

Road Test

# Macaroni and Cheese

WE TRIED EVERY BOX OUT THERE TO FIND THE ONES THAT RIVAL HOMEMADE.

By Grace Elkus



REAL SIMPLE  
ROAD TEST

**BEST SHELLS**
**365 Everyday Value Organic Deluxe Shells and Creamy Cheddar Sauce**

Thanks to a squeezable pouch of cheese sauce that gets stirred into the warm noodles, every single shell is coated in a decadently thick and creamy sauce—no clumps in sight.

**TO BUY:** \$4 for 12 oz.; at Whole Foods.

**BEST CLASSIC**
**Back to Nature Organic USDA Macaroni & Cheese**

This no-frills pick surprised us with its silky-smooth sauce and extra-long elbows. The short, organic ingredient list also gets a thumbs-up.

**TO BUY:** \$2.50 for 6 oz.; at grocery stores.

**BEST WHITE CHEDDAR**
**Kraft White Cheddar Macaroni & Cheese**

The mild white Cheddar flavor and the nostalgic elbow shape make this a winner for family dinners and dorm meals alike. Opt for whole milk and the suggested half stick of butter for an irresistibly gooey sauce.

**TO BUY:** \$1.25 for 7.3 oz.; at grocery stores.


**BEST GLUTEN-FREE LiveFree Gluten Free Deluxe Macaroni & Cheese**

White and brown rice noodles are smothered in a rich Cheddar sauce for a gluten-free option—we spooned up seconds.

**TO BUY:** \$2 for 12 oz.; at Aldi.

**BEST VEGAN**
**Annie's Organic Vegan Mac and Cheese, Cheddar Flavor**

Many vegan varieties have a distinct aftertaste. This one boasts the same comforting flavor as classic—sans dairy.

**TO BUY:** \$2.80 for 6 oz.; at grocery stores.

**BEST FROZEN**
**Trader Joe's Hatch Chile Mac & Cheese**

Roasted Hatch chiles and aged Cheddar make for a smoky, grown-up take. Unlike many frozen varieties, the noodles stayed al dente when heated.

**TO BUY:** \$3 for 12 oz.; at Trader Joe's.

For our best mac and cheese recipes, go to [realsimple.com/macaroni](http://realsimple.com/macaroni).