



# Cheesy Chicken Ham Bake

## The First Bite That Hooked Me

The smell hit me first—garlic butter, smoky ham, and melted Swiss cheese. My neighbor brought this bake to a potluck years ago. One bite and I was sold. The creamy sauce hugged every bit of chicken, and the crunchy topping? Perfect. **Ever wondered how you could turn Cheesy Chicken Ham Bake into something unforgettable?** It's all in the sauce. Try it, and you'll see why it's my go-to comfort dish. What's the one meal that always feels like a hug to you? Share below!

## My Messy First Attempt

I burned the garlic butter sauce my first time making this. The kitchen smelled like a campfire, not cozy dinner. But I tried again, slower this time. The second batch was golden and smooth. **Cooking teaches**

**patience—and that mistakes taste better with cheese.** Now I laugh at that smoky mishap. What's your funniest kitchen fail? Tell me in the comments!

## Why This Dish Shines

• The Dijon mustard and lemon juice cut through the richness, balancing the cheese. • Panko breadcrumbs add a crisp contrast to the creamy chicken and ham. **Which flavor combo surprises you most?** Is it the smoky paprika or the tangy mustard? Vote with your fork—then tell me your pick!

## A Dish With Roots

This bake mixes Swiss cheese traditions with American comfort food. It's like a fancier cousin of mac and cheese. \*Did you know?\* Ham-and-cheese casseroles became popular in the 1950s for using leftovers. Today, they're a weeknight hero. What's your favorite way to reinvent leftovers? Let's swap ideas!





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### Ingredients:

Ingredient	Amount	Notes
Unsalted butter	4 tablespoons	
Garlic	2 cloves	Minced or grated
Flour	1/4 cup	
Whole milk	2 cups	
Dijon mustard	1 tablespoon	
Lemon juice	1 tablespoon	
Coarse kosher salt	1/2 teaspoon	
Ground black pepper	1/2 teaspoon	
Smoked paprika	1/4 teaspoon	
Shredded Swiss cheese	1 1/2 cups	
Parmesan cheese	1/4 cup	Freshly grated
Cooked chicken	5-6 cups	Diced or shredded
Ham steak	3 cups	Cubed
Butter (for topping)	2 tablespoons	Melted
Italian seasoning (for topping)	1/2 teaspoon	Homemade
Garlic powder (for topping)	1/2 teaspoon	
Panko breadcrumbs (for topping)	1 cup	
Fresh parsley	As needed	For garnish (optional)

## How to Make This Cozy Cheesy Bake

### Step 1

See also Creamy Garlic Parmesan Chicken Rice  
Preheat your oven to 350°F. Grease a 9×13 dish lightly. Set it aside.  
Melt butter in a saucepan. Add garlic and stir for 1 minute. **Step 2**

Whisk in flour to make a paste. Slowly pour in milk while stirring. Add mustard, lemon juice, and spices. Simmer gently. **Step 3** Stir in Swiss and Parmesan until melted. Remove from heat. Toss chicken and ham in the dish. Pour sauce over evenly. **Step 4** Mix melted butter, seasoning, and breadcrumbs for topping. Sprinkle over the casserole. Bake 20 minutes. Let rest 5 minutes. (Hard-learned tip: Use room-temperature milk to avoid lumps in your sauce.) **What's your go-to cheese for bakes? Share below! Cook Time:** 20 minutes **Total Time:** 35 minutes **Yield:** 6 servings **Category:** Dinner, Comfort Food

## 3 Twists to Try Tonight

**Vegetarian** Swap chicken and ham for mushrooms and spinach. Add extra cheese for richness. **Spicy** Toss in diced jalapeños or a dash of hot sauce. Use pepper jack cheese. **Seasonal** Fold in roasted butternut squash or Brussels sprouts. Top with crispy sage. **Which twist would you pick? Vote in the comments!**

## Serving Ideas & Pairings

Serve with a crisp green salad or garlic bread. Garnish with extra parsley for color. Pair with chilled apple cider or a light lager. For non-alcoholic, try sparkling lemonade. **Which would you choose tonight? Tell us below!**





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### Storing and Reheating Tips

Let's talk leftovers. This bake keeps well in the fridge for 3 days. Cover it tight with foil or plastic. Freeze portions in airtight containers for up to 2 months. Thaw overnight before reheating. \*Fun fact\*: The cheese sauce stays creamy if you reheat it low and slow.

See also Stuffed Eggplant Mediterranean Delight

Batch-cooking? Double the recipe and freeze half. Skip the topping if freezing—add it fresh when baking. Why this matters: Meal prep saves time and cuts stress on busy nights. Ever tried freezing casseroles? Share your tricks below!

### Common Issues and Fixes

Sauce too thick? Whisk in a splash of milk while reheating. Topping not crispy? Broil for 1-2 minutes at the end. Meat drying out? Use leftover rotisserie chicken—it's juicier. Why this matters: Small tweaks make big flavor wins. Had a kitchen mishap? My first time, I burned the garlic. Oops! Now I stir constantly. What's your go-to fix for saucy fails?

### Your Questions Answered

**Q: Can I make this gluten-free?** A: Swap flour for cornstarch or gluten-free blend. Same creamy result! **Q: How far ahead can I prep it?** A: Assemble 1 day early. Keep chilled. Add topping just before baking. **Q: Swiss cheese swaps?** A: Gruyère or sharp cheddar work. Pick your favorite melter. **Q: Can I halve the recipe?** A: Yes! Use an 8×8 dish. Bake 15-18 minutes. **Q: Fresh vs. bottled lemon juice?** A: Fresh brightens the sauce. But bottled works in a pinch.

## Let's Dish Together

This bake is my cozy-weekend hero. Did it become yours too? **Tag Savory Discovery on Pinterest** with your creations. I'd love to see your twist! Happy cooking! —Elowen Thorn.



**You need to try !**



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