

Crock Pot Cauliflower Curry



Crock Pot Cauliflower Curry is a delicious side dish that packs a lot of flavor!

Sometimes I just want a side dish with a little kick and not a lot of calories. I was raiding the pantry the other day and found a can of coconut milk that I didn't remember buying. Funny how that happens, right?! Like, who else would have bought this random item that I don't usually purchase? I must have had an intention for it, but the whim passed and I was still stuck with the can of curious origins.

Then, while trying to decide what to do with it, I debated the cauliflower I bought on a whim as well. I don't know about you, but I find so many recipes online right now reinventing the cauliflower and I go, that sounds good, let's try it! But then I pin 17 other things and forget where I started from. Maybe that's how I wound up with the coconut milk, too!

This dish is QUICK to put together— like five minutes— and is a great way to try a new ingredient or two. Warning- red pepper flakes can be spicier than you anticipate, especially after they fester with the other flavors in the crockpot! Add them timidly the first time you make this dish. It's a side, not a fire!

Crock Pot Cauliflower Curry

Makes 6-8 side dish servings, depending on the size of your cauliflower

1 cauliflower, washed, core removed, chopped into bite-size pieces

1 red pepper, sliced or 6-8 multi-color small peppers, sliced

1 inch of ginger root, peeled and diced

1 yellow onion, sliced thin

3 cloves garlic, diced

1 can coconut milk

1 T. ground curry

1-2 t. red pepper flakes



With just a few ingredients you probably have on hand anyway, you can make this kickin' crock pot side dish!

Add all ingredients to crock pot and cook on low for 4 hours. Cautious of the spice level until you try this for the first time!

Crock Pot Asian Mushrooms



With a change of sauce and topping, these mushrooms went from the ground to being great!

Well fans, I told you I made variations to two of my recipes and I finally have a minute to share. The first variation was for [crock pot asian meatballs](#) and this was the side dish I made to go with it! I've been trying to do some Asian-inspired dinners that don't involve me picking up the phone and ordering fried, fried, sauced and steamed. I also wanted this dish to still be kid-friendly for picky eaters. So I took my favorite [crock pot sassy meatballs](#) and changed it's regional origin and then took my [crock pot garlic mushrooms](#) and added a different sauce and topping!

I learned from a Korean friend of mine that I can make a very basic sauce out of three ingredients, put it on almost anything, and it will taste awesome. And indeed, she was

right! I'm also convinced that mushrooms can taste good covered in just about anything.

So I pretty much made these mushrooms according to the original recipe but without all of the seasonings. Add the sauce and sprinkles and be good to go!

Crock Pot Asian Mushrooms

serves 8 as sides

2 lbs white mushrooms, cleaned, stems removed, and quartered

1/4 lb. butter (one stick)

2 T. minced garlic

1 t. onion powder

1/2 t. salt

1/2 t. black pepper

Sauce:

1 T. sesame oil

1 T. soy sauce

1 clove minced garlic

Topping:

1 T. roasted sesame seeds

Put mushrooms in crock pot first, then all of the seasonings and garlic. Put the stick of butter on top as the last step and then put the lid on. No mixing is necessary. Do not add sauce yet. Cook on low for 5-6 hours. Combine the three sauce ingredients in a separate bowl. Remove the mushrooms using a slotted spoon and then toss in the sauce just before serving. If you wish, you can decorate the mushrooms with the roasted

sesame seeds just before serving.

Crock Pot Asian Meatballs



Take your favorite foods to a new region with just a little variation!

Well fans, I told you I made variations to two of my recipes and I finally have a minute to share. I've been trying to do some Asian-inspired dinners that don't involve me picking up the phone and ordering fried, fried, sauced and steamed. I also wanted this dish to still be kid-friendly for picky eaters. So I took my favorite [crock pot sassy meatballs](#) and changed it's regional origin!

