

Creamy Chicken and Rice Skillet

Creamy Chicken and Rice Skillet is the kind of comfort food that makes dinner feel special without requiring hours in the kitchen. With juicy chicken breasts, fluffy rice, and a rich cream sauce, it's a one-pan recipe that balances convenience with flavor. Perfect for busy weeknights or casual gatherings, it combines hearty ingredients with simple steps. The result is a warm, filling dish that everyone will look forward to at the table.

Why This Chicken and Rice Skillet Works

Balanced Comfort Food

This dish has all the elements of a complete meal in one skillet. Chicken provides protein, rice gives substance, and cream makes the sauce luxuriously smooth. The seasoning of paprika, thyme, garlic, and onion enhances the flavor without overwhelming it. This balance creates a dish that's hearty yet comforting, perfect for feeding families or guests.

Easy Yet Impressive

Even though it uses common ingredients, this skillet feels impressive. It's done in under an hour and requires minimal cleanup. The creamy sauce and golden chicken look restaurant-worthy, while the rice soaks up flavor to make each bite satisfying. It's a simple recipe that delivers big results, proving that weeknight dinners don't need to be boring.

Creamy Cowboy Butter Chicken Linguine

Creamy Chicken and Rice Skillet

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- Author: [Aaron recipes](#)
- Total Time: [45 minutes](#)
- Yield: [4 servings 1x](#)

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Description

Creamy Chicken and Rice Skillet is a hearty one-pan meal with juicy chicken, fluffy rice, and a savory cream sauce. Perfect for weeknights or meal prep.

Ingredients

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Scale

- ☐ 4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts (about 1.5 lbs)
 - ☐ 1 cup uncooked rice
 - ☐ 2 cups chicken broth
 - ☐ 1 cup heavy cream (or half-and-half/non-dairy)
 - ☐ 1 medium onion, diced
 - ☐ 3 cloves garlic, minced
 - ☐ 1 cup frozen peas (optional)
 - ☐ 2 tbsp olive oil
 - ☐ 1 tsp paprika
 - ☐ 1 tsp salt
 - ☐ 1/2 tsp black pepper
 - ☐ 1/2 tsp dried thyme
 - ☐ 1/2 tsp parsley (fresh or dried, for garnish)
 - ☐ Cook Mode Prevent your screen from going dark
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Instructions

1. Rinse rice until water runs clear. Cook in chicken broth according to package directions. Set aside.
2. Heat olive oil in skillet over medium heat. Sauté onion for 2–3 minutes, then garlic for 1 minute.
3. Season chicken with paprika, salt, pepper, and thyme. Cook 5–6 minutes per side until golden and 165°F. Remove and set aside.
4. Lower heat, pour in cream, and deglaze skillet. Simmer gently to thicken.
5. Optional: stir in peas, mushrooms, or bell peppers. Cook until heated.

6. Return chicken to skillet, simmer 5 minutes in sauce.
7. Serve chicken and sauce over rice. Garnish with parsley.

Notes

Swap heavy cream for half-and-half or non-dairy alternatives.

Add vegetables like mushrooms, bell peppers, or spinach.

Make components ahead and reheat gently.

Use brown rice for a healthier base, adjusting cooking time.

- Prep Time: 10 minutes
- Cook Time: 35 minutes
- Category: Dinner
- Method: Skillet
- Cuisine: American

Nutrition

- **Serving Size:** 1 plate
- **Calories:** 510
- **Sugar:** 4g
- **Sodium:** 720mg
- **Fat:** 27g
- **Saturated Fat:** 12g
- **Unsaturated Fat:** 15g
- **Trans Fat:** 0g
- **Carbohydrates:** 32g
- **Fiber:** 2g
- **Protein:** 38g
- **Cholesterol:** 145mg

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The Essential Ingredients

Foundation of Flavor

Boneless, skinless chicken breasts are seasoned with paprika, thyme, salt, and pepper for savory depth. Rice, cooked in chicken broth instead of water, becomes fluffy and flavorful. Onions and

garlic create an aromatic base, while heavy cream turns everything into a smooth sauce. Olive oil is used for sautéing and searing, ensuring golden chicken with locked-in juices.

Optional Additions

Frozen peas add sweetness and color, mushrooms bring earthiness, and bell peppers provide brightness. Fresh parsley adds freshness as a garnish. Heavy cream can be swapped with half-and-half or non-dairy alternatives for lighter versions. These options make the recipe flexible, so it can be adjusted for dietary needs or personal tastes without losing its creamy essence.

Preparing the Chicken and Rice

Cooking Rice with Broth

Start by rinsing the rice under cold water to remove excess starch. This step ensures the grains remain fluffy. Cook it in chicken broth instead of water to build flavor right into the base. Once done, set it aside. The rice acts as the foundation of the dish, soaking up creamy sauce for a complete and hearty meal.

