Crockpot Chicken Parmesan Soup

Chicken Parmesan soup combines chicken, tomato broth, pasta and cheese, with toasted crumbs added at the table. Cooking pasta separately keeps leftovers from turning into a thick pasta casserole.

SERVES 6	PREP 15 min	COOK 360 min	EXTRA 0 min



Ingredients

- 1 1/2 lb (680 g) boneless skinless chicken breast
- 1 medium onion (150 g), finely diced
- 3 garlic cloves (9 g), minced
- 1 can (28 oz / 795 g) crushed tomatoes
- 4 cups (960 ml) low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 tsp (1 g) dried oregano
- 1/2 tsp (3 g) fine salt
- 1/4 tsp (0.5 g) black pepper
- 4 oz (115 g) dry small pasta, such as ditalini
- 1/2 cup (45 g) vegetarian Parmesan-style hard cheese, finely grated
- 1 cup (115 g) shredded mozzarella made with microbial or vegetarian rennet
- 1/2 cup (30 g) panko
- 1 tbsp (14 g) unsalted butter
- 2 tbsp (4 g) torn basil
- 2 qt (1.9 L) water, for boiling pasta

Method

1. Place thawed chicken, onion, garlic, tomatoes, broth, oregano, salt and pepper into a 5- to 6-quart slow cooker. Cover and cook on LOW for 4 to 6 hours or HIGH for 2 1/2 to 3 1/2 hours, until chicken reaches 165°F (74°C) and onion is tender. Begin temperature checks at the shorter time.
2. In a separate pot, boil pasta in the measured water for its package time, then drain. Keep it separate from the soup until serving so it does not soak up all the broth.
3. Melt butter in a small skillet and toast panko over medium-low heat for 3 to 4 minutes, stirring until golden. Transfer to a clean bowl.
4. Transfer cooked chicken to a clean board, shred with two forks and return it to the soup.
5. Turn the soup heat off and stir in hard cheese a little at a time. Divide pasta among six bowls, ladle soup over it, and top each with mozzarella, toasted crumbs and basil.

Doneness & safe handling

Insert an instant-read thermometer into the thickest center of each portion; chicken must reach 165°F (74°C). For thin pieces, insert from the side. Color and time alone do not establish doneness.

Cook’s notes

Store pasta, soup and toasted crumbs in separate containers if you expect leftovers.

Common mistake

Leaving pasta in hot soup for hours makes it swell and go soft.

Variations

Use 2 cups (60 g) baby spinach, stirred into the hot soup at the end until wilted.

Serving

Divide pasta, soup, mozzarella, toasted crumbs and basil among six bowls.

Storage

Divide leftovers into shallow covered containers and refrigerate within 2 hours, or within 1 hour above 90°F (32°C). Keep at 40°F (4°C) or colder and use within 3 to 4 days.

Freezing

Freeze soup without pasta, mozzarella or crumbs in airtight portions for up to 3 months. Thaw in the refrigerator and add freshly cooked pasta and toppings.

Reheating

Bring the soup base to a rolling boil, stirring, and verify chicken reaches 165°F (74°C). Add separately reheated pasta and fresh toppings at serving.

Quick questions

Can I cook pasta in the soup? You can, but it changes liquid needs and leftovers thicken; separate cooking gives more control.

Can I freeze it? Freeze the soup base without pasta or crumb topping, then add fresh cooked pasta when reheating.

Recipe references: Pillsbury - tomato broth soup and separate crumb topping • https://www.pillsbury.com/recipes/slow-cooker-chicken-parmesan-soup/d47a2da4-4914-47f4-85e1-0e7c71f0cc36
USDA FSIS - poultry safety and leftovers • https://www.fsis.usda.gov/food-safety/safe-food-handling-and-preparation/food-safety-basics/leftovers-and-food-safety