

Crock Pot Cream of Mushroom Soup (#2)



Get ready for fall flavors with this easy to make, robust mushroom soup!

On the cusp of summer turning into fall, I'm already getting excited about the next season of recipes. I'm not a pumpkin spice anything, but I love pulling in the flavors of butternut squash, roasted root vegetables, and hearty seasonings.

Last night, I made a cream of mushroom soup just as a way of using up leftover vegetables that were starting to age in the refrigerator. I figured I would freeze some or share with friends, but it was certainly better than throwing things out. Turns out— this soup was a nice variety to my normal [Crock Pot Cream of Mushroom Soup](#)! With just a little change up of flavors and ratios, this soup was a little more hearty and robust.

As I wrote in the first mushroom soup recipe, this doesn't need to be an exact recipe with precise measurements. Also-

using a [hand blender](#) does give this soup a lovely smooth consistency. Try it and enjoy this soup as a transition to fall!

Crock Pot Cream of Mushroom Soup

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 6 hours

Serves: 8-10 people

1 lb fresh mushrooms (button, portobello or shiitake or a combination!)

4 stalks celery, cleaned and diced

1 large parsnip, peeled and diced

1/2 c. [caramelized onions](#)

3 cloves garlic

4 c. broth (chicken or vegetable)

1/2 teaspoon EACH: celery seed, salt, dried dill weed, black pepper

1 t. dried parsley

2 c. cold milk

2 T. corn starch

Put all ingredients EXCEPT milk and corn starch into crock pot and stir. Cook on high for 5 hours. Puree with hand blender. Dissolve corn starch into cold milk and add to crock pot and stir. Heat 1 additional hour on high and then serve.

Crock Pot Miso Soup



Restaurant quality soup,
only easier, cheaper and
more delicious!

Why go out to eat when you can stay in?! This week I'm working on Asian inspired dishes that are easy to make and taste like take-out- only healthier! Today's soup is super easy. So much so, that you should never actually order it in a restaurant, it's so much better to make at home. I add a couple more vegetables to my miso soup so that it's a more filling appetizer or the start of a great main dish. You can add thin egg noodles, vermicelli noodles, or rice to this soup to make it a complete meal in itself. Don't let the tofu fool you; this isn't a crunchy, earthy food, it's the same thing you order in a restaurant, only better for you! Enjoy. ☐

Crock Pot Miso Soup

Serves 6-8

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 6 hours

6 c. water

4 T. white miso paste

1 zucchini, cut horizontally and then sliced into half moons
2 cloves garlic
1 12 oz package, extra firm tofu, drained and cut into small cubes
1/2 c. green onions (about 3 inches of the white/green parts), sliced into rings
1 100g package of enoki mushrooms, cut off the base

Put water and miso paste into crock pot and stir until dissolved. Add zucchini, garlic, and tofu. Cook on low for 6 hours. Add green onions and enoki mushrooms about 20 minutes before cook time is complete. Serve immediately.

Crock Pot Vegetarian Refried Beans



With just a few ingredients, you can add a rich side dish to Taco Tuesday- on any day

of the week!

In our house, every Tuesday is TACO TUESDAY! The kids have become so accustomed to it, that sometimes I like to mess with them and make tacos on the “wrong” day of the week. If we eat something different on a Tuesday, they are a little disappointed... but if we eat tacos on any night other than Tuesday, it’s almost unacceptable. I’ll say “it’s Taco Tuesday on Wednesday!” and they respond, “we can’t eat tacos on Wednesdays!” “But why??” I ask. “Because we’d have to call it Waco Wednesday!” they would shout with despair.

Oh trust me, that scenario is totally legit. It happens. Scripted or not, that’s how it plays out every freaking time.

But this week is an exception, because it’s Cinco de Mayo on a Thursday. That’s an unwritten acceptable negotiation and my hellions are ok with moving the taco consumption in order to celebrate another nation’s announcement of victory in war. (Not to be confused with Mexico’s Independence Day, that’s September 16– which is also not a Tuesday this year.)

My mini-me’s could practically prepare taco night by themselves– hard shells and tortillas. Sour cream. Shredded cheese. Lettuce, tomato, onions, and olives. Jalapeños and [this ridiculous taco sauce](#) for mommy. Homemade tomatillo salsa verde, too. And then ground beef or chicken. By the book, typical American-style taco night. Extra napkins, of course.



The perfect side dish
for your next fiesta!

But since tomorrow is a celebration, I wanted to introduce a new dish into taco night. Growing up, a trip to Taco Bell always included way too many tacos and a side of pintos and cheese. What's that, you ask? A bowl of refried pinto beans and a handful of soft, shredded cheddar cheese. They put a lid on it and by the time you filled your fountain drink and sat down to scarf, the cheese would be gooey and melted perfectly. Ok, it was crap quality, but the taste was so good!

