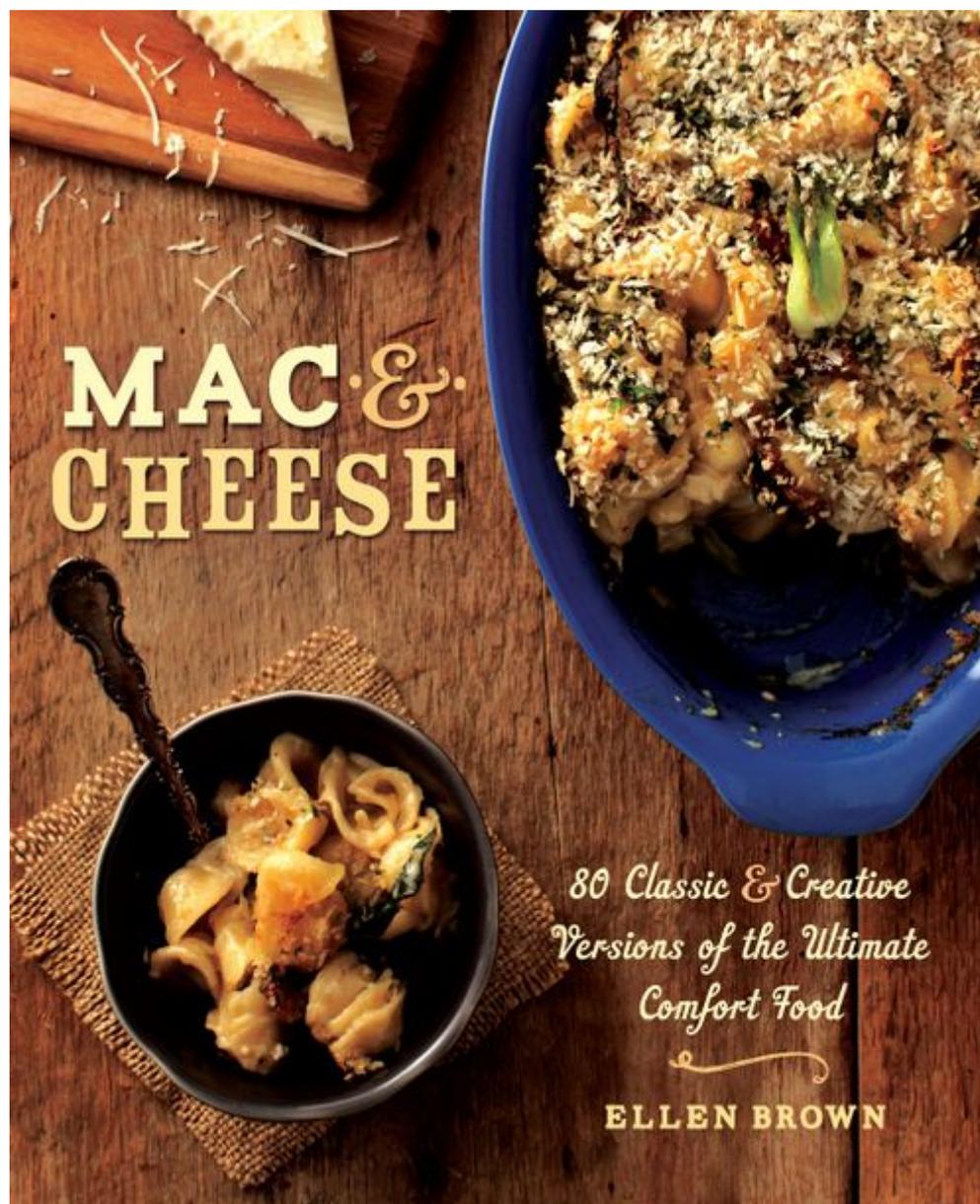


Cook the Book: 'Mac and Cheese'

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Fall is here, whether the temperature gauge shows it or not. There's a crispness in the wind, the leaves are turning crimson, and our appetites shift decisively towards belly-warming comfort foods, the crowning jewel of which (in my opinion) is macaroni and cheese. If you're skeptical, remember that mac and cheese can be so much more than simply a bowl of pasta coated in thick, gooey cheese sauce (even if that combo has its addictive merits). In her new cookbook, *Mac & Cheese: 80 Classic & Creative Versions of the Ultimate Comfort Food*, **Ellen Brown** delves into the myriad combinations and techniques possible when marrying cheese and pasta.

Brown offers everything from bite-sized finger foods to baked casseroles and even sweet, creamy desserts. Most of the recipes in the book are adapted from popular restaurant versions, and (indicated by the extreme detail in each recipe) have been exhaustively tested to work on a small scale in a home kitchen.

In addition to the recipes, Brown presents a tutorial in sauce-making, cheese selection, and pasta shapes at the beginning of the book so it's easy to adapt her recipes or invent your own with confidence. The only real drawback (besides gaining a couple extra cheese-pounds) is that most of the recipes require a veritable army of pots and pans. So be sure to have an empty dishwasher or a couple able extra hands to assist with the clean-up; there will be a big one.

This week, we'll be trying out five different techniques for mixing our mac. First, we'll start simple with a baked **Herbed Mac and Cheese** from [La Laiterie](#) in Providence and a saucy **Sweet Onion Mac and Cheese** from [The Coterie Room](#) in Seattle. Then we'll take things to the next level with **Skillet Fried Cheddar Mac and Cheese** from [Zingerman's Roadhouse](#) in Ann Arbor and take a Southern spin with **Mac and Cheese Souffle with Country Ham** from [Sweet Potatoes](#) in Winston-Salem. Finally, we'll top off the week with multidimensional **Mac and Greens** from [Red Rooster](#) in Harlem.

Win 'Mac & Cheese'

Thanks to the good folks at Running Press, we have five (5) copies of *Mac & Cheese* to give away this week. All you need to do is tell us about the best mac and cheese you've ever eaten in the comments below.