You can add many different vegetables to this dish, like the pea pods and shredded carrot that I chose, but also try water chestnuts, bamboo shoots, baby corn, or bean sprouts for even more interesting textures and authentic cuisine.

Start by making your own meatballs using 1 lb beef, 1 lb turkey, 2 eggs, 2 cloves minced garlic and 1/2 c. panko breadcrumbs. Do not bake them like you would with the sassy meatballs, you can actually cook the meatballs directly in the sauce for a softer finish to the meat.

Crock Pot Asian Meatballs

serves 6-8

2 lb. meatballs (see above recipe or buy frozen ones)

8 oz. grape jelly

1 jar Heinz chili sauce

1/2 lb. snow peas or sugar snap peas

1 c. shredded carrot (bagged or hand-grated)

1 T. soy sauce

1 T. roasted sesame seeds

Put all solids into the crockpot. Mix jelly, soy sauce and chili sauce together and then pour into crockpot. Cook 4-6 hours on low. Serve over noodles or rice and top with sesame seeds.

Crock Pot Garlic Mushrooms



It's quite possible that these little fungi will become your new favorite side dish. Consider yourself warned.

Snow Day #7. I've been using my crock pot for [breakfast](#), for [lunch](#), and for [dinner](#). Somehow the invasion of snow has worked up some serious appetites after playing outside. To feed my little monsters, I planned on making pasta last night (no, not in a crock pot... just the normal boil water and add pasta) but I wanted a nice side dish to go with it. I bought a huge container of mushrooms last week, but then forgot what I was going to make, so I decided that they would make the perfect side dish for our pasta dinner.

Mushrooms are one of my favorite vegetables. They are all fine and good raw, dipped in ranch, or marinated. And they come in so many different varieties! Don't believe me? Take a trip to your favorite international grocer and see if you can even identify all of those little fungi. I like enoki in miso soup or baby portabellos in [beef stroganoff](#), but I used regular, white mushrooms in today's recipe. They are a pretty standard item for me to buy, since they are sturdy, take a long time to spoil, and can be added in so many different ways.

This dish is really easy to make, but be warned— you can fill the crock pot with mushrooms and six hours later, you will have about a quarter of a pot of food left! So plan for more

than you think you want. They also work well added to spaghetti sauce or used as a layer in vegetable lasagna. Enjoy!

Crock Pot Garlic Mushrooms (serves 8 as sides)

2 lbs white mushrooms, cleaned, stems removed, and quartered

1/4 butter (one stick)

2 T. minced garlic

1 T. dried dill

1 t. onion powder

1/2 t. paprika

1/2 t. salt

1/2 t. black pepper

2 sprigs fresh thyme, just the leaves

parmesan cheese

Put mushrooms in crock pot first, then all of the seasonings and garlic. Put the stick of butter on top as the last step and then put the lid on. No mixing is necessary. Do not add parmesan cheese yet. Just don't. Cook on low for 5-6 hours. Remove the mushrooms using a slotted spoon and then decorate with grated or shredded parmesan cheese just before serving. If you wish, you can save the liquid in the crock pot for mushroom gravy.

Crock Pot Chicken and Artichokes



This easy and delicious dish can be made with just a few items from your pantry!

Happy Valentine's Day, crock pot lovers! I hope you've enjoyed the day and if you care nothing about this Hallmark holiday, I hope you had a fabulous Saturday.

I thawed out some chicken a couple days ago and didn't decide what to do with it until today. I wanted something easy that even the kids would eat, and didn't want to go to the store to get any supplies.

One of my favorite pantry items that I always keep stocked is a small jar of artichoke hearts in a marinade. They are great on fresh salads, complement tomato-based sauces on pasta, or create a delectable antipasto plate when you need a quick appetizer. The dressing is also a fabulous sauce.

I also had a basket of fresh cherry tomatoes from a local farm

that I needed to use before they went soft. Even in North Carolina, it's cold at this time of year, but I love that I can get fresh tomatoes that were greenhouse grown.

