

# Mexican Chicken & Rice Casserole

*with Monterey Jack Cheese & Lacinato Kale*

As the weather cools down, our minds turn to comforting, hot casseroles. We're making this one Mexican-style, with chicken and rice, black beans, cilantro and authentic spices. To shake things up, we're also adding beautiful, Italian-variety kale to the mix, and topping the casserole with shredded Monterey Jack (a mild American cheese). In the oven, the cheese melts down to a wonderfully crispy crust—while beneath, the vibrant flavors of the filling come together deliciously. Dig in, chefs!



## Ingredients

- 1½ Pounds Ground Chicken
- 1¼ Cups Long Grain White Rice
- 1¼ Cups Black Beans
- 1¼ Cups Shredded Monterey Jack Cheese
- 1 15-Ounce Can Diced Tomatoes
- 3 Cloves Garlic
- 1 Bunch Lacinato Kale
- 1 Red Onion
- 1 Bunch Cilantro

## Knick Knacks

- ¼ Cup Mexican Crema
- 2 Tablespoons Mexican Casserole Spice Blend  
(Ancho Chile Powder, Garlic Powder, Ground Cumin, Ground Mexican Oregano & Smoked Sweet Paprika)

**Makes 4 Servings**

**About 690 Calories Per Serving**

**Prep Time: 10 min | Cook Time: 35 to 45 min**





1



## Cook the rice:

Preheat the oven to 450°F. In a large pot, combine the **rice**, **2½ cups of water** and a **big pinch of salt**. Heat to boiling on high. Once boiling, cover and reduce the heat to low. Simmer 10 to 12 minutes, or until the liquid has been absorbed and the rice is tender. Remove from heat and fluff with a fork.

2



## Prepare the ingredients:

While the rice cooks, wash and dry the fresh produce. Peel and thinly slice the garlic. Peel, halve and thinly slice the onion. Remove and discard the kale stems; roughly chop the leaves. Drain and rinse the beans. Thinly slice the cilantro leaves and stems.

3



## Start the filling:

In a large pan, heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil on medium-high until hot. Add the **garlic**, **onion** and **spice blend**; season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, 2 to 4 minutes, or until softened and fragrant. Add the **ground chicken**; season with salt and pepper. Cook, frequently breaking the meat apart with a spoon, 4 to 6 minutes, or until lightly browned and cooked through.

4



## Add the vegetables:

Add the **diced tomatoes**, **kale**, **beans** and **½ cup of water** to the pan of chicken; season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, 4 to 6 minutes, or the kale has wilted and the liquid has thickened; season with salt and pepper to taste. Transfer to the pot of **cooked rice**.

5



## Finish the filling & assemble the casserole:

To the pot of cooked rice, chicken and vegetables, add the **crema**, **¼ of the cheese** and **all but a pinch of the cilantro**. Stir to thoroughly combine; season with salt and pepper to taste. Transfer to a baking dish. Evenly top with the **remaining cheese**.

6



## Bake the casserole & serve your dish:

Place the **casserole** in the oven and bake 12 to 14 minutes, or until the cheese is browned and bubbling. Remove from the oven and let stand for at least 2 minutes before serving. Garnish with **remaining cilantro**. Enjoy!