

Crock Pot Dirty Rice

Do you ever stock up on meat when it's on sale and freeze it, only to then have to come up with a meal that specifically uses that "great deal" before it gets freezer burnt?! Yeah, that's what I'm going through today. I thawed out a package of sweet italian ground sausage. I'm sure I bought it with some sort of intention... but then it got buried in the freezer under half a dozen packages of frozen vegetables. After making winter vegetable soup, I found my meat stash and now had to face the task of figuring out what to make with the ground sausage.

Normally, you can substitute ground sausage in most ground beef or ground turkey recipes. It makes great chili, an incredible lasagna and even is creative in meatloaf. But I wanted to work on a recipe that truly highlighted the spices of the sweet italian sausage. You can use any variety of sausage, just understand that the flavors will ultimately completely change up the overall dish— so if you want hot sausage or you want to un-case a beer bratwurst, that's totally fine. You can play with the flavors by changing up your meat selection— or using up something you find in the bottom of your freezer!

So tonight, we're having crock pot dirty rice. I love that this dish uses the word "dirty", but it's so true. This is the antithesis of steamed, white rice. It muddles together all the flavors from the spicy meat and the sweet vegetables and somehow the tomato paste marries it all together. Yes, that's what this is— a "dirty" "marriage" of flavors. Ha! I hope you enjoy this classic spicy one-pot meal and that it warms up your winter night.

1 lb sausage, crumbled and browned

3 cups water

1 cup uncooked long grain rice

1/2 large onion, finely chopped

1/2 large red bell pepper, finely chopped

1/2 large yellow bell pepper, finely chopped

3 stalks finely chopped celery

1 15 oz. can kidney beans, not drained

1 6 oz. can tomato paste

1 beef bouillion cube

1 tsp salt

1/2 tsp red pepper flakes

1 T. chopped fresh parsley

Brown meat and put in crock pot first. Then using same pan, brown onions and peppers until soft, then add to crock pot. Add remaining ingredients, except for parsley. Stir. Cook on low for 4 hours. Serve into bowls and sprinkle with fresh parsley.

[Sarah's Vegetable Chili](#)

I love when my friends and fans share their recipes... everyone loves a good crock pot dish that is worthy of sharing! So from one crock pot fanatic to another, here is Sarah's recipe for vegetable chili. It sounds like a great way to use fresh

produce and also make a vegetarian dish that will fill everyone's bellies with happiness. I especially like her tools of measurement. Enjoy!

Chop one metric crap-ton (that's 1 HUGE zucchini, 3 small bell peppers, 2 big handfuls of green and wax beans and 2 ears of corn, hulled) to bite-sized pieces and drop into crock pot. Add 3 (15 oz) cans of beans (I used pinto, kidney and dark kidney). Stir to combine.

Separately, combine 1 (8oz) can tomato sauce, 1 (6 oz) can tomato paste, 4 cloves minced garlic, 4 T chili powder, 1 T dried mustard powder, 1 t oregano and 1 t ground cumin. Plop over veggies.

Add 1 box (4 C) vegetable stock. (I like wetter chilis, but you can use less if you prefer a chunkier chili). Stir to combine and coat all the veggies with the chili goodness.

Pop on low for ... I think mine was on for about 10 hours, so I'll go with the 8-10 hours on low. At this point, you can add cooked elbow noodles, sour cream, cheese, fresh onion...whatever you like.

I'm thinking carrots would sweeten it up a bit if that's what you like. OOH! I bet barley would be good too...Lookie at me, cooking without a complete recipe. My sister would be so proud! ☐ Next recipe will be filled with "a pinch of" and "a dash of" and "half an eggshell of"..."

Crock Pot Cincinnati Chili

If you are unfamiliar with Cincinnati chili, let me explain to

you how this is different from what you might think. This is more like a spaghetti sauce, than a stew. It usually has some combination of allspice, cinnamon and sometimes cocoa powder in it. There are no beans cooked in this pot and it is not meant to be consumed by itself. It is however, an amazing topper for hot dogs, spaghetti, french fries or even in a tortilla! When you eat this, there are different ways of presenting it– five in fact! Two-way would be spaghetti and chili, three-way adds finely shredded cheddar cheese, four-way diced onions and five-way would be all of the above plus some dark red kidney beans. Crazy enough– you can also top it with oyster crackers and hot sauce, if you so choose.

