

Microwave Chilli Con Carne with Rice

Chilli con carne is a spicy Mexican-style stew. This recipe is cooked completely in the microwave – and that includes cooking the rice.



Nutritional information per portion (494g):

Energy	Fat	Saturates	Sugars	Salt
2006kJ 473kcal	7.9g 11%	2.7g 13%	7.2g 8%	0.31g 5%

of an adult's reference intake.
Typical values per 100g: energy 406kJ/96kcal.

Equipment

Weighing scales
Chopping board
Sharp knife
Garlic press (optional)
Kitchen paper
Can opener
Colander
2.5 litre, large microwave-safe bowl with lid or clingfilm x 2
Fork
Oven gloves
Measuring spoons
Wooden spoon
Kettle
Mug
Sieve

Ingredients

Serves 4
1 medium onion
1 clove garlic
100g mushrooms (optional)
1 x 400g can chopped tomatoes
1 x 400g can red kidney beans
250g minced beef
2 x 15ml spoons tomato puree
1 x 5ml spoon chilli powder OR $\frac{3}{4}$ x 5ml spoon chilli flakes
Black pepper (optional)
1 mug long grain OR basmati rice (approx 250–300g)
550–600ml boiling water



Top Tips

- Cook the chilli for 5 more minutes if the liquid has not been absorbed or the meat is not tender enough.
- Always use the same-sized mug to measure the rice and the water. If you would rather weigh the rice, use 250g of rice and 600ml of water.
- There is no need to cover the rice when cooking it in the microwave.

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Method

1. Peel and finely chop the onion and garlic (press or chop the garlic as small as you can).
2. Wipe the mushrooms (if using) with kitchen paper to remove any dirt and slice finely.
3. Open the cans of tomatoes and beans. Drain the kidney beans through a colander and rinse with cold water.
4. Put the minced beef into the large bowl and add the onion and garlic. Mix together using a fork until the meat is thoroughly broken up.
5. Cover with a microwave-safe lid or clingfilm, leaving a small area open to allow steam to escape. Cook in the microwave on full power for 5 minutes (timing based on an 800W microwave). Remove from the microwave. Peel back the clingfilm and stir well with the fork, breaking up any clumps of meat.
6. Add the mushrooms (if using), tomato puree, chilli flakes or powder, tomatoes and beans to the meat and stir well.
7. Add a small amount of water to the empty tomato can, swirl around and add to the bowl. Season with black pepper to taste (if using).
8. Re-cover in the same way and cook on full power for 5 minutes. Remove the bowl and stir well.
9. Re-cover, return to the microwave and cook on full power for 10 minutes. Remove halfway through and stir well. Leave to stand while you cook the rice.
10. To cook the rice, boil the kettle. Measure one mug, approximately 250–300g of rice, and pour into the sieve. Run cold water through the rice until the water runs clear and drain. Pour the rice into the other large microwave-safe bowl. Fill the same mug with boiling water twice and pour over the rice. Stir once and put into the microwave.
11. Microwave on full power for 10 minutes.
12. Remove the rice and stir. Return it to the microwave on full power for another minute.
13. Remove the rice and leave to stand for 1–2 minutes and then taste to check it is cooked. If it needs slightly more cooking add a small amount of water and cook for another 2 minutes.

Something to try next time

- Add a chopped red or orange pepper at step 4.
- If you have some dried herbs or spices in your cupboard add some to the chilli at step 6. Try $\frac{1}{2}$ x 5ml spoon of mixed herbs, cinnamon, coriander or cumin.
- Try adding 1 drained can of mixed pulses or 1 x 400g can of baked beans instead of red kidney beans, for a change.

Prepare now, eat later

- Cool the chilli con carne as quickly as possible, then cover and store in the fridge for up to 2 days or freeze for up to 3 months. Defrost and reheat until piping hot.
- Label food before freezing it with the contents and the date it was frozen.
- Rice is best eaten as soon as it is cooked, but any leftover rice should be cooled as quickly as possible (within 1 hour) and stored straightaway in the fridge for no longer than 24 hours. When you reheat any rice, always check that the dish is steaming hot all the way through and never reheat it more than once.

Skills used include:

Weighing, measuring, peeling, chopping, crushing, mixing/combining, boiling/simmering and microwaving.

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