

# 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 0z. 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.

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# Crock Pot Southern Style Greens



Living in the South, I have learned that I can no longer assume that my vegetables are vegetarian. It seems like every restaurant I go to uses delicious savory meats like bacon, sausage or ham to season our side dishes. I always

like bacon on a side salad without any complaints, so I'm definitely open to experimenting. Plus— what a great way to get my boys to eat new vegetables! Adding a little bit of a familiar flavor to a foreign one definitely eases the introduction.

This week, I decided to try kale. I've always heard the redeeming qualities of this blueish-greenish rough leafy vegetable, but had never tried to cook it. The simplest instruction I could find included removing the hard center vein and then slicing, sauteing and serving with garlic and olive oil. That seemed easy enough, but I really wanted to see how I could prepare kale in the crock pot instead.

I've heard about soups containing kale, usually with a white bean and some sort of sausage or just a vegetable medley that included kale instead of something like cabbage. But in this beautiful summer heat, I didn't really want to sit down to a hot bowl of broth.

So, I decided to prepare a soft, tasty side dish with my kale, using the Southern inspiration of including meat in my vegetables. I found out that the steam of the crock pot really breaks down the toughness of the kale without removing any of

its natural sweetness. While I intended for this dish to be an accompaniment, I actually think it would be great served like a stir fry over rice or noodles without the need for any additional sauce. Enjoy!

1 large bunch of kale. hard center vein removed, leaves sliced into strips

6 strips of bacon, cooked and crumbled

1/4 c. water

1/2 medium onion, sliced thin

3-4 cloves of garlic, minced

1/2 t. salt

1/2 t. black pepper

1/2 t. red pepper flakes

Put all ingredients in crock pot and mix together. Cook on low for 3-4 hours.

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## Crock Pot Mozzarella Dip

Summer is a great time for backyard BBQs, gathering with friends and family and enjoying lots of tasty treats. Here is a great recipe that is quick and easy to make, but everyone loves to enjoy! Serve this in the crock pot so that it stays hot and creamy. Accompany this spicy crowd-pleaser with crackers, pull-apart bread or just some cool, crisp veggies. Enjoy!

1 lb. mozzarella cheese, cubed

1 c. mayonnaise

1/2 medium onion, chopped

2 cloves garlic, chopped

1/2 t. paprika

2 t. Worcestershire sauce

1 4-oz. can chopped green chiles (NOT DRAINED)

Coat crock pot in non-stick spray. Combine all ingredients in separate bowl, mix well. Pour into crock pot and cook on low for 2-3 hours. Serve hot.

*Looking for some more flare?? Try adding 1/2 c. crisp bacon bits or a few shakes of Tabasco to add more flavor to this cheesy appetizer.*

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## Crock Pot Fish Chowder

This recipe has evolved from an amazing chowder that I once had at the Columbus International Festival in Ohio. I think it was the Scandanavian table that was honoring their long-standing countrymen's careers of treacherous trips on the ocean. I think it was really to honor the countrywomen's careers of having boatloads of fish to cook and trying to come up with new recipes that didn't resemble a fish face.

Now this recipe can easily be done in a pot on the stove and done in an hour, but then the flavors wouldn't have a chance to fester all together. I prefer it in the crock pot, usually made from leftover salmon or tilapia. You could probably use halibut, red snapper or maybe even some trout if you wanted

to, depending on what you like. If you don't have leftovers to use, then just throw the (deboned, please) fish filets into a pan with a little butter, salt and pepper and then bake it, let it cool and flake it. Realistically, a budget-minded mama could also use a couple cans of pink salmon and still have a similar result.

Well, if we wanted to, we could start by sauteeing up some diced bacon with the mirepoix (fancy word for chopped carrots, celery and onions) and then including it all in the pot for a smoky and salty addition. Or, we could throw in half a pound of shrimp at the end of the day and make the chowder heartier. But I keep it simple and it's still a crowd-pleaser and probably a little healthier too.

4 carrots, peeled and diced

3 celery stalks, diced

1 medium onion, diced

1 chopped zucchini, unpeeled

3 cups vegetable broth

2 bay leaves

1 clove garlic, minced

salt and pepper

1/2 – 1 lb fish– no skin, no bones; cooked, cooled and flaked  
(1 T. corn starch dissolved into 2 cups cold milk)

Put all ingredients (except corn starch and milk) in the crockpot, with the fish being last. Cook 4-6 hours on high. Remove bay leaves. Dissolve corn starch in cold milk and then add to the pot 1 hour before serving.

If you'd like to add some variety, offer cheddar cheese, chopped scallions and puffy oyster crackers to top your fish chowder. Or a toy boat, if you can find one that hasn't been in the bath.