Skyline and Gold Star are probably the most common brands of Cincinnati Chili and you can get it at the fast-food restaurants or in cans at the grocery store. But since I don't live in the Great Lakes area anymore, I make my own crock pot Cincinnati chili using my best friend's mom's recipe. Yes, it's three degrees of separation, but it's still so good! So to "K" and "R"– thank you for sharing your recipe with me, it's better than the original!!

1.5 lbs. ground beef

1 29 oz. can tomato sauce

1 14.5 oz can peeled whole tomatoes

1 onion, diced

1/2 t. allspice

1/2 t. cinnamon

1 t. salt

1/2 t. black pepper

1 1/2 t. chili powder

1 t. white vinegar

1 clove garlic, minced

3 bay leaves

Brown meat in a pan, then add to crock pot. Add all ingredients and stir well. Cook on high 4-5 hours. Smash peeled tomatoes while still in the crock pot. Remove bay leaves before serving. See notes above for different ways of enjoying your Cincinnati chili, including on a hot dog, on french fries, in a tortilla, or most commonly on spaghetti and topped with finely shredded cheddar cheese.

Easiest Crock Pot Chili-- EVER

If you can work a can opener, you can make this chili. You still need to brown the meat before you put it in the crock pot, but that's the only work that needs done. Open the cans, dump it in, let it fester. Done.

My brother in law taught me this recipe and I love that it is uncomplicated. I usually make this on football Sundays so that when we have people over to watch the game, everyone can have a hot meal whenever they get hungry. Plus, I love all the fun toppings that go on chili. It isn't football season yet, but it is the start of baseball season. So, for sports fans everywhere, here is your game day strategy. Enjoy!

(I SUGGEST USING A 6 QT. CROCK POT TO MAKE THIS. IF YOU HAVE A SMALLER ONE, THEN REMOVE ONE OF THE CANS OF BEANS. ALSO, ALL CANS ARE TYPICALLY ABOUT 14-15 OUNCES.)

2 cans diced tomatoes

1/2 medium onion, chopped

1 can dark red kidney beans

1 can light red kidney beans

1 can great northern beans

1 packet of chili seasoning (FYI– it's a combination of things like onion powder, chili powder, a bit of cumin, salt and pepper, etc. but it's just easier to buy the packet instead of measuring it all out separately)

1 lb. ground beef or turkey

Brown meat completely and then put in crock pot. Dump everything else in. Give it a stir and then cook on high for 4 hours. Serve with shredded cheddar, chopped onion and sour cream. For added flavor, you can add 1 can of sweet corn kernels when you add in all the beans.

Crock Pot Bean Medley

We're going to a BBQ at my brother's house this weekend and since the assumption is that I'll bring something from the crockpot, I know I need to come up with something tasty and creative. The catch is that I don't really want to go grocery shopping today. So, I'm diving into the pantry in the hopes that I will surface with a plan and an amazing side dish. I also want to make this dish over night so that it is ready to go in the morning.

Baked beans are a very typical BBQ side dish, but I would like to make a bean dish that isn't brown and smokey or looks like it's was dumped into a bowl and served. Beans are an easily accessible food– even if they look like they were prepared a little different, everyone still usually takes a scoop to eat. This combination is a nice variation because it is more colorful and the light colors are a nice balance for spring. Enjoy!

NOTE: Assume that each can is about 15 ounces. This recipe works best in a 6-quart pot. Feel free to divide all ingredients in half if you are not cooking for a large gathering of people, a sports team or a small army.

2 cans black beans, drained and rinsed

2 cans dark red kidney beans, drained and rinsed

2 cans great northern or cannellini beans, drained and rinsed

2 cans sweet corn kernels, drained

8 oz. frozen cut green beans

1/2 medium onion, chopped

1/2 red bell pepper

1/4 c. apple cider vinegar

1/4 c. brown sugar

1/2 t. celery seed

1/2 t. oregano

1/2 t. black pepper

3 T. ketchup

3 T. tomato paste

1 T. brown or dijon mustard

Drain and rinse all the beans before putting them in the crockpot. Add the rest of the veggies. Mix together the brown sugar, apple cider vinegar, tomato paste, mustard, ketchup and seasonings and dump in on everything in the crock pot. Give it one good stir and then set it on high for 3 hours or low for 5-6.