Prep Time	10 minutes
Cook Time	3–4 hours on LOW (chicken) + 20–30 minutes (pasta)
Total Time	Approximately 4 hours
Yield	6 servings
Intensity	Easy (Mostly hands-off, but the pasta stage needs attention to avoid overcooking)
Equipment	Slow cooker (5–6 qt recommended), whisk, wooden spoon, grater for Parmesan

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Table of Contents

- 🛒 Ingredients
  - For the Chicken and Sauce
  - For the Pasta
- 🔪 Instructions
  - Step 1: Season and Sear the Chicken (5 minutes | Easy)
  - Step 2: Build the Sauce Base (5 minutes | Easy)
  - Step 3: Slow Cook the Chicken (3–4 hours on LOW | Easy)
  - Step 4: Whisk the Sauce (3 minutes | Medium Intensity)
  - Step 5: Cook the Pasta in the Sauce (20–30 minutes on HIGH | Medium Intensity)
  - Step 6: Finish and Serve (2 minutes | Easy)
- 🍽️ Serving & Storage
- 📊 Nutrition Information (Estimated)

🛒 Ingredients

For the Chicken and Sauce

- 1½ lbs (680g) boneless, skinless chicken breasts (about 3 medium breasts)

- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- ½ teaspoon onion powder
- ½ teaspoon dried Italian seasoning
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1½ cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 4 oz (113g) cream cheese, cubed and softened
- 1 cup grated Parmesan cheese, freshly grated (plus more for serving)
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- ¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes (optional)

For the Pasta

- 12 oz (340g) penne, rigatoni, or rotini (uncooked)
- 1½ cups whole milk (to adjust consistency)
- Fresh parsley, chopped (for garnish)
- Extra grated Parmesan (for serving)

Instructions

Step 1: Season and Sear the Chicken (5 minutes | Easy)

Pat the chicken breasts dry with paper towels and season both sides with salt, pepper, garlic powder, onion powder, and Italian seasoning. Heat the olive oil in a skillet over medium-high heat and sear the chicken for 2 minutes per side, just until golden—this step is optional but adds deep flavor. Transfer the chicken to the slow cooker. If you're short on time, skip the sear and add the seasoned raw chicken directly to the pot.

Step 2: Build the Sauce Base (5 minutes | Easy)

Add the minced garlic to the same skillet and sauté for 30 seconds until fragrant. Pour in the chicken broth and scrape up any browned bits from the bottom of the pan. Pour the broth mixture over the chicken in the slow cooker. Add the heavy cream, cubed cream cheese, ½ cup of the grated Parmesan, butter, and red pepper flakes if using. Stir gently to combine, leaving the chicken in a single layer.

Step 3: Slow Cook the Chicken (3–4 hours on LOW | Easy)

Cover and cook on LOW for 3–4 hours (or HIGH for 2–2½ hours), until the chicken reaches 165°F (74°C) and shreds easily with a fork. Do not lift the lid during cooking. Once done, remove the chicken to a cutting board and shred it with two forks. Set aside.

Step 4: Whisk the Sauce (3 minutes | Medium Intensity)

Whisk the sauce in the slow cooker until smooth and creamy, breaking up any remaining cream cheese lumps. Stir in the remaining ½ cup of Parmesan until melted. Taste and adjust seasoning—add salt, pepper, or more garlic powder as needed. The sauce should be rich and slightly loose, as the pasta will absorb liquid as it cooks.

Step 5: Cook the Pasta in the Sauce (20–30 minutes on HIGH | Medium Intensity)

Return the shredded chicken to the slow cooker. Stir in the uncooked pasta and 1 cup of the whole milk. Cover and cook on HIGH for 20–30 minutes, stirring every 10 minutes to prevent sticking, until the pasta is al dente and the sauce has thickened and coated the noodles. Watch closely during the final 10 minutes—pasta can go from al dente to mushy quickly in a slow cooker. If the sauce becomes too thick, stir in the remaining ½ cup of milk, a splash at a time, until you reach a creamy consistency.

Step 6: Finish and Serve (2 minutes | Easy)

Turn off the slow cooker. Stir in the chopped parsley and a final handful of grated Parmesan. Serve immediately in bowls with extra Parmesan and a sprinkle of red pepper flakes if desired.

Serving & Storage

- Serve: Pair with a crisp green salad, garlic bread, or steamed broccoli. This dish is rich, so a bright side helps balance it.
- Storage: Store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days. The pasta will absorb sauce as it sits, so reheat with a splash of milk or broth to loosen it.
- Freezing: Freezing is not recommended—the pasta becomes mushy and the cream sauce can separate. If you must freeze, freeze the chicken and sauce without the pasta for up to 2 months, then cook fresh pasta when reheating.
- Reheating: Reheat gently on the stovetop over medium-low heat with a splash of milk, stirring often, or in the microwave in 1-minute intervals with a splash of liquid.

Nutrition Information (Estimated)

Note: Nutritional values are estimates per serving (⅙ of the recipe) and will vary based on the specific pasta shape, Parmesan brand, cream cheese type, and portion sizes. Values assume whole milk and full-fat dairy.

Nutrient	Amount per Serving (⅙ recipe)
Calories	~620 kcal
Total Fat	32 g
Saturated Fat	18 g
Cholesterol	145 mg

Nutrient	Amount per Serving (⅙ recipe)
Sodium	780 mg
Total Carbohydrates	48 g
Dietary Fiber	2 g
Total Sugars	6 g
Protein	35 g