So here's my attempt at recreating a mouth-watering memory and introducing it to my family. Let's all celebrate our little victories— not just the big war-type ones. Sometimes sitting down to eat as a family is a victory in itself. Ole!

Crock Pot Vegetarian Refried Beans

Serves: 8-12

Prep Time: 5 minutes

Cook Time: 8-10 hours

1 lb. dried pinto beans

1 c. [crock pot caramelized onions](#)

3 cloves garlic, peeled

2 t. cumin

2 t. salt

6 c. water

Put all ingredients in crock pot and give it a stir. The water level should cover everything. Cook on high 8-10 hours or low 12 hours. Remove excess water that isn't absorbed, not do not discard. Puree everything in the crock pot using [an immersion blender](#). Add reserved water 1 tablespoon at a time until desired smooth consistency is reached. Serve immediately with toppings like shredded cheddar cheese, sour cream, jalapeños, bacon bits, or use inside of a taco or burrito.

Crock Pot Mushroom-Spinach Soup with Middle Eastern Spices



So it's Saturday and I've got a date with this really fungi... haha, get it?! I'm making a mushroom soup!

This version is an adaptation of [a recipe from the New York Times](#), it is not my original creation. But I saw the recipe online and thought... this looks delicious, but has WAY TOO MANY steps. Let's make it easy and throw it all in the [crock pot](#) instead. And guess what. Yup. It works just perfectly without the extra hassle and dirty dishes.

There are so many wonderful varieties of mushrooms, you can change up the the recipe a million different times for different texture and flavor results. Play around with it. I have increased the quantity of seasonings after reading reviews saying that it needed a little more umphh. I don't think that's a technical culinary term, but neither is WOW or YUM and those are the things I'm going for here! I've added links for you to my [favorite brand of seasonings](#), just in case you don't already have these items on hand.

Try this soup with a dollop of plain greek yogurt and some naan or pita bread. Enjoy!

Crock Pot Mushroom-Spinach Soup with Middle Eastern Spices

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 7 hours

Serves: 8 people

~1-1.5 lbs fresh mushrooms- cleaned and diced=about 5-6 cups

(try button, cremini, portobello, Baby Bella, etc)

1/4 lb shallot (one) finely diced

2 T. tomato paste

3 T. salted butter

2 t. dried [thyme](#)

1 1/2 t. [coriander](#)

2 t. [cinnamon](#)

2 t. [cumin](#)

1 t. salt

1/2 t. freshly cracked black pepper

5 cups water

5 ounces fresh baby spinach

1 lime

plain greek yogurt (optional)

Dice mushrooms and shallots and stir together in [crock pot](#). Add seasonings, tomato paste, and butter. Pour water in, but do not stir. Cook on low for 6 hours- you may lift the lid and give it a stir after the butter appears to be completely melted.

After 6 hours, add the spinach and squeeze about 2 T. of fresh lime juice into the crock pot, give it all a stir, and heat on low for up to one more hour... or until spinach is wilted. Serve

with a dollop of plain greek yogurt.

Crock Pot Loaded Potato Casserole



Who doesn't love a baked potato with all the toppings?! The problem is, I rarely ever keep baking-sized potatoes in the pantry. ([Although has anyone ever used one of these?!](#)) So this recipe is a great way to fulfill that salty and savory craving with items that you can keep on hand. I used refrigerated shredded potatoes, but you can totally make this

dish using the frozen kind instead. The quantity and directions stay the same.

My mother-in-law used to make a potato casserole like this and my recipe is totally inspired by her dish. I remember lots of festive gatherings, summer BBQs, and family dinners with second and third helpings of potato casserole. Some nights, I'd rather just have this as my main dish with a side salad.. and save room for dessert! Family recipes are the best—because they satisfy your soul and not just your appetite.

Crock Pot Potato Casserole

Serves 8-12



You can keep these ingredients on hand for an easy side dish anytime.

2 lb. shredded potatoes (just wanted to share... [I use THESE](#))

8 oz. sour cream

2 cups shredded cheddar cheese

1/2 onion, chopped

1 10.5 oz can Cream of Celery Soup

1 cup bacon crumbles

Put all ingredients in crock pot and give it a stir until everything is combined. Cook on low for 4 hours.

Crock Pot Sausage-Stuffed Portobello Mushrooms



These 5-ingredient stuffed caps are a delicious main or side dish!

Two tips with today's amazing recipe.....

1. Find a ground sausage that you like. It can be a prepped tube from the grocery store or a visit to a special deli or anything in between. But when you find it, it becomes a mainstay in your home for breakfast, lunch or dinner. No endorsement here, but my personal favorite is the country pork sausage from The Fresh Market. I also like that they shape it into the face of a pig each day and that makes me smile. But I really like the combinations of spices that gives it a little kick and a lot of taste.

