

Creamy Cilantro Lime Chicken

*This **cilantro lime chicken** simmers in a creamy flavor-packed sauce and comes together in just one pan and in around 40 minutes from start to finish. This easy chicken dinner recipe is a favorite in my home—and many readers' homes too—all year round!*

I originally published this recipe in 2015 and have since added new photos and more helpful success tips. And based on reader feedback, increased the amount of creamy sauce!



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While I enjoy baking [desserts](#) the most, dinner is an everyday adventure. And if you're like me, you're constantly searching for quick and easy [dinner recipes](#). Well, you've come to the right place! This is my one-pan creamy cilantro lime chicken, a consistent crowd favorite.

One reader, Marci, commented: “ *Thank you for this recipe. My family has been obsessed for months; we have it at least once a week and I recommend it to everyone.* ”

Another reader, Rose, commented: “ *Omg what a flavor bomb!!! This was absolutely delicious!! ... Wish I made a double batch, but will be making again and again!!* ”

And another reader, Allison, commented: “ *STAPLE DINNER in our house and a GREAT thing to serve to guests! Everyone LOVES this* ”

Today I'm going to show you that one skillet is all it takes to transform chicken into something you and your family will love. The process is a lot like my skillet [apple cider chicken](#) and this [creamy lemon thyme chicken](#). Pan-sear the chicken on the stove, make a flavorful cilantro lime pan sauce, then bake the chicken in the sauce to finish.



Here's Why You'll Love This Cilantro Lime Chicken

- Quick and easy 1-pan meal

- Extra tender, juicy chicken
 - Creamy, buttery, zesty sauce tastes amazing on rice and vegetables, too!
 - Undeniably crowd pleasing, so you'll want to make it again and again
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Grab These Ingredients

- **Chicken:** I use boneless, skinless chicken breasts. Pound them down to even thickness. You could use boneless, skinless chicken thighs instead if desired.
- **Salt & Pepper**
- **Olive Oil**
- **Chicken Broth**
- **Fresh Lime Juice**
- **Onion:** Yellow, white, or red—chef's choice!
- **Cilantro**
- **Red Pepper Flakes:** Adds a bit of heat, but feel free to reduce or increase the amount to your liking.
- **Heavy Cream:** Just enough to make the sauce taste creamy and rich. See below for a dairy-free alternative.
- **Butter:** Adds so much delicious flavor!



Start the Chicken, Then Make the Pan Sauce

The process is the same as my [lemon thyme chicken](#) and [creamy garlic chicken and vegetables](#), so if you've made either of those before you know how easy it is!

Cook the chicken in a large oven-proof skillet until both sides are browned—the chicken will cook again in the oven so if the centers aren't cooked all the way through yet, that's fine. Remove the chicken temporarily and set it aside.

If you're in the market for a new skillet, [I own and love this one](#).



Now, using the same skillet, make the pan sauce. The juices left behind by the chicken are key for flavor, so don't clean the skillet before making the sauce!

Simmer the pan sauce until it has reduced and thickened.

Add the chicken back to the skillet:



Bake in the oven until the chicken is cooked through. Garnish the saucy chicken with extra cilantro (flavor! flavor!) and a squeeze of lime. Serve with rice and veggies, and smother them with the sauce, too!



Can I Make This Dairy Free?

Yes! Use full-fat canned coconut cream instead of heavy cream and coconut oil instead of butter for a dairy-free version with a delicious coconut-y twist.

What if My Pan Isn't Oven Safe?

No problem! After you cook the chicken and sauce on the stove, you can transfer both to a baking dish.

Can I Use Chicken Thighs Instead of Chicken Breasts?

Yes, you can use chicken thighs instead if you prefer. No changes necessary!

Can I Double the Sauce?

Yes! The recipe below reflects an almost-doubled portion of the sauce. Before 2025, it made only about half as much, but now there's plenty to generously coat the chicken and spoon over any sides you're serving.

What to Serve With Cilantro Lime Chicken



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Description

This cilantro lime chicken simmers in a creamy flavor-packed sauce and comes together in only 1 pan!

- 1.5 pounds (24 ounces/680g) **boneless, skinless chicken breasts**
- 1/4 teaspoon **salt**
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground **black pepper**
- 1 Tablespoon **olive oil**
- 1 and 1/2 cups (360ml) **chicken broth** (I recommend reduced sodium)
- 3 Tablespoons (45ml) **fresh lime juice**
- 1/2 cup (60g) chopped **red onion**
- 2 Tablespoons chopped fresh **cilantro**
- 1/2 – 1 teaspoon **red pepper flakes** *
- 1/3 cup (5 Tablespoons /80ml) **heavy cream** *
- 1/4 cup (4 Tablespoons / 56g) **unsalted butter**
- **optional:** lime wedges and more cilantro for garnish

Cook Mode Prevent your screen from going dark

1. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C).
 2. If the chicken breasts are uneven in thickness, [pound them down](#) so they're all even. This way all the breasts will cook through simultaneously. Sprinkle both sides with salt and pepper.
 3. In a large ovenproof skillet, heat the oil over medium-high heat. Add the chicken and cook for 6–7 minutes, turning once. You want the chicken nice and browned on the outside. (It doesn't have to be cooked all the way through yet.) Transfer chicken to a plate and cover with foil until step 5.
 4. Remove skillet from heat and add the broth, lime juice, onion, cilantro, and red pepper flakes. Return to heat. Cook and stir to scrape up the browned bits from the bottom of the skillet. Bring to a boil. Allow to boil, uncovered, for 10-12 minutes or until the liquid is reduced to 1/2 cup. Reduce heat to medium-low, then add the cream and butter. Stir until butter has melted, then remove from heat.
 5. Add the chicken back to the skillet, turning once to coat both sides in the sauce. Transfer the skillet to the preheated oven. Bake uncovered until the chicken is completely cooked through, about 5–10 minutes ([internal temperature](#) should be at least 165°F (74°C)).
 6. Serve chicken with sauce spooned on top, and garnish with lime wedges and cilantro, if desired.
 7. Leftovers keep well in the refrigerator for a few days. You can reheat on the stove over medium heat, in the microwave, or in the oven.
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Notes

1. **Special Tools** (affiliate links): [Meat Tenderizer](#) | Large Oven-Proof Skillet ([I own and love this one](#)) | [Tongs](#) | [Citrus Juicer](#) | [Instant-Read Thermometer](#)
2. **Red Pepper Flakes:** Adjust the amount of red pepper flakes to your liking. This amount made the chicken mildly spicy. The cream in the sauce mellows out the spice.
3. **Heavy Cream:** You can use whole milk or half-and-half instead, but for the thickest, richest sauce I **highly** recommend heavy cream. If using whole milk, make sure it is at room temperature to help prevent curdling.

4. **Dairy-Free:** Use coconut cream instead of heavy cream and coconut oil instead of butter.

Nutrition

- **Serving Size:** 1 chicken breast + 1/4 of the sauce
- **Calories:** 396
- **Sugar:** 1.5 g
- **Sodium:** 254.4 mg
- **Fat:** 23.7 g
- **Carbohydrates:** 4.3 g
- **Protein:** 40.8 g
- **Cholesterol:** 165.9 mg



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