With a few basic ingredients you really can put together a delicious dinner without needing a trip to the grocery store.

Happy Love Day!

5-6 boneless skinless chicken thighs

1 pint cherry tomatoes

6 oz jar of artichoke hearts in marinade (DO NOT DRAIN!)

3 cloves garlic

1/2 sweet onion, sliced

Put all ingredients in crock pot and cook on high for 4 hours. Serve alone as an entrée or over pasta or rice.

Crock Pot Cream of Celery and Leek Soup



Crock Pot Celery and Leek Soup

Most weeks, I have a game plan for all of our meals and a grocery list to organize my trip. I know which nights will be crockpot meals, which nights will be leftovers, and I even anticipate which nights I'll probably be too tired to cook!

But I started this week a day too late. I didn't have my grocery list set and I wasn't quite sure what was for dinner, so I opened the fridge and played a little Food Network-style game show called, "what the hell can I cook with these three ingredients?"

This is part of the amazement of crockpot cooking. With the right balance of seasonings and time, dinner can be a full meal without a lot of struggle.

Tonight's cream of celery and leek soup turned out beautifully. Some of my Facebook followers have been asking for easy soups that are low calorie, too. This dish is very low carb and adding the last step really thickens it up to make it hearty. I even used 1% milk and it still tastes rich and creamy.

As long as you keep basic ingredients in your pantry and an open mind for culinary adventure, you can make delicious dishes without needing unusual ingredients. I'll still be going to the grocery store tomorrow, though!

Crock Pot Cream of Celery and Leek Soup

3 Bunches of celery hearts, sliced (about 8-10 cups)

1 lb frozen sliced leeks (or fresh if you can find them)

32 oz Chicken or vegetable broth

14 oz Can sweet corn, cream style

3 Cloves garlic, whole

1 t. Dried dill

1/4 t. Nutmeg

2 Bay leaves

1 t. Salt

1 t. Black pepper

2 T. Corn starch

2 Cups cold milk

Add everything except the last two ingredients to your crock pot. Cook on high for 3-4 hours or until all vegetables are soft. Remove bay leaves. Use immersion blender and purée soup. Dissolve the cornstarch in the cold milk and then add to crock pot. Continue cooking one more hour on high so soup can thicken.

Crock Pot Beet Borscht

Dre's got nothing on me—my beets are fresh! Ha! Get it? See what I did there.



Beet borscht tastes great with a few boiled potatoes and a scoop of cold sour cream.

There is nothing that makes me think of the my family history more than a steaming hot bowl of neon pink soup. No, this isn't a serving of chemical warfare, it's a fresh and sweet, soothing bowl of beet borscht. My grandma still makes this and at most Jewish Deli's you can usually find it on the menu right next to corned beef, chopped liver and matzah balls. What can I say? My roots are authentic and so is my cuisine. Except grandma never made this dish in the crock pot!

Now if this was truly home cooking, I would use fresh beets, but I've found that the canned version works just as well and the pink juice adds a certain flavor feature as well. Grandma taught me to cut sliced beets into strips instead of buying the canned variety of matchsticks. Somehow the matchstick ones are too mushy. (According to grandma, of course.)

Authentically, I would hand slice some cabbage, but I love the fine style of angel hair cabbage that I can purchase at my

grocery store. It cooks up quicker and doesn't contrast the texture of the beets as much.



Keep a few of these items on hand in your pantry and you can have beet borscht anytime you want!

If you make this dish with fresh beets, just clean, peel and shred them before throwing them in the crock pot. The taste is very similar to this recipe, but the beautiful pink broth cannot be matched! It truly is extraordinary. But that pink color will most likely stain your cutting board. And your fingers. And your countertops, before you even realize the glow has been dripping!

