

Crock Pot Summer Onion Dip



If you read my post about the cute \$7 crockpot that I saw on sale last week, this recipe would be the perfect fit for it! If you have a “little dipper” sized crock pot, you can make this dip and then use the crock pot to serve it and keep it warm. I thought these flavors fused together well for an easy

afternoon snack.

I'd recommend serving my summer onion dip with crisp pita chips, wavy potato chips, baby carrots and cut up celery. It also would be great on a baked potato! It's a basic enough recipe that it would be great on top of pretty much anything. Enjoy!

1/2 c. chopped basil leaves

juice of 1 lemon

8 oz. cream cheese, warmed

1/2 t. black pepper

1 T. Worcestershire sauce

3 T. minced onion

1 clove garlic, minced

Put all ingredients in small crock pot and stir together. Heat on low for two hours.

Crock Pot Mexican Chicken

I'm a big fan of celebrating other cultures, especially their holidays, but it's mostly for the foods we get to enjoy. Cinco de Mayo used to mean margaritas, Corona with lime and maybe some array of indigestion-causing spicy salsas. Now I try for a little more flavor and less debauchery. This Mexican Chicken crockpot is a fantastic combination of spice and creaminess and when your teeth burst through a bite you might just start thinking about moving south of the border.

4 chicken breasts (can be frozen)

1 pkg. taco seasoning

1 can yellow corn niblets, drained

1 can black beans, washed and drained

1 jar of picante sauce (mild, medium or hot)

1 pkg. plain cream cheese (8 ounces)

Directions:

Place frozen chicken breasts in the bottom of a crockpot. Layer all ingredients EXCEPT for the cream cheese. Cook on low for 6-8 hours. Ten minutes before you serve, stir in cream cheese. Serve over rice. Or— make it a day ahead and just add the cream cheese when you reheat!

(recipe originally provided by Preferred Childcare, Inc., Greensboro, NC)

Crock Pot Salmon- Crock for the Cure



This morning I am participating in the **Susan G. Komen's Race for the Cure**. It has been my privilege to support this cause and all the amazing women and men that are fighting cancer every day. We all know someone, have loved someone or have experienced this battle ourselves. We must provide courage and compassion to support each other and on a day like today we add enthusiasm and charisma as well. I am proud of my community for running (no pun intended) such an amazing event every year.

One of the goals of the I AM THE CURE campaign this year is to "start the fight by living right!" It only makes sense that I challenge myself today to make a healthy PINK meal. I think we'll call it Crock for the Cure. Maybe someday I'll run my own fundraiser along these lines, but for today, I'd like to provide you with an easy colorful recipe. Enjoy!

(to find a Race for the Cure in your area, visit <http://ww5.komen.org/findarace.aspx>)

4 salmon steaks (about 1-2 lbs of salmon; deboned, skin on)

1 red bell pepper, seeded and sliced thin

1 T. pink peppercorns

1 c. white wine

1 T. olive oil

2 T. fresh dill, chopped

1/2 t. salt

Start by coating crock pot with a non-stick spray. Place salmon steaks side by side in the crock pot. Drizzle with olive oil, peppercorns, salt and fresh dill. Scatter sliced red pepper on top. Pour wine around edges of fish, but don't rinse off the seasonings. Poach for 2 hours on high.

To continue the theme, mix 1 T. softened cream cheese into 1/2 c. cocktail sauce and serve with the fish. It will be pink and spicy and will complement the opaque color of the fish.

Crock Pot Creamy Corn

Not to be too corny, but I'm a big fan of corn. I love fresh local corn on the cob in the summer, corn chowder soup in the winter, corn muffins, popcorn at the movies, canned cream corn, kettle corn at the apple festival, even cooking with corn oil.

I've got some great leftover meat from this weekend, but I really want a yummy side dish to go with it to make it seem like a whole new meal. It's already the middle of the afternoon, so I'm short on time, but this is a perfect time to make a delicious corn side dish as an accompaniment.

The contrast of the sweet corn and creamy cheese to the sting of the jalapenos is a great chemistry. When you make this dish and someone tells you how much they love it, just smile and say, "awww shucks!"

1 32 oz. bag of frozen corn

1 small yellow onion, chopped

4 T. butter, melted

1/2 c. milk

1 T. parsley

1/2 t. salt

1 t. black pepper

3 T. chopped jalapeno slices (from the jar, not fresh)

8 oz. whipped cream cheese

Put corn and onion in crock pot first, then stir in melted butter and milk. Add in all the seasonings and the jalapenos and stir again. Scoop the cream cheese onto mixture, leaving scoops all over. Cook on high for 2 hours, stir cream cheese into mixture and then heat for half an hour more.

Crock Pot Mac and Cheese

Mac and cheese= kid favorite, adult favorite, crowd pleaser. Unless you are lactose intolerant, I'm guessing mac and cheese is a staple in your diet and probably gives you warm fuzzies of memories as a kid. Whether you liked the stove top blue box, orange carton that went in the oven or something homemade with buttery crumbles on top, cheese and noodles are a great combination.

Noodles are a challenge for the crock pot, however. I would recommend cooking the noodles in advance. I know it makes TWO pots to clean instead of just one, but it's the best way. You can reuse the pot to make the sauce before pouring it into the

crock pot. You may be saying, but then isn't this a stove top recipe and not a crock pot recipe? But by adding these things together into the crock pot, you are actually working to increase the creaminess, less the seasoning melt together and ultimately have dinner ready when you get home.

I also would recommend shredding the block of cheese by hand instead of buying preshredded cheese. It makes it a little creamier, although I'm not quite sure why. But if you cook the noodles in advance and shred the cheese too, you are eliminating some of the prep time to make it easier to start this dish over breakfast and then enjoy it at dinner time.

Once this becomes one of your favorite dishes, there are lots of ways to add variety: add 1/2 c salsa or 4 strips of crumbled bacon or freshly snipped chives or some steamed vegetables like broccoli or peas. If you want more protein in the dish, add a packet of drained tuna fish or some fajita-style chicken strips. If you are serving this to adults and want to make it more grown up, try different shape noodles instead of the traditional shell or elbow macaroni. However you make it, I hope this becomes one of your favorite recipes too and helps to make new warm fuzzies for you, your friends and your family.

8 oz pasta, cooked and drained (try shells or elbow macaroni if you want to be traditional)

4 T. butter

4 T. flour

1/2 cup half and half creamer

1 c. milk

1 egg, beaten

8 oz sharp cheddar cheese, shredded

8 oz. mild cheddar cheese, shredded

1 t. white pepper

PINCH of nutmeg (just a weeeee bit)

4 oz. whipped cream cheese

Cook the package of noodles according to the box, this step can be done in advance and should not be done in the crock pot. On the stove, melt the butter in a pot, then slowly stir in the flour until it is all dissolved. Slowly add the creamer, milk, beaten egg and seasonings while still continuing to stir and then remove pot from heat. This mixture should thicken. Now for the crock potting instructions— first, spray pot with non-stick spray. Add noodles, creamy mixture from pot and then the shredded cheeses. Mix this all together. Then, cook on low for 4 hours. About an hour before you want to serve this, add the whipped cream cheese and stir it all together. This last step adds a special creaminess to your mac and cheese.