Cauliflower Alfredo with Chicken, Broccoli, and Whole Grain Pasta

Serves 4-6. Total time 30 minutes.

This cauliflower sauce is amazing! Eat it alone as a little bowl of creamy cauliflower soup or toss it with chicken, broccoli, and whole grain pasta for a full meal. Serve a large portion alone or a smaller portion with a side of fruit salad.

Ingredients:

- 1 (16 oz) bag frozen cauliflower
- 2 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1-1/4 tsp. salt, divided (most is discarded)
- ½ tsp. garlic powder
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 8 ounces whole wheat rotini
- 1 (16 oz.) bag frozen broccoli florets
- 1 pound of boneless, skinless chicken breast, chopped into bite size pieces
- freshly ground black pepper (optional)

Directions:

Prepare cauliflower and chicken: In a medium pot, combine frozen cauliflower, chicken broth, and ¼ teaspoon of salt; place over medium heat. Simmer for 6-8 minutes or until cauliflower is tender. Use a slotted spoon to transfer the cauliflower into a blender. Use a ladle to transfer one cup of the cooking liquid to the blender, leave the rest of the cooking liquid in the pot. Add chicken to the reserved cooking liquid in the pot. Cover and simmer the chicken over medium heat until cooked through about 6-8 minutes depending on the size of your pieces. Remove from heat.

Cook pasta and broccoli: While cauliflower is cooking, bring a large covered pot of water to boil over high heat. When the pasta water comes to a boil, add 1 teaspoon of salt and whole grain pasta. Lower to medium heat and simmer the pasta for 5 minutes. Add broccoli to the pasta and cook for 4-5 more minutes or until pasta is al dente and broccoli is cooked through. Drain pasta and broccoli over a colander.

Blend cauliflower sauce: In a blender, combine cooked cauliflower, 1 cup of cooking liquid, grated Parmesan, ½ tsp. garlic powder, and 1 Tbsp. of olive oil; blend until smooth about 3-5 minutes (it should be really silky and creamy).

In the empty pasta pot, combine pasta, broccoli, chicken, and sauce. Stir to combine. Top with a little extra grated Parmesan cheese and freshly ground black pepper, if desired.

Nutrition Facts (1/4 recipe): 470 calories, 10 g fat, 3 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat, 55 g carbohydrates, 14 g fiber, 46 g protein, 755 mg sodium. Each serving contains 2 cups vegetables, 1 lean protein, 1 whole grain.

Nutrition Facts (1/6 recipe): 313 calories, 6 g fat, 2 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat, 37 g carbohydrates, 9 g fiber, 31 g protein, 503 mg sodium.

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Shopping List

Freezer Section
- 1 (16 oz) bag frozen cauliflower (see tip #1)
- 1 (16 oz.) bag frozen broccoli florets (see tip #1)

Dry Goods Section
- 2 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 1-1/4 tsp. salt, divided (most is discarded)
- 1 tsp. chopped garlic or garlic powder
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 8 ounces whole wheat rotini

Meat/ Dairy Section
- 1 lb. boneless, skinless chicken breast
- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese

Smart Shopper Tip #1:
Fresh cauliflower may be used for this recipe but the cooking time will need to be lengthened a bit. Fresh broccoli or frozen broccoli florets that are microwavable in the bags may also be substituted.