



This meal is so robust and cheesy that we usually dive right in, before I can snap a good photo. That's a sign of an excellent dish, when you can't wait for the picture! I hope I've done it some justice and that you want to dive right in, too!

The Un-Believable Un-Burrito

This recipe is everything you love about a burrito minus the tortilla. Don't get me wrong, the tortilla comes in very handy when you – well – want to hold a burrito in your hand! This version, the un-burrito, is a one-pan dinner that cooks in less than 30 minutes, feeds 2 as a main dish (with leftovers) and 4 easily as a side dish. You can customize it to your own taste, and you can even wrap it in a tortilla if you want, but I like it just like this.

Ingredients

- 2 Tablespoons canola oil
- 1 cup long grain white rice
- 2 cups prepared chicken breasts, diced (leftover or rotisserie works great)
- ½ onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 jalapeno, seeded & minced OR 1 small can roasted green chiles
- ½ red bell pepper, chopped
- 2 Tablespoons tomato paste
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
- A pinch of salt
- 2 cups of low sodium chicken stock
- 1 can of black beans, rinsed and drained

4 deli slices of sharp cheddar cheese

1 cup of grated cheddar cheese

Optional toppings: hot sauce, salsa, sour cream, guacamole, green onion or any of your favorite burrito fillings!

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees.

A 12-inch nonstick skillet is perfect for this, as long as it is oven-safe. The dish comes together very quickly, so have all ingredients ready to go when you begin cooking.

Heat the oil in the skillet over medium heat. Add the onions and bell pepper (and jalapeno if using) and sauté for 3 minutes. Add the garlic and sauté for 1 more minute.

Next add the rice and stir it well through the vegetables (1 to 2 minutes). Add the already-cooked chicken, tomato paste, canned chiles (if using), and spices. Add a pinch of salt. Mix well with the rice and veg.

Now add the chicken stock and black beans, and bring the mixture to a light boil. Put a lid on the pan, reduce the heat to a gentle simmer, and cook for 12 to 15 minutes. You want the rice to be cooked through and the chicken stock to be absorbed. Cooking time will depend upon the strength of your simmer.

Test the rice, and when it tastes good, take the pan off the heat, put the cover back on and let the rice sit for 5 minutes. Next, put the 4 slices of cheddar across the top of the rice, and then top with half of the shredded cheddar. Put the pan in the oven (no lid) and let it warm for 5 to 10 minutes or just until the cheese is deliciously melted. (Note: If your pan is broiler-safe, you can broil for 1 to 3 minutes instead of baking. Don't take your eye off of it! Pull as soon as the cheese bubbles!)

Time to eat! Serve on a plate or in a bowl, and garnish with the remaining cheddar cheese and any additional toppings of your choice! Plus, you can easily make this a vegetarian dish by omitting the chicken and using vegetable stock or water.

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