

Creamy Chicken and Rice Skillet

Creamy Chicken and Rice Skillet is the perfect one-pan meal that blends juicy chicken, fluffy rice, and a rich, flavorful sauce. This dish offers the comfort of home-cooked food while remaining simple enough for weeknight dinners. Made with pantry staples like onion, garlic, broth, and cream, it's a recipe that transforms everyday ingredients into something memorable. Easy, hearty, and customizable, it's bound to become a family favorite.

Why This Skillet Recipe Works

Balanced and Hearty

The beauty of this recipe lies in its balance. Chicken delivers lean protein, rice provides substance, and the creamy sauce ties everything together. Paprika, thyme, and garlic layer in comforting flavors that make each bite savory and satisfying. The dish feels indulgent but doesn't require complicated steps. It's wholesome and hearty, ideal for families who want both nourishment and flavor.

Perfect for Weeknights

This skillet recipe takes less than an hour from start to finish, making it practical for busy nights. Since it uses one pan for the sauce and chicken plus a pot for rice, cleanup is minimal. Its versatility allows for easy swaps, such as half-and-half instead of cream or different vegetables for variety. Quick, adaptable, and delicious, it's a true weeknight hero.

Moist & Savory Chicken Breast

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 combines juicy chicken, fluffy rice, and a savory cream sauce for a hearty, one-pan meal that's perfect for weeknights.

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 per package instructions. Set aside.
2. Heat olive oil in skillet over medium heat. Sauté onion 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. In same skillet, stir in cream. Simmer gently and scrape up browned bits.
5. Optional: add peas or other vegetables. Cook 2–3 minutes.

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

Notes

Swap heavy cream with half-and-half or non-dairy for a lighter version.

Add mushrooms or bell peppers for extra flavor.

Prepare ahead and reheat gently for meal prep.

Brown rice can be used but requires longer cooking.

- 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

Did you make this recipe?

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Key Ingredients

Flavorful Foundations

Boneless, skinless chicken breasts are the star protein, seasoned with paprika, thyme, salt, and pepper. Rice acts as the base, cooked in chicken broth for enhanced flavor. Heavy cream creates

richness, while onions and garlic bring depth. Olive oil ensures a good sear on the chicken, adding flavor and texture. These ingredients, though simple, combine beautifully in this skillet dish.

Add-Ins for Variety

Frozen peas add sweetness and color, while optional mushrooms or bell peppers introduce earthiness and vibrancy. Parsley, whether fresh or dried, brightens the final dish. For lighter versions, swap cream with half-and-half or non-dairy alternatives. This flexibility ensures the recipe can suit different diets and preferences while maintaining its creamy, satisfying essence.

Preparing the Chicken and Rice

Cooking Rice with Flavor

Rinse rice under cold water to remove excess starch, ensuring fluffy grains. Cook it in chicken broth instead of water to infuse flavor from the start. Once ready, set aside and keep warm. The rice is more than a side—it soaks up the creamy sauce, making the dish cohesive and hearty.

Searing the Chicken

Season the chicken and sear it in olive oil for 5–6 minutes per side until golden brown and cooked through to 165°F. Searing locks in juices while creating browned bits that enrich the sauce. Resting the chicken before returning it to the skillet keeps it tender. This step is key to creating moist, flavorful meat that complements the creamy sauce.

Making the Creamy Sauce

Building the Base

Sauté onions until translucent, then add garlic for aroma. Pour in heavy cream, scraping the skillet to deglaze and capture all the flavor from the chicken. Simmer gently until slightly thickened, forming a smooth base. This sauce becomes the heart of the dish, rich yet balanced, enhancing both the chicken and rice.

Enhancing with Veggies and Herbs

Optional frozen peas, mushrooms, or bell peppers can be added to the sauce, bringing freshness and nutrition. A sprinkle of thyme deepens the savory flavor, while parsley provides a bright finish. These additions ensure the sauce is not only creamy but also colorful and well-rounded, making the dish visually and nutritionally satisfying.

