

Taco Night Just Got Better with These Cheesy Stuffed Shells

bring the best of both worlds into one bubbling, cheesy, comfort food masterpiece.



OVEN
350°F

TIME
5 min

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INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb ground beef
 - 1 packet taco seasoning
 - $\frac{3}{4}$ cup water
 - 1 box jumbo pasta shells
 - 1 cup salsa (chunky or smooth, your call!)
 - 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
 - 1 cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese
 - 1 (10 oz) can enchilada sauce (or taco sauce)
- Optional toppings: sour cream, chopped tomatoes, green onions, avocado
- Swaps and Notes:
- Protein options: Ground turkey, chicken, or black beans make excellent substitutions.
- Sauce flexibility: Use a spicy enchilada sauce for kick, or a mild taco sauce for picky eaters.
- Cheese variations: Pepper jack, Mexican blend, or cotija cheese all work beautifully.
- Gluten-free? Just swap in GF jumbo pasta shells and check your seasoning packet.
- Instructions:
- Boil the shellsCook jumbo pasta shells according to package instructions. Drain and set aside to cool slightly.
- Cook the taco fillingIn a large skillet over medium heat, brown the ground beef. Drain excess grease. Add taco seasoning and $\frac{3}{4}$ cup water, simmering for 5 minutes until thickened.

Prep your baking dishPreheat oven to 350°F (175°C). Spread salsa across the bottom of a 9x13-inch baking dish.

Stuff the shellsFill each shell with a spoonful of taco meat and place seam-side up in the dish.

Sauce and cheese it upPour enchilada or taco sauce evenly over the shells. Sprinkle with both cheeses.

BakeCover with foil and bake for 20 minutes.

Uncover and bake an additional 10 minutes until cheese is melted and bubbly.

Garnish and serveTop with your favorite taco toppings-sour cream, diced avocado, tomatoes, green onions-right before serving.

Tips for Success:

Don't overfill the shells or they'll spill out while baking.

Cook shells al dente so they don't become mushy in the oven.

Make a double batch and freeze one for later-thank yourself later.

Try mixing a little cheese into the taco meat for extra creaminess.

Serving Suggestions & Pairings:

A crunchy side salad or slaw

Cornbread or tortilla chips and dip

This Crockpot Nacho Dip as an appetizer

Want more taco vibes? Try this Walking Taco Bar

Storage & Leftover Tips:

Fridge: Store in an airtight container for 3-4 days.

Freezer: Freeze unbaked (or baked) shells for up to 2 months. Thaw overnight and reheat at 350°F until warmed through.

DIRECTIONS

1. Boil the shells: Cook jumbo pasta shells according to package instructions. Drain and set aside to cool slightly.
2. Cook the taco filling: In a large skillet over medium heat, brown the ground beef. Drain excess grease. Add taco seasoning and ½ cup water, simmering for 5 minutes until thickened.
3. Prep your baking dish: Preheat oven to 350°F (175°C). Spread salsa across the bottom of a 9x13-inch baking dish.
4. Stuff the shells: Fill each shell with a spoonful of taco meat and place seam-side up in the dish.
5. Sauce and cheese it up: Pour enchilada or taco sauce evenly over the shells. Sprinkle with both cheeses.
6. Bake: Cover with foil and bake for 20 minutes. Uncover and bake an additional 10 minutes until cheese is melted and bubbly.
7. Garnish and serve: Top with your favorite taco toppings-sour cream, diced avocado, tomatoes, green onions-right before serving.
8. Tips for Success: Don't overfill the shells or they'll spill out while baking.
9. Cook shells al dente so they don't become mushy in the oven.
10. Make a double batch and freeze one for later-thank yourself later.
11. Try mixing a little cheese into the taco meat for extra creaminess.
12. Serving Suggestions & Pairings: This dish is hearty on its own but pairs beautifully with:

13. A crunchy side salad or slaw
14. Cornbread or tortilla chips and dip
15. This : Crockpot Nacho Dip as an appetizer
16. Want more taco vibes? Try this Walking Taco Bar
17. Storage & Leftover Tips: Fridge: Store in an airtight container for 3-4 days.
18. Freezer: Freeze unbaked (or baked) shells for up to 2 months. Thaw overnight and reheat at 350°F until warmed through.
19. Reheat: Microwave individual portions or cover and warm in the oven.
20. More Recipes You'll Love: For more easy, cozy, family-friendly dinner ideas, check these out:
21. Dorito : Casserole
22. Chicken : Enchiladas
23. Sheet : Pan Quesadillas
24. Final Thoughts: Taco Stuffed Shells are the kind of recipe that gets requested again and again. They're easy to make, totally comforting, and versatile enough to adapt to whatever's in your fridge.
25. If you try this recipe, don't forget to tag @chefmaniac and share your twist on it. I'd love to hear what toppings you used or how you made it your own!

SWAPS & NOTES

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Sauce flexibility : Use a spicy enchilada sauce for kick, or a mild taco sauce for picky eaters.

Cheese variations : Pepper jack, Mexican blend, or cotija cheese all work beautifully.

Just swap in GF jumbo pasta shells and check your seasoning packet.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

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More recipes: [ChefManiac.com](https://chefmaniac.com)

Original recipe: <https://chefmaniac.com/taco-night-just-got-better-with-these-cheesy-stuffed-shells/>