

GUAM STYLE TUNA MAC

My childhood memories of food seem to keep popping up! I remember eating tuna and macaroni salad with crackers. The pasta had to be soft enough that the crackers wouldn't break when you used it to scoop up some salad. Fast forward to about 2007 when a Chamorro family made this for us as well. So here I am, in 2020, cementing it into my life.

As the salad ages in the fridge, the pasta soaks up the moisture from the mayo so you may want to add a little bit more mayonnaise the next day.

I've been replacing soybean, vegetable, canola oils, etc., with better options. This recipe is delish with a good mayo, such as Duke mayonnaise. It's also yummy with Primal Kitchen's Real Mayonnaise made with Avocado Oil. The avocado mayo has more flavor than using Duke's. That said, if you use Primal Kitchen's avocado mayo, LEAVE THE SALT AND THE VINEGAR OUT; do a taste and texture test first then add a bit of salt if needed.

Also, if you use a different brand of avocado oil, it may not taste as good...

Double the recipe if you want to cook the whole 1-pound box of pasta.

Makes 6 cups of tuna mac.

INGREDIENTS

Set 1

½ tablespoon salt for the water

½ pound of macaroni pasta

Set 2

1 – 5 ounce can of tuna in water, drained well

1 ½ to 1 ¾ cups good quality mayonnaise

½ tablespoon ground black pepper

½ teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon distilled white vinegar

Tools: large pot, colander, large bowl, rubber spatula, potato masher

DIRECTIONS

Pour a ½ tablespoon salt into a large pot, fill halfway with water, and bring to a hard boil. Add pasta and boil until it is quite soft, but still holding its shape, 45 minutes. Once boiling, I keep the heat at medium. Stir often to prevent pasta from sticking to bottom of the pot. Add more hot water to the pot as needed because the pasta will absorb a good amount of water. I know it seems like a long time to cook pasta, but the macaroni needs to be very soft.

Drain in colander and run under cold water until the pasta is no longer warm. Keep in colander for 5 to 10 minutes then transfer to a large bowl.

Add the drained tuna, 1 cup of the mayo, black pepper, vinegar, and salt (if using avocado mayo, don't add salt and vinegar till later). Stir to combine well. Set the bowl in the fridge for 15 to 20 minutes, giving the pasta some time to absorb residual water.

Remove from fridge then add a ½ cup of mayo. Combine well. If you feel like you want it a touch creamier, add ¼ cup more mayo at a time. Once you're satisfied with the texture, taste the salad then add more salt and pepper, and maybe a sprinkle of vinegar.

Smash the tuna mac with a potato masher or a large spoon for a couple of minutes to break some of the pasta up.

Cover and fridge for several hours. Taste again before serving, adjusting seasoning as desired. Serve alongside Sky Flakes or Saltine crackers.

Recipe courtesy Paula Quinene of Paulaq.com.