

Creamy Chicken Pasta Bake

Creamy chicken pasta bake is the definition of classic comfort food made easy. Tender chicken pieces, rich cheddar cheese sauce, and perfectly cooked pasta come together in a golden, bubbling casserole that’s both hearty and comforting. This dish delivers everything you love about homemade pasta — creaminess, flavor, and that perfect cheesy pull. It’s ideal for busy weeknights or family gatherings when you want something satisfying yet simple to prepare. If you’ve enjoyed flavorful dishes like [Baked Melt In Your Mouth Chicken](#), this recipe is sure to earn a permanent spot in your dinner rotation.

The Magic of Creamy Baked Pasta

Why Everyone Loves It

There’s something universally comforting about baked pasta. The creamy sauce coats each noodle, and the golden crust on top gives every bite texture and depth. This recipe combines the richness of mac and cheese with the heartiness of chicken, creating a complete, satisfying meal. Every forkful delivers a balance of creamy, cheesy, and savory flavors.

Simple Ingredients, Incredible Flavor

You don’t need fancy ingredients to make this taste amazing. Butter, flour, milk, and cheddar cheese form the base of a silky sauce that binds everything together. The chicken adds protein and texture, while the pasta provides that comforting chew. A light breadcrumb topping finishes it off with a crispy crunch.

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

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Description

A creamy, cheesy baked chicken pasta with tender chicken, sharp cheddar, and golden breadcrumbs. The perfect comfort food for family dinners.

Ingredients

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Scale

- ☐ 3–4 boneless skinless chicken breasts (about 1 lb)
 - ☐ 8 oz elbow macaroni
 - ☐ 2 cups sharp cheddar cheese, shredded
 - ☐ 2 cups whole milk
 - ☐ 4 tbsp unsalted butter
 - ☐ ¼ cup all-purpose flour
 - ☐ 1 tsp garlic powder
 - ☐ Salt and pepper, to taste
 - ☐ ½ cup breadcrumbs (optional)
 - ☐ Cook Mode Prevent your screen from going dark
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Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (175°C). Grease a baking dish and set aside.
2. Boil macaroni in salted water until al dente. Drain and set aside.
3. Melt butter in a skillet. Add cubed chicken, season with salt and pepper, and cook 5–7 minutes until golden.
4. In the same skillet, melt butter and whisk in flour to form a roux.
5. Slowly pour in milk, whisking constantly until smooth and thickened.
6. Reduce heat and stir in cheddar cheese until fully melted. Add garlic powder, salt, and pepper.
7. Fold in cooked pasta and chicken until evenly coated with sauce.

8. Transfer to baking dish, top with breadcrumbs, and bake 20 minutes until golden and bubbly.
9. Let cool slightly, garnish with parsley, and serve warm.

Notes

Add spinach, broccoli, or peas for extra nutrition.

Mix cheeses like mozzarella or Parmesan for different flavors.

Make ahead and refrigerate; bake when ready to serve.

- Prep Time: 15 minutes
- Cook Time: 30 minutes
- Category: Dinner
- Method: Baking
- Cuisine: American

Nutrition

- **Serving Size:** 1 cup
- **Calories:** 450
- **Sugar:** 6g
- **Sodium:** 600mg
- **Fat:** 24g
- **Saturated Fat:** 14g
- **Unsaturated Fat:** 8g
- **Trans Fat:** 0g
- **Carbohydrates:** 37g
- **Fiber:** 2g
- **Protein:** 25g
- **Cholesterol:** 70mg

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Preparing the Chicken

Choosing and Cooking the Chicken

Boneless, skinless chicken breasts work best for this recipe. Slice them into cubes for even cooking. Heat a skillet over medium heat, melt butter, and cook the chicken until it's golden brown on the edges and juicy inside. Season lightly with salt and pepper to enhance the natural flavor.

Building Flavor from the Start

The goal is to give the chicken a golden crust before it's mixed into the sauce. Those browned bits at the bottom of the skillet — called fond — are full of savory flavor. They'll blend into the cheese sauce later, adding depth and richness to the entire dish.

Creating the Creamy Cheese Sauce

The Roux Base

A good cheese sauce starts with a roux — equal parts butter and flour cooked together to thicken the sauce. Once melted, whisk the flour into the butter until it forms a smooth paste. Gradually pour in milk while whisking to avoid lumps. Within minutes, the sauce begins to thicken into a silky base.

