

Treasure Barrel

Cowboy Butter Chicken Pasta: Ultimate Comfort Dish Recipe

10 min Prep time	**20 min** Cook time	**30 min** Total time
4 Servings	**Easy** Difficulty	**American** Cuisine

Ingredients

For the Chicken and Pasta

- [ ] 1 lb boneless, skinless chicken breast, cut into 1-inch cubes
- [ ] 12 oz fettuccine or pasta of your choice
- [ ] 1 tbsp olive oil
- [ ] Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

For the Cowboy Butter Sauce

- [ ] 1/2 cup unsalted butter
- [ ] 4-5 cloves garlic, minced
- [ ] 1 tbsp fresh lemon juice
- [ ] 1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley
- [ ] 2 tbsp chopped fresh chives
- [ ] 1 tsp fresh thyme leaves (or 1/2 tsp dried)
- [ ] 1/2 tsp smoked paprika
- [ ] 1/4 tsp red pepper flakes (or more, to taste)
- [ ] 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- [ ] 1/2 cup reserved starchy pasta water

Instructions

1. First, let's create a calm space. Put a large pot of water on to boil for your pasta, and be sure to salt it generously—it should taste like the sea. While it's heating, gently pat your chicken pieces completely dry with a paper towel; this is so important for getting a beautiful golden crust. Season them simply with salt and pepper. This little moment of prep is my favorite part, it sets the stage for everything to come together smoothly.

2. Once your water is boiling, add the pasta and cook according to the package directions until it's al dente. While the pasta is cooking, heat the olive oil in a large skillet or pan over medium-high heat. Add the chicken pieces in a single layer, being careful not to crowd the pan. Let them cook for about 3-4 minutes per side, until they are golden brown and cooked through. I love the sound and smell of chicken searing; it's so satisfying. If you're a fan of perfectly cooked chicken, you might also like these oven-baked thighs. Once done, remove the chicken from the pan and set it aside on a plate.

3. Turn the heat down to medium-low. In the same skillet, add the unsalted butter and let it melt completely, scraping up any browned bits from the chicken—that's pure flavor. Add the minced garlic and cook for just about a minute until it's fragrant. You have to watch it closely so it doesn't burn, you just want it to be aromatic and soft. Stir in the smoked paprika and red pepper flakes and let them bloom in the butter for about 30 seconds. Wow, the aroma that fills your kitchen right now is just incredible.

4 Now, turn off the heat and stir in the fresh lemon juice, parsley, chives, and thyme. Before you drain your pasta, remember to scoop out about a cup of that starchy cooking water. It's liquid gold! Add about half a cup of the pasta water to the skillet and whisk everything together to create a smooth, beautiful sauce. Add the cooked pasta directly into the skillet with the sauce, followed by the cooked chicken and the grated Parmesan cheese. Toss everything gently until the pasta is coated, the cheese is melted, and the sauce is glossy and wonderful. If it seems a little thick, add another splash of pasta water until it reaches the perfect consistency. Serve immediately in warm bowls, with maybe a little extra parsley on top.

Nutrition per serving

580 kcal	35 g	52 g	28 g
Calories	Protein	Carbs	Fat

Tips & notes

- The starchy pasta water is truly the key to a perfect sauce. It contains starches that help the butter and oil emulsify, creating a creamy texture that clings to the noodles beautifully without having to add heavy cream.
- Feel free to adjust the herbs based on what you have and love. Fresh dill or a little bit of rosemary could be a lovely addition, too. Cooking is about making things your own, so don't be afraid to play with the flavors.
- For the best flavor, use freshly grated Parmesan cheese from a block. The pre-shredded kind often has anti-caking agents that can prevent it from melting as smoothly into the sauce, and the flavor is just so much better.