

Perfecting Alfredo Sauce

Alfredo sauce is a rich, smooth, and creamy white sauce perfect for serving with cooked pasta. Authentic Italian Alfredo sauce is typically made with Parmesan cheese, butter, some warm pasta cooking water, and salt – no cream. Over the years, it's been adapted to include heavy cream.

Discover the art of creating the perfect Alfredo sauce. Never buy a store-bought jar again! Add some sliced cooked chicken breasts or grilled shrimp, and you have a satisfying meal in no time!

Select high-quality butter and heavy cream for a truly rich buttery sauce. Use European-style butter that has between 82-90% fat. A higher fat content and less water makes a better alfredo sauce.

Use fresh, high-quality parmesan or, even better, Parmigiano-Reggiano, which is imported from Italy. The key difference between parmesan and Parmigiano Reggiano is that Parmigiano Reggiano is a Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) cheese, meaning it can only be produced in specific regions of Italy, while “parmesan” is a more general term that can refer to similar cheeses made anywhere, not just Italy. Do not skimp! Romano cheese or a Parmigiano-Reggiano /Romano blend can also work. The pre-shredded parmesan in the bags, shaker-style containers, or tubs won't melt properly and will make the sauce grainy. Plus, they don't taste nearly as good as fresh.

To ensure smooth melting, shred cheese yourself instead of using pre-shredded varieties, which often contain anti-caking agents that hinder melting. Shredding exposes more surface area, allowing the cheese to melt quickly and evenly in the sauce.

Fresh garlic is recommended. Maximize the garlic flavor by using a garlic press. Minced garlic exposes more surface area, enhancing the sauce's taste. However, frozen or jarred minced garlic will work as well. Garlic powder can be used as a substitute but won't impart the same infused garlic taste.

While Alfredo sauce is perfect on its own, you can add black pepper, salt, onion powder, or Italian seasoning to suit your taste. In addition, fresh parsley always makes a nice garnish on the Alfredo pasta dish.

Whisk, don't stir the sauce ingredients. Whisking will help prevent the sauce from separating.

Do not allow the sauce to boil! Alfredo sauce is cooked at a gentle simmer over medium-low. If the heat is too high and/or the sauce begins to boil, it will cause the sauce to break/separate. The sauce is 'broken' if the butter separates itself from the rest of the sauce and becomes grainy.

To thin Alfredo sauce, add more heavy cream. You can also add small amounts of hot, salted, starchy pasta water. To do this, scoop out a cup of salted pasta water just before draining the pasta, and stir it into the sauce as needed to reach the desired thickness.

Make and serve right away. This sauce is at its best served right after making it, so if you're serving it with pasta, try to time the cooking so they finish at the same time.

When served on a cold plate, Alfredo sauce will eventually seize up and get clumpy. To prevent this, warm them in an oven on a low setting while you make the pasta.

Alfredo sauce can be reheated. The sauce must be reheated gently in the microwave on 50% or lower power, on the stove over low heat, or by adding super hot, freshly drained pasta.

In authentic Italian cuisine, pasta dishes are not meant to “swim” in sauce; rather, the amount of sauce used is just enough to coat the pasta, not drown it.

Try an Alfredo recipe that tastes like it came from a fancy restaurant! I must warn you this recipe is not for the health-conscious; however, I believe in the principle of “everything in moderation.” Enjoy!