



SARA A. FAJARDO/ORLANDO SENTINEL

The divas are ready to pony up and go gunnin' for the good, the bacon and the Gorgonzola.

divas of dish

The perfect meal for high noon

By ANNE-MARIE HODGES and PAM BRANDON
SPECIAL TO THE SENTINEL

Forget the blue box and mosey on over to this diva version of a spaghetti western: creamy, dreamy mac and cheese spiked with bits of smoky bacon, caramelized onions, then topped with a bubbly crust of pungent Gorgonzola cheese.

Gorgonzola is veined Italian blue cheese made from cow's milk. Buttery and crumbly with a salty finish, it's the perfect compliment for mild-mannered macaroni bathed in made-from-scratch fontina cheese sauce.

Consider this your chuck wagon, gourmet comfort food to balance a day of roping and rough riding, because even cowgirls get the blues. Yeehaw!

Share your diva recipes and ideas with Anne-Marie Hodges and Pam Brandon through the blog OrlandoSentinel.com/thecookinggal or at culinaryconfessions.net. Send mail to Divas of Dish, MP-240, 633 N. Orange Ave., Orlando, FL 32801.

Even Cowgirls Get the Blues Mac and Cheese

Yield: 8-10 servings.

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| 1 pound bacon, chopped | 5 cups whole milk |
| 1 large sweet onion, chopped | ½ teaspoon each: salt and ground coriander |
| 2 teaspoons sugar | |
| Coarse salt and cracked black pepper to taste | 1 pound fontina cheese, grated |
| 6 tablespoons each: butter and flour | 1 pound elbow macaroni |
| | 1½ cups crumbled Gorgonzola cheese |

1. Heat oven to 350 F. In a large nonstick skillet, fry bacon until crisp. Drain on paper towels, reserving 2 tablespoons of bacon fat.
2. In same pan, add onions, sugar, salt and pepper. Cook on medium heat, stirring often until golden and caramelized, 15-20 minutes. Set aside.
3. Melt butter in a medium pan on medium heat. Add flour. Stir 2-3 minutes to combine. Add milk, salt and coriander. Bring to simmer, stirring often, until thickened. Add fontina cheese and stir until melted. Set aside.
4. Cook macaroni according to package directions. In 13-by-9 casserole dish, combine bacon, onions, cheese sauce and macaroni. Top with crumbled Gorgonzola. Bake 30 minutes.