2. Learn how to clean a mushroom. Because it is a sad sad day when you didn't REALLY get all the dirt out of it and then after 4-6 hours your dinner actually tastes more like mud than anything else. That's disgusting.

How to Clean a Mushroom Cap

Here's my step by step process to clean a portobello mushroom properly. Sorry for the footage- I had the phone propped on my paper towel holder, but I promise to start uploading better videos soon!



The BEFORE mushrooms are on the left and the AFTER ones are beautiful on the right.

Now that your mushrooms are prepped, you just need to mix together the ingredients, much like making a meatloaf. This dish will taste much more complex than the basic ingredients because of all the seasonings in the sausage- so remember to pick a good one.

Crock Pot Sausage-Stuffed Portobello Mushrooms

Serves 2-3

4-6 portobello mushroom caps, properly cleaned of skin and “gills”

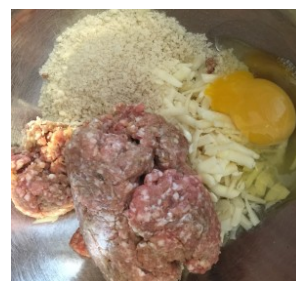
1/2 c. shredded gruyere cheese

1/2 c. shredded white cheddar cheese

1/2 cup panko bread crumbs

1 egg

Prep and wash mushrooms and then put in crockpot with the smooth side down and the underside facing UP. Mix the remaining ingredients in a separate bowl and then form into patties, much like a hamburger.



Place each patty into each mushroom cap and smush just a little so that the two things join together. Do not push so hard that you break the mushroom cap, but if you just did- it's ok. A broken mushroom tastes just the same.



Cook on high for 3-4 hours. The filling will cook through and brown just a little on top.

Crock Pot Pattypan Squash Salad



While this vegetable might look like a flying saucer, pattypan squash is a wonderful seasonal favorite!

Summer is almost here which means it is officially BBQ season! I love starting side dishes in my crock pot and then finishing them with fresh veggies and herbs. So for this past weekend's festivities, I picked up some pattypan squash at my local farmer's market. I think they are so cute and fun to eat! I also like them better than regular yellow squash because in a pattypan, the seeds are much smaller. The shape of the vegetable sort of resembles a flying saucer or a spin-top toy.

If you get really small pattypan squash, you can just cook them whole, which is a beautiful presentation. But I bought bigger ones, so I went ahead and cut them up into bite-sized cubes. The prep for this dish was so minimal, I had it done in about a minute.

You can use this vegetable in a number of different ways. It holds its texture well when steamed or stir-fried. I cooked it in the crock pot while I ran some errands and then let it cool completely before mixing it into my salad.

Happy summer BBQs!



Try this side dish at your next summer BBQ!

Crock Pot Pattypan Squash Salad

Serves 10-12 sides dishes

8 Pattypan squash, three-inches in diameter each

2 T. butter

2 green onions, diced

1/3 c. banana pepper rings (hot or mild)

1 8 oz. jar of marinated artichoke hearts (DO NOT DRAIN!)

1 c. sliced carrots

1/2 c. shredded guyere cheese

Cut squash into bite size pieces and put in crock pot, add 2 T. butter distributed across vegetables and cook on low for two hours. Let cool, then mix with remaining ingredients and chill for 2-4 hours. The marinade from the artichoke hearts serves as your dressing.

Crock Pot Dulce de Leche



I'm pretty sure this Crock Pot Dulce de Leche would be good on just about anything!

This is the easiest dessert I've ever made. And while this

recipe is not new or even really my own creation, I want to share it with you because of WHY I made it, and not just the HOW.

Here's a little story about my family. My youngest son has some crazy food allergies and while he is awesome and outgoing and resilient, he almost always has to miss out on desserts like cake at friends' birthday parties, free cone day at the local ice cream parlor, treats at school and after holiday services, and always has a heavy sigh when a waiter or waitress says, "would you like to see the dessert menu tonight?"

So for my sweet boy, I started learning to cook desserts. I don't like to bake, but there's something to be said about life being short, so eat dessert first. I bought an [ice cream maker](#) that attaches to my stand up mixer and learned how to make a basic vanilla and then jazz it up with fruit. I learned how to make a [buttermilk pound cake](#) that is an easy crowd-pleaser. I found [chocolate chunks](#) that are good enough to eat alone.

But this crock pot dulce de leche recipe is life-changing. It is simple and sweet and I plan on making it way more often than I probably should! DISCLAIMER: THIS STUFF IS HIGHLY ADDICTIVE~ I want to put it in everything. My coffee. My pound cake. Drizzled on a waffle. Scooped onto ice cream. I plan on making teacher gifts with this stuff, holiday cookie exchange treats, and by mid-summer, I'll probably figure out how to make a pretty delicious dulce de leche martini (for me, not my son!).

