

Viral Cajun Chicken Pasta: The Quick Weeknight Dinner You've Been Missing

Tired of the same old weeknight meals? This viral Cajun chicken pasta recipe is here to save your dinner routine. It's a one-pan wonder that combines spicy, seasoned chicken, tender pasta, and a luxuriously creamy sauce that has made it a sensation across social media. This dish isn't just about hype; it delivers bold, restaurant-quality flavor in about 30 minutes. It's the perfect comfort food hybrid, blending the zesty kick of Cajun cuisine with the rich, satisfying embrace of a classic Alfredo. Prepare to find out why this recipe has everyone talking—and seconds.

? Why This Cajun Pasta Went Viral

The Perfect Flavor Combination

This dish strikes an incredible balance. You have the savory, spicy notes from the Cajun seasoning, the rich depth from the garlic and Parmesan, and the velvety finish of the heavy cream. It's a complex flavor profile that tastes like it took hours to develop, yet it comes together in minutes. Each bite is a perfect blend of heat, cream, and savory chicken.

Speed and Simplicity

Weeknight dinners need to be fast, and this recipe understands the assignment. By using quick-cooking chicken breast and a sauce that comes together while the pasta boils, you can get a gourmet meal on the table in 30 minutes. It's this combination of speed and impressive flavor that made it a viral hit for busy home cooks.

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- Author: [Aaron recipes](#)
- Total Time: [30 min](#)
- Yield: [4 1x](#)

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Description

This viral Cajun Chicken Pasta is a quick 30-minute weeknight dinner. It features spicy, smoky chicken and sautéed peppers in a rich, creamy Parmesan sauce.

Ingredients

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- ☐ 1 lb boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into 1-inch pieces
 - ☐ 2 tbsp Cajun seasoning (divided)
 - ☐ 2 tbsp olive oil
 - ☐ 8 oz penne pasta
 - ☐ 2 tbsp unsalted butter
 - ☐ 3 cloves garlic, minced
 - ☐ 1 red bell pepper, sliced
 - ☐ 1 green bell pepper, sliced
 - ☐ 1/2 yellow onion, diced
 - ☐ 1 1/2 cups heavy cream
 - ☐ 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
 - ☐ 1/2 cup reserved pasta water (if needed)
 - ☐ Salt and black pepper to taste
 - ☐ 2 tbsp chopped fresh parsley (for garnish)
 - ☐ Cook Mode Prevent your screen from going dark
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Instructions

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Cook penne pasta according to package directions until al dente. Reserve 1/2 cup of pasta water before draining.

2. While pasta cooks, toss the chicken pieces in a bowl with 1 tbsp of Cajun seasoning, salt, and pepper.
3. Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the seasoned chicken and cook for 5-7 minutes, until browned and cooked through. Remove chicken from the skillet and set aside.
4. In the same skillet, melt the butter over medium heat. Add the minced garlic, diced onion, and sliced bell peppers. Sauté for 4-5 minutes, until vegetables are tender.
5. Stir in the remaining 1 tbsp of Cajun seasoning and cook for 30 seconds until fragrant.
6. Pour in the heavy cream, scraping up any browned bits from the bottom of the pan. Bring to a simmer, then reduce heat to low.
7. Stir in the grated Parmesan cheese until the sauce is smooth and thickened.
8. Add the cooked pasta and the cooked chicken back into the skillet. Toss to combine, letting the pasta soak up the sauce for 1-2 minutes.
9. If the sauce is too thick, add the reserved pasta water, one tablespoon at a time, until it reaches your desired consistency.
10. Taste and adjust seasoning with salt and pepper if needed.
11. Serve immediately, garnished with fresh parsley and extra Parmesan cheese.

Notes

For a spicier pasta, add a pinch of cayenne pepper with the Cajun seasoning. You can also use andouille sausage in addition to the chicken.

- Prep Time: 10 min
- Cook Time: 20 min
- Category: Main Course
- Method: Stovetop
- Cuisine: Cajun

Nutrition

- **Calories:** 550
- **Fat:** 25g
- **Carbohydrates:** 60g
- **Protein:** 30g

Did you make this recipe?

Share a photo and tag us-we can't wait to see what you've made!

Mastering the Chicken and Seasoning

Choosing Your Chicken

For this recipe, boneless, skinless chicken breasts are the ideal choice. They cook quickly and absorb the seasoning beautifully. You'll want to cube the chicken into 1-inch pieces to ensure they cook evenly and you get savory chicken in every bite of pasta. You could also use chicken thighs if you prefer darker meat, just be sure to trim any excess fat.

The Magic of Cajun Seasoning

The heart of this dish is the seasoning. You can use a store-bought blend (like Slap Ya Mama or Tony Chachere's) or make your own. A homemade blend typically includes paprika, garlic powder, onion powder, cayenne pepper, oregano, and thyme. The key is to generously coat the chicken, creating a flavorful crust when you sear it in the pan.

