

Chicken Bacon Ranch Pasta Stack: Your New Go-To Dinner for Cheesy, Quick Comfort

The Ultimate Chicken Bacon Ranch Pasta Stack: Creamy, Cheesy Comfort in 30 Minutes



TIME
30 min

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INGREDIENTS

Swaps and Notes:

The Chicken: I almost always use rotisserie chicken for this recipe. It's the ultimate shortcut! If you cook your own, aim for breasts or thighs cut into bite-sized pieces.

The Cheese: Don't limit yourself to cheddar. Pepper Jack will give it a nice, subtle kick, Monterey Jack keeps it mild, or you can mix in some Mozzarella for extra stretch.

To Lighten It Up: You can swap the heavy cream for milk (2% or whole) or even chicken broth if you want to cut down on fat. The sauce will be thinner but still flavorful. For a lighter chicken dish, check out [A Light, Tangy Chicken Salad I Actually Crave \(And There's No Mayo in Sight\)](#).

Spice It Up: Add a pinch of red pepper flakes to the sauce with the onion powder for a little warmth.

? How to Make the Chicken Bacon Ranch Pasta Stack:

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 20 minutes

Total Time: 30 minutes

Serves: 4-6 hungry souls

Step 1: Cook the Pasta:

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil.

Add the rotini pasta and cook according to package directions until perfectly al dente (tender but

still slightly firm).

Drain the pasta immediately and set it aside. Do not rinse.

Step 2: Build the Creamy Sauce:

In a large skillet or Dutch oven (big enough to hold all the pasta), combine the ranch dressing, heavy cream (or milk), onion powder, and a dash of pepper.

Warm this mixture over medium heat, stirring occasionally. Do not let it boil, just let it come to a nice gentle simmer until warm and slightly thickened.

Step 3: Add the Meat:

Stir in the cubed cooked chicken and the crumbled crispy bacon.

Continue stirring until the chicken and bacon are fully coated in the creamy ranch sauce and are heated through.

Step 4: The Cheesy Finish:

Reduce the heat to low.

Toss in the cooked, drained pasta. Mix well to ensure every noodle is coated.

Finally, add the 1 1/2 cups of shredded cheddar cheese. Stir continuously until the cheese is completely melted, smooth, and gooey, creating that glorious "stack" consistency.

Step 5: Serve:

Serve immediately, stacked high in bowls! Garnish with a sprinkle of fresh chopped parsley and a little extra crumbled bacon if desired.

Tips for Success:

Grate Your Own Cheese: Pre-shredded cheese contains anti-caking agents that can make your sauce slightly grainy. Grating a block of sharp cheddar yourself yields a much smoother, creamier, and gooier sauce.

Keep it Moving: When melting the cheese, keep the heat low and keep stirring. This prevents the sauce from breaking or the cheese from clumping at the bottom.

Don't Overcook the Pasta: Cook your pasta to the low end of the time range on the box. Since it will sit in the hot sauce for a few minutes, you want it to be al dente when you drain it.

Optional Bake: If you love a golden, bubbly top, transfer the finished pasta to a casserole dish, sprinkle with extra cheese, and bake at 400°F for 10 minutes or until the top is melted and slightly browned. This works great for making a crowd-pleasing casserole, much like my These Chicken Enchiladas are my go-to for cozy crowd-pleasing dinners.

Serving Suggestions and Pairings:

Salad: A simple green salad with a Vinaigrette

Dressing is the perfect light and acidic counterpoint to the creamy pasta.

Bread: Nothing beats dipping a piece of Garlic Bread or a crusty Italian loaf into the cheesy sauce.

Vegetables: Steamed or roasted Broccoli or Asparagus adds a vibrant green and earthy flavor.

DIRECTIONS

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2. Cook : Time: 20 minutes
3. Total : Time: 30 minutes
4. Serves: 4-6 hungry souls
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9. Warm this mixture over medium heat, stirring occasionally. Do not let it boil, just let it come to a nice gentle simmer until warm and slightly thickened.
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11. Continue stirring until the chicken and bacon are fully coated in the creamy ranch sauce and are heated through.
12. Step 4: The Cheesy Finish: Reduce the heat to low.
13. Toss in the cooked, drained pasta. Mix well to ensure every noodle is coated.
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glorious "stack" consistency.

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19. Optional Bake: If you love a golden, bubbly top, transfer the finished pasta to a casserole dish, sprinkle with extra cheese, and bake at 400°F for 10 minutes or until the top is melted and slightly browned. This works great for making a crowd-pleasing casserole, much like my These Chicken Enchiladas are my go-to for cozy crowd-pleasing dinners.
20. Serving Suggestions and Pairings: This rich pasta is a full meal on its own, but a fresh, crisp side can provide a lovely contrast.
21. Salad: A simple green salad with a Vinaigrette Dressing is the perfect light and acidic counterpoint to the creamy pasta.
22. Bread: Nothing beats dipping a piece of Garlic Bread or a crusty Italian loaf into the cheesy sauce.
23. Vegetables: Steamed or roasted Broccoli or Asparagus adds a vibrant green and earthy flavor.
24. Drinks: Pair this savory dish with a refreshing glass of Iced Tea or, for an adult pairing, a light Pinot Grigio or a cold Lager Beer.
25. Nutritional Information (Per Serving): Disclaimer: This is an estimated value and can vary based on the specific ingredients (especially the ranch dressing and type of cream) and portion size.

SWAPS & NOTES

Cheddar Cheese, shredded 1 1/2 cups Use a sharp or medium cheddar for the best flavor.

Rotini Pasta 1 lb Penne, bowtie, or shells also work well.

Cooked Chicken, cubed 2 cups See "Swaps and Notes" for time-saving tips.

Crispy Bacon, crumbled 6 slices Cooked until nice and crisp.

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