I hope someday my kids appreciate the lengths I went to in order to provide them the opportunity to eat well. I like to tell them that I've ruined them for marriage by cooking every night and that their future spouses will hate me for focusing so much on the importance of the family dinner. But I won't apologize for it.



With just one ingredient, dessert is almost ready!

Crock Pot Dulce de Leche

servings: unknown (how much of this is too much?!)

2 14 oz cans sweetened condensed milk

water

Pour sweetened condensed milk into mason jars that will fit in your crock pot. Put lids and rings on tightly, then place in crock pot. Fill crock pot with enough water to cover lids entirely. Cook on low for 10 hours. The ingredient will turn from white to a beautiful caramel color. Turn crock pot off and let cool before removing cans to prevent burning your fingers! Mason jars will be shelf stable, but keep in refrigerator once you open it.

Crock Pot Coconut Butternut Squash



This is a great easy side dish that goes with everything! And it only takes two ingredients to make it.

Are you ever in need of a quick and easy side dish? This vegetarian option only takes TWO INGREDIENTS and cooks on low for about four hours. It also goes with just about anything, so there's no need to amp it up with crazy flavor– just dump it in an hit start.

The prep work for this dish is less than five minutes if you start with a whole squash– or about 30 seconds if you buy it already prepped. Now I'm a big fan of doing things yourself... I buy whole mushrooms, not the sliced ones, because I don't like the brown edges. I buy the pineapple already cored because otherwise it looks like a porcupine and I don't want to get pricked. And let's not even move to the meat department and the ease and efficiency of getting chicken that is already

boneless and skinless!

But I digress. My apologies. Back to making things easy– I often buy butternut squash that's already been prepped. It's fresh and easy and pure in its raw state; it just has the seeds and skins removed which is actually sort of a difficult task to accomplish. You can try [something like this](#) to peel it, but it's a challenging task, especially on a Monday! If you want to prep it yourself, that's fine... the measurements are still the same. Plus, with only two ingredients, you don't really to be too precise.

Crock Pot Coconut Butternut Squash

Serves 6 (as side dishes)

2 lbs. butternut squash, peeled and seeds removed, then cut into chunks

1 13.5 oz can coconut milk (light or regular is fine)

Put both ingredients in the crock pot, cook on low for 4 hours. That's it!

[Crock Pot Cream of Mushroom Soup](#)



Try different varieties of mushrooms in your soup to enhance the flavor!

Did you have a great weekend? Yeah, I met a real fungi.

Haha, fungi humor still cracks me up. Get it? Get it? Funguy?! Bwahhh ha ha ha. This recipe calls for at least three different kinds of mushrooms because I love the variety of texture. If you don't like mushrooms, don't make this recipe, make a different soup like [Crock Pot Creamy Tomato Soup](#) or [Crock Pot Cream of Celery and Leek Soup](#). This mushroom soup is earthy and pungent in all the right ways.

You can get mushrooms all year round, but I suggest you try different varieties each time you make this. For example... your standard button mushroom is a great basic, but play around with oysters, enochi, portabello, or bunapi. No, those are not made up words, they are varieties of mushrooms!

This recipe requires very little measuring, which might make some of you uncomfortable. But, rest assured, that you would have to work so very hard to mess this up. Don't over season the soup— it's better to add a little salt and pepper at the end instead of at the beginning.

I like my mushroom soup to be smooth and creamy so I use [a](#)

[hand blender](#). If you like a more chunky soup, then try pulling 2 cups of the soup out and pureeing that, then add it back in. The soup will still feel smooth, but will retain the majority of chunks for bigger texture.

Try adding in other veggies for a more full flavor, if the mushroom intensity is too much for you. You can add chopped celery, green onions, chopped carrots, a can of green chiles or even some corn to adapt the flavor. I am making a simple version of this soup, but feel free to add more fun to your fungi as you experiment.

Crock Pot Cream of Mushroom Soup

Serves 6-8

4 cups mushrooms, cleaned, stems discarded, and caps cut into bite-sized pieces

32 oz. vegetable broth

2 cloves garlic, minced

4 sprigs fresh thyme (just the leaves)

1/4 sweet onion

2 cups milk

2 T. corn starch

Add all of the ingredients into the crock pot EXCEPT the milk and corn starch. Cook on low for 3-4 hours. With one hour left to cook, dissolve corn starch in the milk and then stir into the soup. Puree the soup using [a hand blender](#) until texture is smooth. The soup should thicken in the last hour and then a bit more once served. Add salt and pepper as needed once cooking is complete.