Combining Chicken, Sauce, and Rice

Nestling the Chicken

Once the sauce is ready, return the chicken to the skillet. Let it simmer for about five minutes, soaking up the creamy flavors. The sauce clings to the chicken, giving it a savory coating that enhances juiciness. This step ensures harmony between meat and sauce, making the dish rich

without being overpowering.

Serving Over Rice

Plate the chicken and sauce generously over the cooked rice. The rice absorbs the creamy mixture, tying all the elements together. Garnish with parsley for a pop of freshness. This presentation not only makes the meal appetizing but also delivers the comfort of a complete dish with every bite.

Serving Ideas

Traditional Pairings

Although this recipe is filling on its own, pairing it with simple sides adds variety. A green salad with vinaigrette balances the creaminess, while roasted vegetables like asparagus or carrots provide crunch. Dinner rolls or garlic bread are excellent for soaking up extra sauce, creating a well-rounded meal.

Creative Variations

For a twist, swap rice with pasta and use the sauce as a creamy topping. Leftover chicken can be shredded and added to wraps or sandwiches. Pairing it with bold dishes like [Bang Bang Chicken](#) [Rice Bowl](#) creates a contrast of creamy and spicy flavors, making for an exciting dinner combination.

Tips for Best Results

Cooking Tips

Use a meat thermometer to ensure chicken reaches 165°F without overcooking. Pound chicken to even thickness for consistent results. Rest the chicken before slicing to keep juices intact. These steps ensure the chicken stays moist and flavorful while blending seamlessly with the sauce.

Flavor Boosts

Don't be afraid to customize. Add lemon juice to brighten the cream or Parmesan cheese for extra richness. Fresh herbs like basil or rosemary add aromatic layers. Spice lovers can mix in cayenne for heat. These small tweaks allow you to adapt the recipe while keeping its creamy foundation intact.

Storage and Reheating

Storing Leftovers

Store cooled leftovers in an airtight container in the fridge for up to three days. The rice absorbs sauce over time, but the dish remains flavorful and filling. This makes it excellent for meal prep or next-day lunches.

Reheating Tips

Reheat gently on the stovetop with a splash of cream or broth to restore sauce consistency. Microwave in short bursts with added liquid if needed. Avoid overheating, as it can dry out the chicken or separate the sauce. Done correctly, leftovers taste nearly as good as fresh.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I use chicken thighs instead of breasts?

Yes, chicken thighs work well and bring extra juiciness. Adjust cooking times slightly, as thighs may need longer. Always ensure they reach 165°F for safety. Many cooks prefer thighs for their flavor and tenderness.

Can I make this recipe lighter?

Absolutely. Use half-and-half or non-dairy cream instead of heavy cream. Reduce oil slightly and add more vegetables like spinach or zucchini. These swaps cut calories while maintaining creaminess and flavor.

Can this dish be made ahead?

Yes, prepare the chicken and sauce in advance and store them separately. Reheat gently, then serve over freshly cooked rice. This method keeps the rice from absorbing too much sauce before serving.

What type of rice works best?

Long-grain varieties like jasmine or basmati are ideal because they stay fluffy and absorb sauce well. Short-grain rice may become sticky, while brown rice offers a healthier alternative with a nutty flavor.

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 overnight in the fridge and reheat gently with added cream or broth to refresh the sauce.

Conclusion

Creamy Chicken and Rice Skillet is the perfect comfort meal that delivers on both flavor and convenience. With juicy chicken, fluffy rice, and a rich sauce, it feels indulgent yet approachable. Its flexibility makes it easy to adapt with vegetables, alternative creams, or different proteins. Whether for weeknight dinners, meal prep, or entertaining, this skillet recipe is one you'll return to often. Comforting, versatile, and delicious, it proves that simple ingredients can create extraordinary meals.