Cajun Ground-Beef Dirty Rice

Browned beef, sweet Cajun trinity and fluffy long-grain rice, finished with scallions and parsley.



6 generous servings · Prep 20 min · Cook 45 min Total about 65 min · Active about 50 min Rice overlaps beef. Thawing is extra.

INGREDIENTS / 6 SERVINGS

2 cups long-grain white rice (not instant, converted or brown)

3 1/4 cups water; up to 4 tbsp extra only if needed

1 1/2 lb 90%-lean ground beef, fully thawed

2 tsp neutral oil, divided

1 tsp fine salt, divided; more to taste

2 cups finely diced yellow onion

1 cup finely diced green bell pepper

3/4 cup finely diced celery

5 garlic cloves, minced

2 tsp sweet + 1/2 tsp smoked paprika

1 tsp dried thyme

3/4 tsp black + 1/4 tsp white pepper

1/4 tsp cayenne (mild: 1/8; hot: 1/2 tsp)

1 cup low-sodium beef stock

1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce; 1 bay leaf

4 scallions, sliced; whites/greens separate

1/4 cup parsley, measured after chopping

1–2 tsp cider vinegar; start with 1 tsp

EQUIPMENT

Wide heavy 5–6-qt pot (about 11 in across); tight-lidded 3-qt saucepan; sieve; thin-tip thermometer; clean bowl/fork/spoon; separate raw-beef tools; shallow containers.

SIX CLEAR STEPS

1 · Prep + rice. Wash hands 20 sec; rinse/cut produce and ready garnish before beef. Keep raw tools away from garnish. Rinse/drain rice. Bring rice, 3 1/4 cups water and 1/2 tsp salt to a boil in saucepan; stir once, cover, simmer on lowest heat 18 min until tender/absorbed. If firm, add 2 tbsp extra water; cover 2–3 min more. Rest off heat, covered, 10 min; fluff with clean fork, re-cover briefly. Start beef during simmer.

2 · Brown finely. Heat heavy pot over medium-high 2 min. Add 1 tsp oil + half the beef; leave 2 min, then crumble finely, cooking 4–6 min more. Each batch must reach 160°F (71°C): probe centers of several small mounds, sensing area in meat, not touching pan. Color is not the test. Clean probe after under-temperature checks; cook longer if needed. Transfer fully cooked beef with a clean spoon to clean bowl; keep spoon from next raw batch. Repeat oil/beef. Wash hands; clean raw tools/surfaces; switch to clean spoon.

3 · Sweeten trinity. Leave about 1 tbsp fat; spoon off excess. Keep brown, not black, fond. Over medium, cook onion, pepper, celery + remaining 1/2 tsp salt 12–14 min until very soft/golden. Lower heat if needed; loosen threatening fond with 1–2 tbsp from measured stock.

4 · Build the coating. Add garlic + scallion whites 1 min; add paprikas, thyme, both peppers + chosen cayenne 30 sec. Add remaining stock + Worcestershire; scrape fond. Return beef/juices; add bay. Simmer uncovered 4–6 min until glossy, with only a few spoonfuls liquid, not soupy.

5 · Fold. Remove bay; gently fold in fresh rice in two additions over medium-low, 3–4 min until hot/coated. Do not mash. If dry, use unused extra water a tablespoon at a time (max 4 tbsp extra total); if wet, cook uncovered briefly.

6 · Brighten. Off heat, add scallion greens, all parsley + 1 tsp vinegar. Taste; add salt or second tsp vinegar only if needed. Savory, not sour. Serve 6 promptly. Beef-centered Cajun-style variation; no required liver or pork.

Before cooking: raw beef ≤40°F (4°C), use within 1–2 days or earlier label deadline; thaw in fridge first. Do not rinse beef; keep raw juices/tools from cooked food and garnish.

Rice-aware leftovers: promptly divide into small shallow containers; refrigerate ≤40°F (4°C) within 1 hour of rice finishing cooking, counting rest/mixing/serving. No full-pot cooling; mixing does not reset the clock. Use within 24 hours of rice cooking or earlier ingredient deadline. Reheat once only to 165°F (74°C) throughout; add a splash of water, cover, stir and probe several places. Discard if limits missed; reheating cannot rescue mishandled rice. Our conservative FSA-based policy replaces USDA's general 3–4-day window; not validated shelf life.

Labels: Worcestershire commonly contains anchovy (fish); check it and stock for wheat, soy, celery or other allergens.

Inspired by Stacey Pirtle's Louisiana Dirty Rice, Southern Discourse. Beef-only variation without flour. USDA: ground beef / 160°F · FSA: Rice / 1 hour / 24 hours / reheat once · USDA: shallow cooling / 165°F

RECIPE NOTE

Not kitchen-tested; quantities, yield and times are estimates. AI-generated serving illustration.

Sources: [1] southerndiscourse.com · [2] fsis.usda.gov · [3] gov.uk · [4] fsis.usda.gov