

Monterey Rice

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MANY COOKS ARE FORCED TO EXPLORE VEGETARIANISM by another family member, often a child, who has unilaterally declared that he or she will no longer eat meat. This rice casserole filled a need for several of my friends who were confronted at dinnertime by instant vegetarians. It doesn't require lots of original thinking. The newly declared vegetarian will like it because it contains no meat; the rest of the family will eat it because it tastes good.

- 4 cups cooked long-grain white rice
(from 2 cups raw)
- 1½ cups shredded Monterey Jack cheese
- 1 17-ounce can cream-style corn
- 1 8-ounce can tomato sauce
- 1 bunch green onions, trimmed and chopped
- 1 4-ounce can chopped mild green chilies
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper, or to taste

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If your children
balk at canned green
chilies, substitute
sautéed fresh green
or red bell
peppers.
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Preheat the oven to 400 degrees.

Combine all ingredients in a medium bowl. Pour into a lightly oiled 1½-quart casserole dish. Bake for 20 minutes if rice is hot, 40 minutes if chilled; cheese should melt.

Serves 4 as a main dish. ~ Serve with broccoli and rolls.

Variation

Speedy Tex-Mex Rice: Combine 2 cups cooked rice with 1 cup cottage cheese, one 4-ounce can chopped mild green chilies and 1 teaspoon chili powder. Stir, place in a 1½-quart casserole dish and top with 1 cup grated Cheddar cheese. Bake at 350 degrees until cheese melts, about 15 minutes.