

Creamy Beef and Shells: A Delicious Pasta Dish

The Evolution of Comfort Pasta



TIME
5-7 min

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INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 lb ground beef (80/20 lean recommended)
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 (15 ounce) can tomato sauce
- 1 (14.5 ounce) can diced tomatoes, undrained
- 1 cup beef broth (or chicken broth)
- 1 teaspoon dried Italian seasoning
- 1/2 teaspoon salt (or to taste)
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper (or to taste)
- 8 ounces medium pasta shells, uncooked
- 1/2 cup heavy cream (or half-and-half)
- 1/2 cup shredded cheddar cheese (or mozzarella), plus more for serving
- Fresh parsley, chopped, for garnish (optional)

DIRECTIONS

1. Let's get this delicious and easy meal on the table:
2. Brown the : Meat: In a large Dutch oven or deep skillet, heat the olive oil over medium-high heat. Add the ground beef and cook, breaking it up with a spoon, until it's fully browned. Drain any excess fat.
3. SautØ Aromatics: Add the chopped onion to the skillet with the browned beef. Cook for 5-7 minutes until the onion is softened and translucent. Stir in the minced garlic and cook for another minute until fragrant.
4. Add : Liquids & Seasonings: Stir in the tomato sauce, diced tomatoes (undrained), beef broth, Italian seasoning, salt, and black pepper. Bring the mixture to a simmer, scraping up any browned bits from the bottom of the pan.
5. Add : Pasta: Stir in the uncooked pasta shells. Make sure all the pasta is submerged in the sauce. If the sauce seems too thick to cover the pasta, add another splash of beef broth.
6. Simmer & : Cook Pasta: Reduce the heat to medium-low, cover the skillet, and simmer for 15-20 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the pasta is tender and most of the liquid has been absorbed. Keep an eye on it to prevent sticking.
7. Finish with : Cream & Cheese: Remove the skillet from the heat. Stir in the heavy cream (or half-and-half) and the 1/2 cup of shredded cheddar cheese until melted and well combined.
8. Serve: Taste and adjust seasoning as needed. Ladle into bowls, top with extra shredded cheese and fresh chopped parsley if desired. Serve hot.

SWAPS & NOTES

Ground Meat: While ground beef is classic, you can easily substitute ground turkey, ground chicken, or a mix of ground beef and Italian sausage for different flavor profiles.

Tomatoes: Crushed tomatoes can be used instead of diced for a smoother sauce.

If you prefer a richer tomato flavor, you can add a tablespoon of tomato paste when browning the meat.

Broth: Beef broth adds depth, but chicken or vegetable broth works perfectly well.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Don't Drain Diced Tomatoes: The liquid from the diced tomatoes is essential for cooking the pasta.

Stir Occasionally: While the pasta is simmering, give it a stir every few minutes to prevent sticking to the bottom of the pan and ensure even cooking.

Adjust Liquid: If your pasta isn't quite tender and the sauce has reduced too much, add a little more broth, a quarter cup at a time, until the pasta is cooked through.

Use a Large Pan: A spacious Dutch oven or deep skillet is key for this "one-pot" meal, allowing enough room for the pasta to cook.

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

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