



Kitchen Cheat Sheet: Barbecue Macaroni Salad

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Tips and Extras

- Cook the pasta until it is tender, don't stop at a la dente. Trust me.
- Once that pasta is cooked and drained you are going to add the crunchy vegetables, the corn, and the black beans.
- The dressing is pretty spicy but you can adjust it by the ratio of spicy and sweet barbecue sauce that you use.
- Taste before serving and if the macaroni soaked up too much dressing just stir in a little more bbq sauce.
- Save time by buying the onions and peppers pre-diced.
- And, like most pasta salads, this is best if you make it the day before.
- If any kind of creamy macaroni salad has been at room temperature for 2 hours or more throw it out. It's not worth a trip to the ER.

Storage

You can store this delicious pasta salad in the refrigerator for about 4 days. Just cover the bowl with plastic wrap or place in an airtight container.

In fact, it's a great make-ahead dish since it's much better the day after it's made!

It doesn't freeze well so eat it up.

FAQs

Why is my pasta salad dry?

More than likely the pasta isn't cooked long enough. If the pasta is undercooked it will soak up more of the dressing, and your salad will be dry. Make a bit more of the bbq sauce and mayonnaise mixture and stir it in before serving.

Can I make this ahead of time?

Yes - it's even better the next day.

How long will pasta salad keep in the refrigerator?

BBQ pasta salad will keep 3 to 5 days in the fridge as long as it's covered with plastic wrap or in an airtight container.

Variations

- I like to use shell pasta for this recipe but any shaped pasta will work fine. Sometimes I use Texas shaped pasta but if you don't live here you probably aren't going to find it.
- Use your favorite bbq sauce.
- Stir in some fresh herbs like chopped cilantro.
- Chopped green onions are a nice garnish.
- Shred some sharp Cheddar cheese over the top.
- If you like more heat use jalapenos instead of poblanos.
- Use some candied jalapenos chopped up in it.
- Adding leftover chicken is a great way to make it a main dish.