

Chicken and Rice Casserole



This recipe assumes the rice requires about 1 1/2 cups liquid per cup of rice to cook. Some rice varieties, such as brown rice, require more liquid (and a longer cooking time). Adjust recipe accordingly.

If you are avoiding cooking with alcohol, skip the sherry and deglaze the pan with a 1/4 cup extra of chicken stock.

Depending on how salted your stock is, you may need to more generously salt this dish. You can always salt to taste at the table.

Stovetop Method: To cook the casserole on the stovetop use a large sauté pan with a tight cover, cook on low when all is assembled. Cook it low enough to keep a simmer, but not so high that you burn the rice.

Prep time: 10 minutes **Cook time:** 1 hour, 10 minutes **Yield:** Serves 6 (with leftovers)

INGREDIENTS

- 2 1/2 pounds boneless, skinless chicken thighs, cut into 1 to 1 1/2 inch pieces, patted dry
- Salt and pepper
- 4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 pound cremini or button mushrooms, sliced
- 1/4 cup dry sherry or white wine
- 1 1/3 cups chicken stock (See Recipe Note)
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 1/4 cup cream
- 1 cup uncooked white rice, medium or long grain
- 1 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon each of Italian seasoning and poultry seasoning (or 2 teaspoons of one of these herb mixes, or 2 tablespoons chopped fresh herbs such as rosemary, sage, thyme, and basil)
- 1/2 teaspoon paprika
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley

Special equipment:

- [9 x 13-inch casserole dish](#)

METHOD

1 Preheat oven to 375°F.

2 Brown the chicken: Heat 2 tablespoons of olive oil in a large sauté pan on medium high or high heat (hot enough to brown but not burn). Season the chicken pieces all over with salt and pepper.

Working in batches, brown the chicken pieces on both sides, about 1 to 2 minutes per batch. Add a little more olive oil if needed with every batch.

Remove chicken pieces and set aside in a bowl. The chicken does not have to be cooked through, only browned.

3 Sauté the onions and garlic: In the same sauté pan add 1 tablespoon olive oil. Lower the heat to medium, add the onions, and cook until translucent, about 3 minutes.

Add the garlic; cook 30 seconds more. Remove onions and garlic to a shallow 9x13 casserole dish.

4 Sauté the mushrooms: Raise heat to medium high and add the sliced mushrooms. Dry sauté the mushrooms (don't add butter or oil), allowing them to brown lightly and release some of their moisture. Add the mushrooms to the casserole dish.

5 Make the sauce: Add 1/4 cup dry sherry or dry white wine to the pan to deglaze it, scraping off the browned bits from the bottom.

(At this point, if you are making ahead, reduce the sherry to 1 tablespoon and pour off into the casserole dish. Refrigerate cooked onions, garlic, mushrooms, and browned chicken pieces until you are ready to make the casserole.)

Let the sherry reduce to about 1 tablespoon, then add the chicken stock, and remove from heat. Stir in 1 1/2 teaspoons salt, the cream, and the sour cream.

6 Assemble the casserole: Add the uncooked rice to the casserole dish. Then pour the stock, sherry, cream, and sour cream mixture over the rice.

Add the Italian and poultry seasonings (or fresh herbs) and paprika to the dish.

Stir the rice, onion, mushroom, and herb mixture so that they are evenly distributed in the casserole dish.

Place the chicken pieces on top of the rice mixture (in a single layer if you can, they will be crowded).

7 Bake: Cover the casserole dish tightly with aluminum foil. Bake in a 375°F oven for 45 minutes and then remove foil.

If the casserole still has too much liquid, let it cook a few minutes more, uncovered, until the excess liquid has evaporated away.

8 Serve: Sprinkle with fresh parsley before serving.

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