

Why Rice and Gravy Is One of the South's Most Comforting Classic Meals

Rice and Gravy (Southern Style): This Simple Southern Dish Is Pure Comfort in a Bowl



TIME

1 to 2 min

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INGREDIENTS

For the Gravy:

2 tablespoons oil or bacon drippings

1 1/2 pounds chicken thighs, pork chops, or beef stew meat

Salt and black pepper, to taste

1 small onion, diced

2 cloves garlic, minced

2 tablespoons all-purpose flour

3 cups chicken or beef broth

1/2 teaspoon paprika

1/2 teaspoon dried thyme

1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper, optional

For the Rice:

2 cups cooked white rice

Chopped parsley, optional for garnish

DIRECTIONS

- Step 1: Season and brown the meat:** Pat the meat dry and season it generously with salt and black pepper. Heat the oil or drippings in a large skillet or Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Brown the meat on both sides until it develops a deep golden crust. Remove and set aside.
- Step 2: Build the flavor base:** In the same pan, add the diced onion and cook until softened. Stir in the garlic and cook for about 30 seconds. Sprinkle in the flour and stir well, letting it cook for 1 to 2 minutes to remove the raw flour taste.
- Step 3: Make the gravy:** Slowly pour in the broth while stirring, scraping up all the browned bits from the bottom of the pan. Add the paprika, thyme, and cayenne if using. Stir until the gravy begins to smooth out and thicken slightly.
- Step 4: Simmer until tender:** Return the browned meat to the pan. Reduce the heat to low, cover, and let it simmer for 35 to 50 minutes, depending on the cut of meat, until the meat is tender and the gravy is rich and flavorful.
- Step 5: Serve over rice:** Spoon hot cooked rice into bowls or onto plates, then ladle the meat and gravy generously over the top. Finish with chopped parsley if desired.

SWAPS & NOTES

Southern rice and gravy can be made a number of ways depending on the family and the region.

Some versions use chicken, especially thighs, while others lean toward pork chops or beef.

The method stays mostly the same: brown the meat well, build flavor in the pan, and let the gravy simmer until everything is

tender.

If you want a richer gravy, use bacon drippings instead of oil.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

The biggest key to great rice and gravy is browning.

The deeper the color on the meat and in the pan, the better the final gravy will taste.

Also, when adding the broth, stir slowly and scrape well to bring all that flavor into the sauce.

Keep the heat low during the simmering stage so the meat becomes tender without drying out.

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