

South-Western Chicken Casserole

Cooked like rice pilaf, this colorful one-pot meal will make dinner for a crowd or provide leftovers for a smaller group. Adjust your spice level according to preference and enjoy the flavor and warmth of this protein-packed dish!

Source: Hannah Brillong, Nutrition Specialist for the Co-op Food Stores and Dietetic Intern with Live Well/Work Well

Makes: 6-8 servings; **Serving Size:** 324 g or 1 ½ cups

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons sunflower seed oil (or other vegetable oil of your choice)
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper (optional)
- 1 cup finely chopped onion (1 medium onion)
- 1 cup chopped red pepper
- ½ seeded, finely diced jalapeño pepper (optional)
- 2 cups short grain brown rice, rinsed in cold water and set aside
- 2 cups low sodium chicken broth
- 15 ounce can black beans (no need to drain or rinse)
- 14.5 ounce can diced tomatoes (no need to drain)
- 2 small chicken breasts (roughly 1 pound un-cooked) cut into 1-2 inch cubes
- 4 ounces grated Cheddar or Jack cheese
- ¼ cup roughly chopped cilantro leaves



Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350°
2. Place Dutch oven (or other oven-safe lidded pot) over medium-low heat and add oil.
3. Once oil looks shimmery (1-2 minutes), add spices and stir to combine. Let cook for about a minute, or just until fragrant.
4. Add onions and peppers to pot and cook for 5-6 minutes (until onions appear translucent but not browned).
5. Add rice to pot and increase heat to medium. Stir frequently with wooden spoon for 4-5 minutes to toast rice.
6. Add black beans, tomatoes, and chicken broth; stir to combine. Place chicken on top and press lightly into mixture.
7. Bring contents to a boil; cover and transfer to oven.
8. Bake at 350°F for 40 minutes. Remove from oven, lift lid and check liquid. If there appears to be extra liquid, uncover pot and place back in oven for an additional 10 minutes.
9. Remove from oven, top with cheese and cilantro. Recover and let rest for 4-5 minutes, or enough time for cheese to melt. Serve with sour cream or plain yogurt.

Nutrition (per serving, not including yogurt/sour cream): 320 Calories, 10.8g Total Fat, 4g Saturated Fat, 40g Carbohydrate, 8g Fiber, 20g Protein, 466mg Sodium

Hannah's Healthy Hints

- ✓ Try any variety of canned beans.
- ✓ If using a regular sauce pot, try placing a wet dish towel over the pot, covering tightly with lid, and tucking the ends up over the top before placing in the oven. This will encourage the rice to steam within. Take care when removing towel, as it will be extremely hot.
- ✓ Combining black beans with chicken gives the flavor and feel of a "meat" dish while supplementing with a low cost, high fiber vegetarian protein as well! This way, you can feed a crowd of 6-8 and only buy 2 chicken breasts.