



Kitchen Cheat Sheet: Stuffed Cabbage Soup

RESTLESSCHIPOTLE.COM | SOUTHERN COMFORT FOOD

.....

Tips and Time Savers

- Use cole slaw mix. It's pre-shredded cabbage without the emotional damage of chopping a whole head yourself.
- Brown the beef well. Color = flavor. Pale beef is a crime and we don't do crimes in this kitchen.
- Don't overcook the rice. It'll drink the broth like gossip at a church potluck. Add more liquid if things get thick.
- Freeze without the rice. Unless you enjoy thawing cabbage-flavored concrete. Add fresh rice when reheating.
- Taste before serving. Tomatoes can mute seasoning, so don't be shy with the salt, pepper, or a splash more lemon.
- Let it rest a minute. The flavors settle, deepen, and get all cozy together — like a casserole, but soup.
- Swirl in sour cream. Not required, but deeply correct. It adds that creamy tang your taste buds deserve.
- Make it a full meal. Sop it up with soft garlic breadsticks, French onion garlic bread, or Guinness Irish soda bread.

Variations

- Turkey twist: Swap the beef for ground turkey when you're pretending to be virtuous. Still hearty, still cozy, just a little lighter.
- Sausage swagger: Use mild or hot pork sausage for deeper flavor and a little attitude. Great for nights when your patience is thin.
- Low-carb attempt: Skip the rice and add extra cabbage. It won't make you a saint, but it'll keep things less carby and still satisfying.
- Veggie version: Lose the beef, use veggie stock, and toss in lentils or plant-based crumbles. Comfort food without the cow.
- Smoky moment: Add a pinch of smoked paprika or stir in a splash of liquid smoke. Suddenly your soup thinks it came from a campfire.
- Spicy chaos: Add crushed red pepper flakes or diced jalapeños. This is for the "I've had a DAY" crowd.
- Thicker: Let it simmer uncovered or add extra rice for a stew-like situation that eats like a meal.
- More tang, please: Add an extra squeeze of lemon or a splash of apple cider vinegar. Brightens it right up.

Storage

Let the soup cool down till it stops steaming like it's filing complaints, then scoop it into airtight containers. It'll keep in the fridge for 3–4 days and actually tastes better once the flavors settle down and decide to behave.

If you're freezing it, do yourself a favor and freeze it without the rice. Otherwise, you'll thaw out a brick dense enough to stun a grown man. Freeze the broth-y part for up to 3 months, and add fresh rice when you reheat. Your future self will want to kiss you on the mouth for this one.

Reheat gently on the stove or in the microwave, adding a splash of broth or water if it thickened up while it was in time-out.

FAQs

Can I make this ahead of time?

Absolutely. Stuffed cabbage soup gets better after a nap in the fridge. Make it 1–2 days ahead and reheat gently on the stove. You may need to add more V-8 juice or water since the rice will soak up a lot of the liquid. Or, cook the rice separately and add it to the soup just before serving.

Does this soup freeze well?

Yes, but freeze it without the rice or it'll soak up every drop of liquid and turn into tragic tomato porridge. Make the soup, cool it, freeze it, and add cooked rice when you reheat and serve. Your future self will thank you.

Can I swap the ground beef for turkey or pork?

Sure can. Turkey will be lighter, pork will be richer, and beef is that dependable friend who always shows up on time.

Is cole slaw mix required?

Required? No. Convenient enough to save your evening? Yes. Use chopped cabbage if you prefer — just cook it a smidge longer.

How do I make it thicker?

Let it simmer uncovered to reduce, or stir in extra rice. If you want it very thick, simmer it until your spoon stands up like a tired toddler.

What if it gets too thick?

Add broth. Add water. Add the tears of a long day. It'll loosen right back up.

Can I make this vegetarian?

Yep. Skip the beef, use veggie stock, and add lentils or plant-based crumbles. Still delicious, still cozy.

Nice to Have

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

I'm telling you right now, this GreenLife 6-quart ceramic stockpot is the kitchen sidekick you didn't know you were missing. It heats evenly, doesn't wobble like it's questioning its life choices, and those stay-cool handles mean you won't sear your fingerprints off in the name of soup. [See it here](https://www.restlesschipotle.com/stuffed-cabbage-soup/)

<https://www.restlesschipotle.com/stuffed-cabbage-soup/>