my cooking skills.

What I did really like about this book was all the great information at the beginning. Before you get to all the recipes there are sections on cheeses, pastas, and even the best cooking tools to use in certain situations. I'm a little weird and I always like to know how things are made. The beginning of this is all about cheese and how it is made even on the microscopic level. I enjoyed reading the science that went into cheese making. There is a lot of information on cheese in this book which can be very helpful. How to buy cheeses, and the proper way to store cheese to maximize flavor was one I will keep with me.

Of course the same care has been taken with pasta. There is plenty information as to how to buy and store different types of pastas, and even why to choose premium dried pastas. Along with the pasta info there is a small section as to what tools you might need to make these recipes. The other big thing that I really liked about this book was that each recipe had alternate cheeses that you could use that would make the dish just as good. There are also wine and food pairings at the end of each recipe. I haven't found a recipe that I have been willing to try yet, but I like that I have options as to how to make it and what is recommended to serve with this dish.

Well for not making any of the recipes I really did have a lot to say about this book. I will give this a solid 3 out of 5 stars just for the useful info this book contains. I can easily use this as a cooking reference for future recipes. I also have not given up on thumbing through these recipes. I do like to change things to make them more appealing to me and my family so maybe I will make a few changes to some of these and find a new cheese/pasta favorite. I hope to feel adventurous one day and pull this back out and boldly go where no cheese has gone before. (I couldn't end this without at least one cheesy one liner) :-)

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## **Bert Edens says**

From my book review blog at:

<https://kickinbooks.wordpress.com/201...>

I received a copy of this book via NetGalley, with thanks to Little, Brown & Company for making it available. While I received this book at no cost to myself, I am under no obligation to provide a positive review.

That said, I love macaroni and cheese. The cover of this made me hungry, and I'd just eaten. How could I not like a book about macaroni and cheese when I already have an inclination toward loving such a book? Then again, maybe with high expectations, a book might not be able to meet them.

I must confess I wasn't sure what to expect with this book. While I've cooked some variations of macaroni and cheese, both stove top and as casseroles, I really couldn't fathom what else might be out there. I honestly expected a basic macaroni and cheese dish, followed by slight variations: different cheeses, different meats, maybe some vegetables, perhaps some panko or other breadcrumbs. Something like that, and that's all.

Boy, was I ever wrong. Try some of these recipes on for size:

- Buffalo Mozzarella Caprese Pasta Salad
- Paneer, Pineapple and Cucumber Pasta Salad
- Toma Macaroni Egg Rolls With Spicy-Sweet Dipping Sauce
- Szechuan-Style Udon With Piave And Radicchio
- Penne With Etorki Cream Sauce And Asparagus
- Pumpkin Stuffed With Fontina, Italian Sausage And Macaroni

Get the idea?

One thing I really like about the recipes is they are described in such a way as to identify why the various ingredients work together, and not just the pasta and cheese. Additionally, they will offer alternatives for the ingredients, especially if they include a hard-to-find cheese. The directions for the recipes are also very detailed, again, giving a lot of detail as to why each step should be performed the way it's described.

Another valuable asset of this book is its appendices, where various types of cheeses and pastas are described in detail, noting which ingredients, sauces, cheeses, etc., blend well with them and why.

Overall, I absolutely loved this book. It not only hit a home run with a universal comfort food, it has given me many ideas on how to adapt other recipes based on the ideas I learned here. I definitely am going to get a hardcopy of this book to add to my cookbook collection.

Rating: 5 stars (out of 5)

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