



Leftover paella with melted cheese on bun.

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Creative Use of Leftovers

I know many who say they hate leftovers. It's true that a quick reheat in the microwave makes for a less than exciting meal, but there's room to be creative and turn those leftover bits into something interesting. Here are a few ideas to stoke the fires of culinary creativity:

A classic Spanish approach is to make a **paella**. While purists might frown, this is a fun way to build a tasty meal from what's sitting around the fridge.

Paella

Leftover whatever: veg & meat, cut in bite-sized chunks

Sofrito, rice & stock

Use our [paella recipe](#), or [quick rice recipe](#) as a reference and enjoy.

Tortilla/omelette

Leftover whatever: veg & meat, cut in bite-sized chunks

Eggs - roughly one egg per cup of leftovers

Sautee leftovers in a bit of olive oil with some diced onion in a non-stick frying pan

Add beaten eggs to the pan, mix, cook on both sides.

Use our [tortilla recipe](#) as a reference and enjoy.

Note: leftover paella (or fried rice) or pasta makes for a great tortilla.

Pasta

Leftover whatever: veg & meat, cut in bite-sized chunks

Tomato sauce, canned tomatoes or commercial marinara sauce.

Pasta - I like spaghetti, but you chose.

Spices - oregano, thyme, red pepper flakes, your choice

Sautee leftovers in a bit of olive oil with some chopped onion

Add spices, followed by the tomato, simmer for 10/15 minutes

In the meantime, Cook pasta, mix with the sauce & enjoy.

Fried rice

Leftover whatever: veg & meat, cut in bite-sized chunks

1/4 onion (or leek), finely diced

Cooked white rice (best cooked a day in advance, it's drier and browns better) or even some leftover paella

1 tbsp soy sauce

Sautee the onion in some olive oil until tender, add rice and cook on medium high until the rice starts to brown

Stir in the leftovers, cook until heated through

Splash on the soy sauce, stir and serve.

Hearty soup

Leftover whatever: veg & meat, diced

1/4 onion (diced), olive oil

1 medium tomato (diced) (or canned tomatoes), or 2 tbsp tomato paste or sofrito

Liquid as needed: stock (chicken, beef, veg or water + boullion cube)

Salt & pepper or other spice (thyme, oregano, dry chillies...) to taste

1 x 16 oz can/jar beans (red, white, your choice), drained & rinsed

1/4 cup small sized pasta (orzo, alphabet, etc.) or if you prefer, 1 medium sized potato (1/2" cubes).

Sautee diced onion in olive oil, when tender add the leftovers, beans, tomato & liquid.

Simmer for a few minutes, bring to a boil, add the pasta (or potato), when it's tender you're ready to go.

Note: 1. Other things you might consider: slices of sausage, garlic (sauteed with the onion), diced carrot, thin slices of celery, chopped cabbage, mushrooms, canned corn, green beans, diced green or red pepper..the list goes on.

2. Also, use those leftovers in [Fideua](#).

On a bun

A handful of leftover whatever: veg & meat, finely chopped.

Chop a little onion, sautee in olive oil, add the leftovers.

Cook for a few minutes to warm through, top with a slice of cheddar cheese, cover and let the cheese melt.

Slide it onto a toasted bun spread with a bit of mayonnaise. Magic!

Tacos

A handful of leftover whatever: veg & meat, finely chopped, cooked white rice (optional).

Tortillas (flour or corn, your choice), sour cream, diced tomatoes, cheese, hot sauce or salsa.

Chop a little onion, sautee in olive oil, add the leftovers.

Cook for a few minutes to warm through, add a spoonful of rice, check seasoning

Meanwhile, lightly toast the tortillas in a dry frying pan.

Put a spoonful of sour cream in the center of the tortilla, then the cooked mixture, top with grated or sliced cheese, diced tomatoes & hot sauce (or salsa) and a drizzle of good olive oil.

That's it, ready to roll. (You can use the same method to make enchiladas. A little more work, but well worth the effort.)

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