

Cheesy Ground Beef & Rice Casserole: Ultimate Family Comfort Food

Cheesy Ground Beef Rice Casserole: The Ultimate Family Dinner in One Dish!



OVEN
350°F

TIME
7 min

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INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 pound ground beef (lean or 80/20 blend)
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 can (10.5 oz) cream of mushroom soup, undiluted
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 1/2 cup milk (any percentage)
- 2 cups cooked white rice (day-old or freshly cooked and cooled is fine)
- 1 1/2 cups shredded cheddar cheese (divided into 1 cup and 1/2 cup)
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley (optional, for garnish)

Swaps and Notes:

Ground Beef: You can easily substitute ground turkey, chicken, or even a plant-based ground for a lighter version.

Onion & Garlic: Finely chopping the onion helps it blend seamlessly into the sauce. Fresh garlic is best for flavor.

Spices: Paprika and dried thyme add warmth and depth. Feel free to add a pinch of onion powder, a dash of chili powder, or a tiny bit of red pepper

flakes for a subtle kick.

Cream of Mushroom Soup: While classic, you can swap with cream of chicken or cream of celery soup if preferred.

Sour Cream: This adds a crucial tang and creaminess. Full-fat sour cream gives the richest result, but light sour cream or even plain Greek yogurt can work for a healthier option.

Cooked Rice: Using leftover cooked rice is perfect, as it helps the grains stay separate and not become mushy. If cooking fresh, let it cool slightly.

Brown rice can also be used, but the texture will be different.

Cheddar Cheese: Freshly shredded cheddar melts beautifully and provides the best flavor. A Colby-Jack or Mexican blend would also be delicious.

Directions:

Preheat Oven & Prep Dish: Preheat your oven to 350°F (175°C). Lightly grease a 9x13-inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray.

Brown Ground Beef: In a large skillet over medium heat, add the olive oil. Once it's hot, toss in the ground beef and cook, breaking it up with a spoon, until it's fully browned and cooked through, about 5-7 minutes. Drain any excess fat from the skillet.

Sauté Aromatics: Add the chopped onion and minced garlic to the skillet with the cooked beef. Sauté for another 3-4 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the onion is soft and translucent and the garlic is fragrant.

Season Meat: Sprinkle in the salt, black pepper, paprika, and dried thyme, stirring to combine thoroughly with the beef and onions. Cook for an additional minute to let those flavors meld.

Stir in Creamy Base: Reduce the heat to low. Stir in the cream of mushroom soup, sour cream, and milk. Mix well until everything is smooth, creamy, and heated through.

Fold in Rice & Cheese: Remove the skillet from the heat. Fold in the cooked white rice and 1 cup of the shredded cheddar cheese, ensuring everything is evenly combined and coated in the creamy beef mixture.

Transfer to Baking Dish: Pour the entire mixture into your prepared 9x13-inch baking dish and spread it out evenly. Top the casserole with the remaining 1/2 cup of shredded cheddar cheese.

Bake: Bake in the preheated oven for 20-25 minutes, or until the cheesy topping is melted, bubbly, and golden brown.

Rest & Serve: Once it's out of the oven, let the casserole rest for 5 minutes. This allows the flavors to settle and makes it easier to serve. If you'd like, sprinkle with fresh chopped parsley

before serving. Enjoy while warm!

Tips for Success:

Drain Fat: Draining excess fat from the ground beef is important for a less greasy casserole.

Cooked Rice is Key: Using pre-cooked or day-old rice prevents the casserole from becoming mushy.

DIRECTIONS

1. **Making this :** Cheesy Ground Beef Rice Casserole is a simple process, primarily done in one skillet before baking!
2. **Preheat : Oven & Prep Dish:** Preheat your oven to 350°F (175°C). Lightly grease a 9x13-inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray.
3. **Brown : Ground Beef:** In a large skillet over medium heat, add the olive oil. Once it's hot, toss in the ground beef and cook, breaking it up with a spoon, until it's fully browned and cooked through, about 5-7 minutes. Drain any excess fat from the skillet.
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11. **Tips for Success: Drain Fat:** Draining excess fat from the ground beef is important for a less greasy casserole.
12. **Cooked : Rice is Key:** Using pre-cooked or day-old rice prevents the casserole from becoming mushy.
13. **Don't : Skimp on Cheese:** Freshly shredded cheese melts better and tastes richer than pre-shredded.
14. **Cover if : Browning Too Fast:** If the top cheese is browning too quickly, you can loosely tent the dish with foil for the remainder of the baking time.
15. **Season to : Taste:** Taste the beef mixture before adding the rice and cheese, and adjust salt and pepper as needed.
16. **Serving Suggestions and Pairings:** This Cheesy Ground Beef Rice Casserole is a complete and satisfying meal on its own! It pairs wonderfully with a simple side, like a crisp green salad with a light vinaigrette, or some steamed green beans or broccoli. For other fantastic, easy-to-make, cheesy comfort food dishes, you might also enjoy my [This Mexican Chicken and Rice Casserole Is My Favorite One-Pan Dinner That's Always a Hit](#).
17. **Storage and Leftover Tips:** Leftover Cheesy Ground Beef Rice Casserole stores beautifully! Place it in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3-4 days. To reheat, cover loosely with foil and warm in a preheated oven at 300°F (150°C) until heated through, or microwave individual portions until warm and bubbly. This casserole also freezes well for up to 2-3 months; thaw in the refrigerator overnight before reheating.
18. **More Recipes You Will Love:** If you loved the easy prep and comforting flavors of this casserole, here are a few more savory and satisfying recipes that I think you'll absolutely love:
19. For another crowd-pleasing, cheesy dip, check out my [This Crockpot Nacho Dip Is the Reason I Never Have Leftovers](#).
20. If you're a fan of quick and easy ways to feed a crowd with cheesy goodness, don't miss my [These Sheet Pan Quesadillas Are My Favorite Way to Feed a Crowd Fast](#).
21. For a fun, customizable, and no-fuss meal perfect for entertaining, my [This Walking Taco Bar Is My Favorite No-Fuss Way to Feed a Crowd](#) is a fantastic choice.
22. And for an incredibly cheesy and easy-to-make casual meal, my [Easy Cheesy Chicken Sliders with Marinara Garlic Butter](#) are always a hit!
23. **Final Thoughts:** This Cheesy Ground Beef Rice Casserole is a true weeknight hero! It's incredibly satisfying, packed with flavor, and delivers on that cozy comfort we all crave. It's the kind of meal that brings smiles

to every face around the table. Give it a try, and enjoy the delicious simplicity!

24. What's your go-to comfort food casserole? Share your ideas and feedback in the comments below, and don't forget to follow Chef Maniac for more delightful and inspiring recipes!

SWAPS & NOTES

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

Original recipe: <https://chefmaniac.com/cheesy-ground-beef-rice-casserole-ultimate-family-comfort-food/>