Searing the Chicken

Season chicken breasts generously, then sear them in olive oil over medium heat. Cook for 5–6 minutes per side until golden brown and the internal temperature reaches 165°F. Remove from the skillet and rest while you prepare the sauce. Searing not only locks in juices but also creates browned bits that enrich the sauce with deeper flavor.

Building the Creamy Sauce

Creating the Base

After removing the chicken, sauté onions until translucent, then add garlic for aroma. Lower the heat, then pour in heavy cream, scraping the skillet to deglaze. This picks up the flavor left behind by the chicken and onions, creating a sauce that's both savory and rich. Simmering gently thickens the cream while keeping it silky.

Adding Vegetables and Herbs

Optional frozen peas or sautéed mushrooms can be added to the sauce for extra nutrition. A sprinkle of dried thyme reinforces the savory base, while parsley adds brightness. These touches not only improve taste but also enhance color and presentation. The sauce becomes more vibrant and layered, complementing the chicken and rice perfectly.

Combining Chicken, Sauce, and Rice

Nestling the Chicken

Return the seared chicken to the skillet once the sauce is ready. Let it simmer for 5 minutes so the flavors meld together. The sauce clings to the chicken, creating a smothered effect that makes the

dish creamy and indulgent. At the same time, the chicken absorbs flavor while staying juicy.

Serving Over Rice

Spoon the chicken and sauce over cooked rice for a satisfying meal. The rice absorbs the sauce, ensuring every bite is full of flavor. Garnishing with fresh parsley or thyme makes the dish pop visually and balances the richness. This combination of creamy sauce, tender chicken, and fluffy rice delivers true comfort in every serving.

Serving Suggestions

Classic Pairings

Although it's hearty on its own, this dish pairs well with simple sides. A green salad with lemon vinaigrette balances the creaminess, while roasted vegetables like carrots or asparagus add crunch. Dinner rolls or garlic bread complement the sauce and complete the meal. These pairings make it versatile enough for weeknights or dinner parties.

Creative Ideas

This skillet can be reinvented in fun ways. Slice the chicken and mix it with rice for a casserole-style dish. Leftovers can be wrapped in tortillas for creamy chicken wraps. Pairing it with bolder dishes like [Bang Bang Chicken Rice Bowl](#) creates an exciting contrast of creamy and spicy flavors. These twists keep the recipe exciting and adaptable.

Tips for Success

Getting Moist Chicken

Always pound chicken to even thickness before cooking for consistent doneness. Use a meat thermometer to ensure it reaches 165°F without overcooking. Resting chicken briefly before slicing keeps juices intact. These simple steps guarantee juicy results every time.

Enhancing Flavor

Taste the sauce as it simmers and adjust seasoning as needed. Add lemon juice if it feels too heavy, or Parmesan cheese for extra richness. Fresh herbs like rosemary or basil can layer in aromatic notes. For spice, a pinch of cayenne or chili flakes works beautifully. These enhancements make the dish customizable without complicating it.

Storage and Reheating

Storing Leftovers

Cool leftovers before storing in an airtight container. They'll keep in the refrigerator for up to three days. The rice will absorb some sauce but remains flavorful. This makes the dish ideal for meal prep or next-day lunches.

Best Reheating Methods

Reheat gently on the stovetop with a splash of broth or cream to restore sauce consistency. The microwave works for faster reheating, though it may slightly change the texture. Avoid overheating to prevent drying out the chicken. Done right, leftovers taste nearly as good as freshly made.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I use chicken thighs instead of breasts?

Yes, chicken thighs work wonderfully. They're juicier and more forgiving during reheating. Adjust the cooking time slightly, and always check for an internal temperature of 165°F.

Can I make this recipe lighter?

Absolutely. Swap heavy cream for half-and-half or non-dairy alternatives. Use less oil when searing the chicken, and add extra vegetables for balance. These changes reduce calories without compromising flavor.

Can I prepare this dish ahead of time?

Yes, prepare the chicken and sauce in advance, then cook the rice fresh before serving. Storing components separately prevents the rice from absorbing too much sauce. It's an excellent option for meal planning.

What type of rice works best?

Long-grain rice like jasmine or basmati works best because it stays fluffy and absorbs sauce well. Short-grain rice can be used but tends to become stickier. Brown rice is also an option for added nutrition, though it takes longer to cook.

Can I freeze creamy chicken and rice skillet?

Yes, though the cream sauce may change texture slightly. Freeze cooled portions in airtight containers for up to two months. Thaw in the refrigerator overnight and reheat gently with extra cream or broth.

Conclusion

Creamy Chicken and Rice Skillet is a recipe that delivers comfort, flavor, and simplicity in every bite. With juicy chicken, fluffy rice, and a luscious cream sauce, it's both hearty and versatile. Its flexibility makes it easy to adapt with vegetables, lighter creams, or different seasonings. Whether for weeknight dinners, meal prep, or casual entertaining, this skillet dish is one you'll turn to time and again. It's proof that simple ingredients can create meals worth savoring.