



Taco Bell Who? This Taco Rice Bowl Is the Cheesy Fix You Need

JUMP TO RECIPE

Prep	10 mins
Cook	20 mins
Total	30 mins
Serves	4

Ingredients

For the Taco Meat:

- 2 tablespoons (30 ml) neutral oil, such as vegetable or canola
- 1 medium white or yellow onion (7 ounces; 200 g), finely diced (about 1 cup)
- 2 medium cloves garlic (10 g), minced
- 1 pound (454 g) ground beef, preferably 80% lean
- 1 tablespoon (8 g) chile powder
- 2 teaspoons (7 g) Diamond Crystal kosher salt; for table salt, use half as much by volume
- 1 1/2 teaspoons ground cumin
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon smoked paprika
- 1/4 teaspoon dried oregano
- 4 teaspoons ketchup (about 1 ounce; 25 g)
- 1 cup (240 ml) water

For the Cheese Sauce:

- 8 ounces (226 g) extra-sharp cheddar cheese, grated on large holes of a box grater
- 1 teaspoon cornstarch or potato starch
- 1 1/4 cups (300 ml) evaporated milk
- 1/4 teaspoon Diamond Crystal kosher salt; for table salt, use half as much by volume
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1/8 teaspoon smoked paprika

To Serve:

- 4 cups cooked short-grain white rice (25 ounces; 700 g)
- 2 cups shredded iceberg lettuce (6 1/2 ounces; 180 g)
- 1 large tomato (11 1/4 ounces; 320 g), halved and sliced (about 1/8-inch-thick slices)
- Salsa, homemade or store-bought, for serving
- Tortilla chips, for serving

Directions

1. In a large nonstick skillet over medium-high, heat oil until shimmering. Add onion and garlic and cook, stirring constantly to avoid browning, until tender and fragrant, about 3 minutes. Add ground beef and cook, using a wooden spoon to break up meat into small pieces, until the beef starts to brown, about 5 minutes.
2. Add chile powder, salt, ground cumin, black pepper, smoked paprika, dried oregano, ketchup, and 1 cup (240 ml) water. Cook, using a wooden spoon to scrape and stir bottom of the skillet. Bring to a boil over high heat and cook until liquid slightly thickens, about 3 minutes. Remove from heat, season to taste, and cover to keep warm; set aside.
3. **For the Cheese Sauce:** In a medium saucepan, toss grated cheddar with cornstarch to evenly coat. Add 1 1/4 cups (300 ml) evaporated milk, salt, black pepper, and smoked paprika. Cook on low heat, whisking constantly, until melted and smooth, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat.
4. Divide cooked rice equally among 4 plates. Top each with taco meat, followed by the cheese sauce, lettuce, and sliced tomato. Garnish with salsa and crushed tortilla chips.

Note

For the cheese, if you want to keep it classic, you can skip making the cheese sauce and use 1 cup of shredded sharp cheddar instead. To serve, add 1/4 cup of cheddar on top of each serving of beef. The residual heat of the meat will slightly melt the cheese. To get the best melty texture, use freshly grated cheddar, preferably on the thicker grated side. Pregrated, store-bought cheddar has extra ingredients that prevent it from as easily melting compared to the freshly grated stuff.