

Tex-Mex Chicken Casserole

January 3, 2012

Serves 4-6

Prep time: 15 minutes

Bake time: 30 minutes



In this zesty twist on the standard chicken casserole, penne is tossed with cooked chicken, corn, black beans, tomatoes and green salsa and topped with plenty of cheese. Add fresh cilantro and homemade tortilla wedges for the finishing touch. Another perk? Bake straight from the freezer, and sit down to a hot, homecooked meal any night of the week.

INGREDIENTS

Cooking spray

2 cups (16 ounces) penne pasta, cooked according to package directions

2 cups chicken, cooked and chopped

1 can (14 1/2 ounces) black beans, rinsed and drained

1 can (14 1/2 ounces) diced tomatoes, with juice

1 cup fresh or frozen corn

Salt and pepper, to taste

1 jar (16 ounces) salsa verde

3/4 cup sour cream

1 cup Kraft® Shredded Pepper Jack cheese

1/2 cup Kraft® Shredded Mexican Blend cheese*

Lightly crushed tortilla chips (see recipe below)

1/4 cup cilantro, finely chopped

**Tip: Feel free to substitute more Mexican Blend cheese or Kraft Shredded Cheddar Cheese if Pepper Jack is too spicy.*

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven to 350°F and spray a 9x13" baking dish with cooking spray.

Place cooked pasta, chicken, black beans, tomatoes and corn in prepared dish. Season with salt and pepper, then toss to mix.

In another bowl, combine the salsa and sour cream. Pour evenly over chicken mixture. Sprinkle evenly with Kraft shredded cheeses, then cover with foil and bake 15 minutes.*

Remove foil and bake for another 15 minutes, or until cheese is melted and bubbly. Sprinkle with crushed tortilla chips and chopped cilantro. Serve using a slotted spoon.

**Tip: To prevent the cheese from sticking to the foil, spray it with cooking spray before placing over casserole.*

Freezing tip: Assemble the casserole, but don't garnish it. Securely double-wrap in foil and freeze for up to one month. Bake the frozen casserole, still wrapped, for 30 minutes in a preheated oven. Remove foil and bake 20-25 minutes more. Garnish before serving.

Homemade Tortilla Chips

Makes 16 wedges
Prep time: 5 minutes
Bake time: 6-7 minutes



INGREDIENTS

4 corn tortillas
Olive oil cooking spray
Salt

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven to 400°F and spray both sides of each tortilla with cooking spray. Stack the tortillas and cut them into wedges with a pizza cutter or a sharp knife. Sprinkle lightly with salt. Place the wedges in a single layer on a baking sheet and bake 6-7 minutes or until crisp and lightly browned. Watch carefully to prevent burning.

The chips will become crisper as they cool.

Topping tip: Cut tortillas into small strips or squares as an alternative to crushing.