? Building the Creamy, Spicy Sauce

Sautéing the Base

The flavor foundation starts after you sear the chicken. In the same pan, you'll sauté your aromatics. Diced onion and colorful bell peppers (red and green are great) are classic Cajun components. Sauté them until soft, then add minced garlic and cook for just a minute until fragrant. This builds a savory base for your cream sauce.

Creating the Cream Sauce

This is where the magic happens. Deglaze the pan with a bit of chicken broth, scraping up any browned bits (that's pure flavor!). Then, reduce the heat and pour in the heavy cream. Let it warm through gently, then stir in the grated Parmesan cheese. The cheese will melt into the cream, creating a thick, luscious sauce that clings to the pasta.

? Assembling the Perfect Cajun Pasta

Cooking Your Pasta

While you work on the sauce, get your pasta water boiling. A short, sturdy pasta shape like penne, rigatoni, or cavatappi is perfect for this dish. You want something with ridges or tubes to capture the thick, creamy sauce. Cook the pasta to al dente according to package directions. It will finish cooking in the sauce.

Bringing It All Together

Just before the pasta is done, reserve about a cup of the starchy pasta water. Drain the rest and add the al dente pasta directly to the skillet with your cream sauce and cooked chicken. Stir

everything together gently over low heat, adding a splash of the reserved pasta water if the sauce seems too thick. This starchy water helps the sauce emulsify and cling perfectly.

? Tips, Tricks, and Variations

Adjusting the Spice Level

This recipe is easy to customize. If you're sensitive to heat, use a mild Cajun seasoning or reduce the amount. You can also add a pinch of smoked paprika for a smoky flavor without extra spice. If you want *more* heat, add a pinch of red pepper flakes or a dash of your favorite hot sauce to the finished sauce.

Smart Add-Ins and Swaps

Feel free to make this dish your own. Sliced andouille sausage adds an extra layer of smoky, spicy flavor. You can also stir in a handful of fresh spinach at the very end until it just wilts. For a slightly lighter sauce, you can substitute half of the heavy cream with half-and-half, though it won't be quite as rich.

? Storage and Reheating

How to Store Leftovers

If you have leftovers, store them in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3-4 days. Like most cream-based pasta dishes, the sauce will thicken considerably once chilled. This recipe does not freeze well, as the cream sauce is likely to separate upon thawing.

The Best Way to Reheat

The key to reheating is to go low and slow. Place the pasta in a small saucepan or skillet over low heat. Add a splash of milk, chicken broth, or a touch of heavy cream. Stir gently and heat until the pasta is warmed through and the sauce has become creamy again. Avoid the microwave, which can make the chicken rubbery.

? Make It a Complete Meal

Simple Side Dish Pairings

This pasta is a hearty meal on its own, but it pairs wonderfully with a few simple sides. A crisp green salad with a vinaigrette can cut through the richness of the sauce. For another great option, try this easy <https://goplated.com/one-pot-chicken-and-rice-the-ultimate-easy-weeknigh...> recipe.

Perfect Bread for Dipping

You will not want to waste a single drop of this delicious Cajun cream sauce. Serve the pasta with a side of crusty French bread, warm garlic bread, or soft breadsticks. They are the perfect vehicles for sopping up every last bit of flavor from your plate.

FAQs for Viral Cajun Chicken Pasta

- Can I make this dairy-free?It’s challenging due to the heavy cream and Parmesan, which are central to the sauce. You could experiment with a full-fat coconut milk and a high-quality nutritional yeast or dairy-free Parmesan alternative, but the flavor and texture will be significantly different.
- What if my sauce is too thick or too thin?This is an easy fix! If the sauce is too thick, stir in a splash of the reserved pasta water, chicken broth, or even a little milk until it reaches your desired consistency. If it’s too thin, let it simmer on low for a few more minutes or add a little more grated Parmesan cheese to help thicken it.
- Can I use pre-cooked chicken?Yes, you can. If you’re using leftover rotisserie chicken or pre-cooked chicken strips, you won’t get the same seared-in flavor, but it’s a great shortcut. Simply toss the cooked, cubed chicken in the Cajun seasoning and add it to the pan just to heat through before you build the sauce.

Conclusion

This Viral Cajun Chicken Pasta is more than just a passing internet trend; it’s a genuinely fantastic recipe that deserves a permanent spot in your weeknight rotation. It’s fast, incredibly flavorful, and brings a touch of indulgence to any meal. The combination of spicy chicken, tender peppers, and that unbelievably creamy, cheesy sauce is pure comfort in a bowl. Once you try it, you’ll see exactly why the world fell in love with this dish.

Cajun Chicken Pasta Quick Guide

Feature	Details
Total Time	30 minutes
Prep Time	10 minutes
Cook Time	20 minutes
Yield	4-6 Servings
Course	Main Course
Cuisine	American / Cajun
Approx. Nutrition	650 kcal per serving