

Unstuffed Cabbage Roll Recipe

Introduction

Have you ever wanted to enjoy the soul-comforting flavors of traditional cabbage rolls but found yourself short on time or energy? Enter the unstuffed cabbage roll, a deconstructed take on the classic dish that delivers all the same goodness without the meticulous wrapping process. This recipe captures the essence of hearty, home-cooked comfort food, with layers of savory beef, tender cabbage, and a rich tomato sauce. Perfect for a busy weeknight or a cozy weekend dinner, unstuffed cabbage rolls promise satisfaction in every bite.

Detailed Ingredients

- 1 1/2 pounds ground beef
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 small head cabbage, chopped
- 2 cups water
- 1 (29-ounce) can tomato sauce
- 1 (14.5-ounce) can diced tomatoes, undrained
- 1/2 cup uncooked white rice
- 2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper

Prep Time, Cook Time, Total Time, Yield

- Prep Time: 20 minutes
- Cook Time: 45 minutes
- Total Time: 1 hour 5 minutes
- Yield: 6 servings

Detailed Directions and Instructions

1. In a large skillet over medium heat, cook ground beef and onion until the beef is browned and the onion is tender, about 5 to 7 minutes.
2. Drain any excess grease from the skillet.
3. Stir in the chopped cabbage and cook until slightly softened, about 5 minutes.
4. Add the water, tomato sauce, and diced tomatoes to the skillet. Stir to combine.
5. Mix in the uncooked rice, Worcestershire sauce, garlic powder, salt, and pepper.
6. Bring the mixture to a boil, then reduce the heat to low. Cover and simmer for 25 to 30 minutes, or until the cabbage and rice are fully cooked and tender. Stir occasionally to prevent sticking.
7. Remove from heat and let sit for a few minutes before serving to allow the flavors to meld.

Notes

For best results, use lean ground beef to minimize excess grease. You can also substitute ground turkey or chicken for a lighter version of this dish. Feel free to add your favorite spices or herbs to taste. Some cooks enjoy adding a pinch of paprika or a dash of hot sauce for a bit of extra flavor. For a gluten-free version, ensure that your Worcestershire sauce and other canned ingredients do not contain any gluten-based additives.

Cook Techniques

Cooking unstuffed cabbage rolls is all about layering flavors. Browning the beef first not only adds depth but also helps to render out excess fat. Incorporating the onion early in the cooking process ensures that it becomes sweet and tender, blending seamlessly with the beef. When adding the cabbage, make sure it is chopped uniformly for even cooking. Simmering the dish allows the rice to absorb the flavorful tomato sauce, ensuring each grain is infused with the recipe's essence. Stir occasionally but gently to maintain the integrity of the cabbage and avoid mushy textures. The slow simmering process is crucial; it melds the ingredients and develops the rich, harmonious taste that is characteristic of traditional cabbage rolls.

FAQ

Can I make this recipe ahead of time?

Yes! Unstuffed cabbage rolls can be made in advance and stored in the refrigerator for up to 3 days. Reheat on the stove over low heat, stirring occasionally until warmed through. You might need to add a splash of water or broth to loosen the sauce.

Can I freeze this dish?

Absolutely. Allow the cooked unstuffed cabbage rolls to cool completely before transferring them to an airtight container or freezer bag. Freeze for up to 2 months. Thaw in the refrigerator overnight before reheating on the stove.

Can I use brown rice instead of white rice?

Yes, but note that brown rice has a longer cooking