

Macaroni au Gratin

3 cups heavy cream

1/2 pound of macaroni, cooked al dente and drained

1 cup shredded gruyere, divided

1 cup shredded Parmesan, divided

1 cup shredded white cheddar, divided

2 tablespoons cold butter

pinch of sea salt

cracked black pepper, to taste

SET a rack in the oven about 4 inches from the broiler, and preheat broiler.

In a large saute pan over medium-high heat, reduce cream by a fourth. Lower heat to medium. Stir in the macaroni and 3/4 cup each of the gruyere, Parmesan and white cheddar. Stir with a wooden spoon while tossing the contents of the pan in a sauteeing motion. Add butter and salt, and continue stirring until the butter is emulsified into the sauce.

TRANSFER mixture to a baking dish (see Note). Sprinkle the remaining 1/4 cup each of the gruyere, Parmesan and white cheddar over the top, distributing them evenly.

PLACE the dish under the broiler. Watch it carefully, as you will need to rotate the dish to create an even crust. This will take from 3 to 5 minutes, depending on the strength of your broiler.

REMOVE gratin from the oven and season with fresh cracked black pepper. Serve immediately.

Note: Chef Christensen suggests that if you wish to add any extra ingredients (such as roasted tomatoes or caramelized onions), they should be layered between the pasta and the cheese topping.

Makes 4 servings.