

Crock pot broth

Last night I cooked an entire crock pot of food with no intention of eating it anytime this week. This is the beauty of the crock pot! I know that next week I want to make a big batch of chicken soup. But, I don't want it to be a day long project, I need it to be an easy meal.

So last night, I crock potted four boneless, skinless chicken breasts, 1 c. baby carrots, half an onion, 1 T. parsley and a little salt and pepper. I set it on high for 4 hours. When it was done, all the broth went into plastic containers for the freezer and the chicken and carrots are in the refrigerator for lunches today. Voila— when I want to make my soup, I simply put the brick of frozen chicken broth into a pot and let it simmer back to soup. Then I can add noodles or rice or more vegetables and have my meal done in a matter of minutes.

Homemade chicken broth is a healthier alternative to using boxed broths or bouillion. Store-bought bases are much higher in sodium and usually have that weird yellow tinge. This easy recipe means that my soup will taste flavorful and look authentic.

You can do this recipe with beef as well, but when the broth cools, I would suggest skimming the fat off of the top. BL/SK chicken breasts are very lean and don't leave much to skim off, but since most cuts of beef have a higher fat content, you would want to remove some the excess. You can also make vegetable broth (try using carrots, celery, leeks, onions and parsley) or fish broth (from any part of the fish) in your crock pot.

After you make your broth, your chicken, beef, fish or veggies are cooked very soft, but most of the flavor has been boiled out. But, the meat is a great texture to add sauces too, try

forking the meat apart and adding BBQ sauce for pulled sandwiches or chopping up chicken for curried chicken salad (see roasted chicken post for recipe). The vegetables can be glazed or broiled and served as a side dish with any future meal.

Hopefully, this post has you thinking ahead to future meals and you'll let your crock pot do your base preparations. Enjoy!