Melting the Cheese

Lower the heat and add shredded cheddar cheese a handful at a time, stirring until melted and smooth. Season with garlic powder, salt, and pepper to taste. The sauce should be rich but not overly thick. It should cling beautifully to each piece of pasta and chicken. This combination creates a luxurious, creamy texture that's irresistible.

Perfect Pasta for the Bake

Choosing the Right Pasta

Elbow macaroni is classic, but penne, rigatoni, or rotini also work beautifully. The key is to use pasta that holds sauce well. Cook it in salted water until al dente — just firm to the bite — so it doesn't get mushy after baking.

Combining for Ultimate Flavor

Once drained, fold the cooked pasta and sautéed chicken into the cheese sauce. Stir until everything is evenly coated. Each piece of pasta should glisten with creamy sauce, while the chicken soaks up its flavor. It's already delicious at this point — but baking takes it to another level.

Baking to Golden Perfection

Getting That Perfect Crust

Transfer the creamy mixture into a greased baking dish. Top it with a light layer of breadcrumbs for a crispy texture. If you're a cheese lover, sprinkle an extra handful of cheddar on top before baking. Bake at 350°F for about 20 minutes, or until the top turns golden brown and bubbly.

Optional Add-Ins

This creamy chicken pasta bake is flexible. Mix in vegetables like spinach, peas, or broccoli for added nutrients and color. You can also experiment with different cheeses — mozzarella for stretchiness, Parmesan for sharpness, or Monterey Jack for smooth meltability.

Tips for a Perfect Bake

Keep It Creamy

If your sauce seems too thick before baking, add a splash of milk or reserved pasta water to loosen it. During baking, the sauce thickens naturally, so it's better to keep it slightly fluid before going into the oven.

Timing Is Everything

Avoid overbaking, which can dry out the sauce. Once the top is golden and bubbling, it's ready. Let the dish rest for a few minutes before serving so the sauce thickens slightly and coats the pasta beautifully.

Serving Suggestions

Pair It Right

Serve this creamy pasta bake with a side of steamed vegetables or a fresh green salad to balance the richness. Garlic bread or dinner rolls are perfect for mopping up the extra sauce. For a full meal, pair it with a light dessert like lemon bars or fruit salad.

Family-Style Perfection

This dish serves beautifully straight from the oven in the baking pan. Garnish with chopped parsley or a sprinkle of Parmesan for a restaurant-style presentation. It's a crowd-pleaser that looks as good as it tastes — creamy in the center, crisp on top, and filled with flavor.

Why You'll Love This Dish

Comfort Food Made Easy

The best part of this creamy chicken pasta bake is how effortlessly it comes together. Simple ingredients, minimal prep, and a single baking dish make cleanup easy. It's the kind of meal that feels special but requires almost no fuss.

Make It Your Own

This recipe is endlessly adaptable. Change the pasta, swap the cheese, or add vegetables to suit your family's taste. You can even double the batch and freeze one for later. It's a meal that never fails to impress — creamy, cheesy, and downright comforting.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I make this ahead of time?

Yes. Assemble everything, cover tightly, and refrigerate for up to 24 hours before baking.

Can I freeze it?

Absolutely. Cool it completely, cover with foil, and freeze for up to two months. Reheat in the oven until warm.

Can I use rotisserie chicken?

Yes, it's a great shortcut! Shred it and mix directly into the sauce.

What other cheeses can I use?

Mozzarella, Gouda, or Monterey Jack all melt beautifully. Combine them for more depth of flavor.

Can I skip baking?

You can. Serve it straight from the stovetop as a creamy stovetop pasta instead.

Conclusion

Creamy chicken pasta bake is the ultimate comfort meal — creamy, cheesy, and irresistibly satisfying. The smooth cheddar sauce envelops tender chicken and perfectly cooked pasta in pure richness. A golden crust adds that finishing touch, making every bite a delight. It's versatile, family-friendly, and simple enough for any night of the week. Whether you serve it fresh from the oven or as leftovers the next day, this dish proves that comfort food doesn't have to be complicated — just creamy, cheesy, and cooked with love.