This soup can be made vegetarian or meat-based. In fact, try cooking down beef bones or chicken bones to make your broth instead of using store bought. I know, I know... this meal is so "processed", but hey, it's a weeknight, and sometimes even the Crock Pot Queen needs a a quick meal to fix.

Give this a try and keep an open mind. Put on those Dre headphones and drop the beat. But not the beet. It will probably stain.

Crock Pot Beet Borscht

Serves 8

2 15 oz. cans of sliced beets (do not drain)

1/2 sweet onion, sliced thin

1 package finely sliced cabbage (approx. 6 cups)

2 bay leaves

2 cloves of garlic, chopped

1 32 oz. box vegetarian stock

8 redskin potatoes

8 T. sour cream

Slice the onion and put in the crock pot with the cabbage, bay leaves, and garlic cloves. Drain the cans of beets into the crock pot and then cut the sliced beets into strips. Add stock and cook on high for 3-4 hours. Clean and quarter the potatoes and bowl separately. To each serving of soup, add a few chunks of boiled potatoes and a dollop of sour cream. Borscht is also refreshingly delicious served cold.

Crock Pot Spaghetti Squash



I was walking through the produce aisle this week and excited to see all of the fall produce slowly emerging as the weather starts to cool and the crock pot starts to heat. With squash of every size and variety piled up like presents under a tree, I started loading my cart with butternut, acorn, and spaghetti squash. But the tipping tower of treasures presents a second issue— how do you prepare and cook these ridiculous looking vegetables? As with most foods that I don't want to fret about, I make them in my crock pot!

If you haven't ever experienced spaghetti squash, you are about to be delighted. I'm pretty sure it's the best diet food ever since it's low in calorie, gluten-free, dairy-free, paleo-friendly, vegan, vegetarian, nut-free, guilt-free, and packed with nutrients and flavor. But what intrigues me most about this cavern of goodness is the bizarre pasta like consistency of the meaty threads.

Here's the prep: waaaaaash the squaaaaaash. I love that you just sounded that out. Seriously though, this thing is going to sit in its entirety in your crock pot all day, let's not harbor fugitives like bugs or germs. Then take a sharp knife and stab the squash 5-6 times so that the heat and moisture can seep in and out to cook the flesh. Yes, it's a vegetable, but I think you can use words like meaty and flesh to describe never-living creatures, too.

Put the 4 lb squash and 2 cups of water in your crock pot for 6 hours on low. When it's done, the squash will deflate a bit and be awkward to lift out. Watch out— it's HOT and full of juices. Let it cool a bit before you handle it. You will need to cut the spaghetti squash in half and scoop out the seeds inside (Throw the seeds away. This is not a pumpkin.)

Use a fork to shred the cooked pasta-like fresh from inside the squash. Once you have scraped it out, throw out the skins. Much like pasta, this is now a wonderful blank slate to begin preparing a delicious dish! Here are a couple ideas to choose from as far as fun flavors to add into your spaghetti squash:

- Add 1 tablespoon butter, 1 teaspoon minced garlic and 1/4 cup grated parmesan cheese.
- Add 1 cup alfredo sauce, 1 lb. browned ground beef and a can of stewed mushrooms. Oh look- beef stroganoff!
- Top it with [crock pot chicken cacciatore](#) for a low-fat, low-carb hearty dinner. (Yes, this requires two crock pots.)
- Add a scoop of [crock pot caramelized onions](#) and some cubed mozzarella cheese. French onion spaghetti squash!

Trying a new vegetable dish is no longer a challenge or a disappointing dinner. Enjoy your local seasonal vegetables in these new and exciting ways.

Crock Pot Sweet Potato Soup

I've always been a fan of our grill... really, for two reasons. 1. In the summertime, it's a great way to eat healthy and not heat up the kitchen and 2. when we grill, my husband is usually the one cooking! Since it's been such a mild winter, we've been taking advantage of the unseasonably warm evenings and grilling our food. But since local produce isn't as plentiful in January, I've been getting creative.

