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How to Make Cowboy Butter

Cowboy butter is a buttery garlic-and-herb sauce with lemon, mustard, and a little heat. This version is served melted for spooning or dipping.



Makes about 2/3 cup, approximately 8 servings.

Prep: 5 minutes. Cook: 3-5 minutes.

Ingredients

1/2 cup unsalted butter (1 US stick); 2 medium garlic cloves, very finely minced; 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard; 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice; 1/2 teaspoon finely grated lemon zest; 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley; 1/2 teaspoon smoked paprika; 1/8 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes, or to taste; 1/8 teaspoon fine salt, plus more only after tasting; 1/8 teaspoon black pepper

Tools

Small saucepan, whisk, knife, cutting board, fine grater, heatproof serving bowl.

Step By Step

1. Melt butter in the saucepan over low heat. Keep it from browning or boiling vigorously.

2. Add minced garlic and cook gently for 30-60 seconds, stirring, until fragrant but not browned.

3. Remove from the heat. Whisk in mustard, lemon juice, lemon zest, paprika, red pepper flakes, salt, and pepper.

4. Stir in the finely chopped parsley. Taste and adjust the lemon or heat in small amounts.

5. Serve warm with steak, cooked chicken, roasted vegetables, or bread. Stir before each spoonful because the ingredients naturally settle.

The butter should be melted and fragrant, with tiny evenly distributed garlic and herb pieces. It is a butter sauce, so some separation is normal.

Common Mistake

High heat can burn the garlic and separate the sauce more quickly. If the sauce separates, take it off the heat and whisk gently; do not keep boiling it.

Jane'S Note

Start with a small pinch of red pepper flakes. It is easier to add a little heat than take it away.

Storage

Refrigerate promptly in a covered container at 40 F or colder; use within 3 days for this guide, or freeze extra portions. Do not keep homemade garlic butter on the counter. Keep room-temperature time under 2 hours, or 1 hour above 90 F. Reheat only the needed portion gently, stirring. Discard sauce used for dipping raw meat; keep a clean serving portion separate.