



# *Kitchen Cheat Sheet: Creamy Taco Stuffed Shells*

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### *Tips and Extras*

- Don't add salt! The taco seasoning is salty (I suggest getting a low-sodium variety) and the queso is salty. If you salt the meat it will be WAY over salted.
- For easy stuffing use a cake decorating bag without an end in it. Fill it with the meat and squeeze it into the pasta.
- Use 90/10 lean ground beef or leaner - it keeps the casserole from being greasy and the seasoning adds plenty of flavor.
- You can substitute ground turkey, ground pork, ground chicken, or ground venison for the beef in this recipe.
- While you're browning the meat stir and break it up with a spatula so it's in small pieces with no big lumps.
- Don't overcook the pasta! It will fall apart when you try to stuff it.
- Don't use the packaged shredded cheese. Shred it yourself from a block - the packaged shredded cheese has cellulose on it to keep it from clumping and it won't melt as nicely as block cheese.

### *Storage*

You can assemble this dish up to 2 days ahead of time, cover with plastic wrap, and refrigerate until you're ready to bake it.

Store leftovers in the refrigerator in an airtight container or covered with plastic wrap for up to 4 days.

#### **How to freeze taco stuffed shells**

This recipe is perfect for freezer meals. Place in an airtight freezer container and freeze for up to 3 months.

#### **Freeze unbaked**

If I'm freezing this unbaked I'll make it right in the casserole dish and then freeze it at step #13. I'll cover it with plastic wrap, then aluminum foil and freeze for up to 3 months.

The night before I'm ready to serve it I just take it out of the freezer and pop it into the refrigerator to thaw overnight.

Next day just bake as instructed!

## *Variations*

- If I'm in a big hurry I use LITTLE shell macaroni and just throw everything into one pan for a casserole instead of stuffing the big shells.
- Any ground meat is fine - venison, turkey, pork, chicken...
- Like it a little spicier? Add Rotel tomatoes with chiles to the ground beef.
- Use Pepper Jack or Monterey Jack cheese instead of Cheddar.

## FAQs

### **How many stuffed shells is a serving?**

I assume 4 to 6 shells per serving.

### **Can this casserole be made ahead?**

Put this hearty casserole together up to three days ahead of time and refrigerate until ready to bake and serve. It can also be frozen for up to three months. See the storage heading for more info.

### **How many jumbo pasta shells in a 12 oz box?**

It can vary but you can pretty much plan on 42 to 48.

## *Nice to have...*

As an Amazon Associate, I earn commission from qualifying purchases.

### **Hot Tip:**

Baking it, freezing it, storing leftovers—this set does it all.

I use this Pyrex 4-piece extra-large glass baking dish set on a weekly basis. The lids snap on tight for freezing, the handles keep me from burning off my fingerprints, and the size? Perfect for feeding a small army—or just your family on a Monday.

[Grab it here and thank me later.](#)