So I've been grilling sweet potatoes. Sure, they get their glory at Thanksgiving when they are smothered and covered by marshmallows or syrup or sugar. Sometimes they even make a

repeat performance at Christmas or Easter or Passover, but my new absolute favorite way to eat a sweet potato is by grilling it to perfection.



It's so easy, let me tell you the few easy steps... Wash your sweet potatoes. Poke fork holes all over. Wrap sweet potato in aluminum foil. Grill on med-high heat for one hour, turning the sweet potato halfway through. That's it! When the sweet vibrant goodness is done, it will be easy to squeeze the flesh with tongs. Please be cautious though, sometimes the sweet juices will run out of the foil (and I don't want you to get burned).

So a couple nights ago, I grilled five sweet potatoes. I figured we would eat the leftovers so I made a couple extra. And these extra potatoes became the inspiration for tonight's new recipe! With a few ingredients I already had on hand, I was able to literally "whip together" this amazing meal. This crock pot sweet potato soup is thick and hearty and even though soup might not be fresh and exciting for a winter meal, adding in the flavor from the grill really makes a difference.

2 medium sweet potatoes, already cooked in grill or oven, cooled and then skinned

3 c. chicken broth

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

1/4 t. nutmeg

1/4 t. chili powder

1/4 t. celery seed

1/4 t. curry powder

1 clove garlic, minced

1/2 c. heavy cream

Put all ingredients (except heavy cream) in crock pot, stir and then cook on low for 3-4 hours. Use a hand blender and puree mixture until smooth, then stir in heavy cream. Serve hot with a tiny sprinkle of nutmeg or curry on top.

Crock Pot Turkey Pot Roast

This afternoon, I went with my family to an apple orchard to pick fresh, local produce to enjoy. It felt organic. Not in the “lacking chemicals and pesticides” way, but in the “feeling connected to the earth and supporting something good”. My kids loved picking the fruit and sampling all the different kinds of apples. I am eager to make my [escaloped apples](#) recipe as soon as possible.

But the best part of the day was coming home to dinner already made and a very hungry family to feed!

One of my favorite meals to cook and eat is pot roast– meat, potatoes, carrots, celery, onions... all the basics. It’s so filling and full of great nutrients. One crock pot is a whole meal. But sometimes I like to vary it up a little. I made a very similar recipe today, but instead of beef, I used three turkey legs as our protein.



The meat becomes so tender it falls off the bone. I used whole carrots because they make such a nice presentation and they don't get soggy when they cook. The key to keeping the meat tender is to use the meat rack for the crock pot and keep it elevated. It still absorbs all the flavors

as it cooks, but it doesn't deteriorate as it cooks.

I highly recommend making this dish for a family dinner or even for the holidays! Trust me— I'm sure you can think of 100 other ways to spend a weekend afternoon than staying in the kitchen cooking. Get out there and enjoy life a little, then come home for a great meal. Enjoy!

3-4 turkey legs (2-3 lbs)

6 whole carrots, peeled

1/2 sweet onion, cut into chunks

4 stalks celery, cut into 2-3 inch sections

1 t. minced garlic

1 white potato, cut into chunks

2 c. chicken broth

1 T. olive oil

1/2 t. salt

1/2 t. black pepper

2 t. Mrs. Dash seasoning

Put all produce (carrots, onions, celery, potato) in crock pot and arrange in bottom. Using an oval shaped crock pot is best.

Put crock pot meat rack in so that the meat will sit just above the produce. Pour chicken broth in, but do not let the volume of it reach the meat rack. Place turkey legs on meat rack. Brush meat with olive oil and then sprinkle with seasonings. Cook on low for 6 hours.

(If you like gravy, put the remaining liquid in a pot on the stove and bring it to a boil. Add 1 T. corn starch that has been dissolved into 1/4 c. warm water. When gravy thickens, serve with turkey pot roast.)