

# Passover Puffs-- not done in a crock pot



Due to popular request, here is my recipe for Passover Puffs. These are great for making sandwiches. Yes they are made with matzah meal, but no—they don't taste like Passover food.

If you want to add some variety, try adding more or less sugar, depending if you are serving them with sweet or savory foods. Also, you can add cheese into them before cooking or seasonings to spice them up. I like them plain, with some cream cheese and jam.

Seriously, you can live on these for the next week. Enjoy!

1 c. boiling water

1/2 c. vegetable oil

1/2 t. salt

2 t. sugar

1 c. matzah meal

1/2 c. cake meal

4 eggs

Boil water, oil and salt. Add dry ingredients, remove from heat and mix. Add eggs, mix. Drop in big scoops (or use a muffin pan to make them pretty) onto greased cookie sheet. Bake at 425 degrees for 30 minutes and then 325 for 30

minutes.

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## Crock Pot Tzimmes

My family loves to try new foods and experience new cultures. This time of year gives us plenty of opportunities to gather with friends and family for holidays and to celebrate spring. This crock pot dish, pronounced “tseh-miss”, is an eastern European side dish usually served at Jewish holiday meals, such as Passover, which begins tonight. Tzimmes has naturally sweet components, so you don’t have to add much to make it really flavorful. As with most holidays, if you cook a whole feast, your dishes are fighting for room in the oven and you have to coordinate timing on everything. My suggestion— do this special dish in the crock pot instead for similar results, but less stress as you’re coordinating your meal.

3 medium sweet potatoes, peeled and cubed

2 c. baby carrots

3 or 4 parsnips, peeled and diced

2-3 cups dried fruit (I like apricots and prunes)

2 c. orange juice

4 T. honey

1/4 brown sugar, not packed

1/2 t. salt

1/2 t. cinnamon

pinch of nutmeg

Place all fruits and veggies into crock pot and stir together. Sprinkle the brown sugar and all seasonings into the pot and then pour the orange juice over mixture in crock pot and stir just a little so that juice runs through everything. Drizzle the honey on top of everything as the last step before covering with the lid. Cook on low for 8-10 hours.

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## Crock Pot Bread Pudding



This crock pot bread pudding makes a great breakfast or dessert!

If you could smell my house right now, it is sweet and a little spicy with a creaminess swirling around with every breath. Somehow, it is like a combination of slow Sunday mornings and early weekday diner breakfasts. If you are preparing your house for the Jewish holiday of Passover– this

is the ultimate way of using up the last of your *chametz* (leavened bread). You can use any combination of plain breads, but I'd recommend using white, wheat, french, italian... even leftover hamburger or hot dog buns if you've got them. Honestly, this might be for dessert, but if I had more bread to use, I would totally make it again for breakfast.

As this time of year seems to fill with baby and wedding showers in preparation for summer celebrations, I would also absolutely recommend making this to share at a brunch. Since it only takes three hours, you can start it when you wake up and be ready to entertain guests with ease. For my male readers and/or sports fanatics— you might be spending too many nights staying up and watching March Madness basketball games; start the following day with this hearty dish to help wake you up and fill you up (and maybe even absorb that last bit of “adult beverage” festering in your belly).

So no matter what category you might fit into from this post, I think you all will fall in love with this sweet dish. Enjoy!

6 c. cubed bread

8 eggs, beaten

4 cups milk

1/4 c. sugar

1 t. cinnamon

pinch nutmeg

1 t. vanilla

2 T. maple syrup

1/2 c. raisins

Throw all the bread cubes into the crock pot first. Then, in a separate bowl, mix together the eggs, milk, sugar, cinnamon,

nutmeg and vanilla. Pour mixture onto the bread crumbs and make sure all pieces are coated. In another separate (small) bowl, mix together the raisins and maple syrup and then sprinkle the coated fruit on top of the swelling bread in the crock pot. Cook on high for 2.5 to 3 hours. You want to make sure the eggs are cooked through and there isn't any liquid left.

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## Crock Pot Shrimp and Grits

Anytime I make shrimp, I always feel the need to call everyone "Bubba" and watch a repeat of Forrest Gump. I love the scene where Bubba lists off "shrimp is the fruit of the sea. You can barbecue it, boil it, broil it, bake it, saute it. Dey's uh, shrimp-kabobs, shrimp creole, shrimp gumbo. Pan fried, deep fried, stir-fried. There's pineapple shrimp, lemon shrimp, coconut shrimp, pepper shrimp, shrimp soup, shrimp stew, shrimp salad, shrimp and potatoes, shrimp burger, shrimp sandwich. That- that's about it." But Bubba forgot about one of my favorites- shrimp and grits.

Living in the South, recipes for grits are as common as dinner rolls- you can have traditional ones, flavorful ones, different recipes for breakfast, lunch or dinner and no matter how you fix it, it's good. Depending where you go in the South, grits take on different traditions. In Charleston, the beginning of the grits is a few pieces of bacon and that has become a common trend across the country; the smokiness of the bacon is a nice balance against the other flavors. I've read that grits is actually the official state food of South Carolina. Maybe we should petition to make it an official food of our whole country!

I prefer this recipe because it's not too spicy and has a lot of flavor without being overwhelming. Keeping it simple makes it easy to serve for any meal of the day or as a special side dish. If you'd like to spice it up, add a few drops of Tobasco to the whole mix or to your own bowl.

4 cups water or chicken broth

1 c. quick-cooking grits, uncooked

2 garlic cloves, minced

1/2 medium onion, chopped

1 lb small shrimp, peeled and cleaned, vein removed

2 T. butter

1 c. shredded cheddar cheese

1 can diced tomatoes, drained

1 t. Worcestershire sauce

1/2 t. red pepper flakes (optional)

Start by putting the broth, salt and grits in the pot. Most of the cooking needs to happen to these three ingredients. Cook on low for 6-8 hours. Saute the onion and garlic in the 2 tablespoons butter until it's all tender and cooked through, then add the shrimp for another 4-5 minutes of sauteing or until the shrimp are no longer pink. Add this mixture to the grits along with the cheese, red pepper flakes and can of diced tomatoes. Cook for another hour on low.

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# Crock pot broth

Last night I cooked an entire crock pot of food with no intention of eating it anytime this week. This is the beauty of the crock pot! I know that next week I want to make a big batch of chicken soup. But, I don't want it to be a day long project, I need it to be an easy meal.

So last night, I crock potted four boneless, skinless chicken breasts, 1 c. baby carrots, half an onion, 1 T. parsley and a little salt and pepper. I set it on high for 4 hours. When it was done, all the broth went into plastic containers for the freezer and the chicken and carrots are in the refrigerator for lunches today. Voila- when I want to make my soup, I simply put the brick of frozen chicken broth into a pot and let it simmer back to soup. Then I can add noodles or rice or more vegetables and have my meal done in a matter of minutes.

Homemade chicken broth is a healthier alternative to using boxed broths or bouillion. Store-bought bases are much higher in sodium and usually have that weird yellow tinge. This easy recipe means that my soup will taste flavorful and look authentic.

You can do this recipe with beef as well, but when the broth cools, I would suggest skimming the fat off of the top. BL/SL chicken breasts are very lean and don't leave much to skim off, but since most cuts of beef have a higher fat content, you would want to remove some the excess. You can also make vegetable broth (try using carrots, celery, leeks, onions and parsley) or fish broth (from any part of the fish) in your crock pot.

After you make your broth, your chicken, beef, fish or veggies are cooked very soft, but most of the flavor has been boiled out. But, the meat is a great texture to add sauces too, try

forking the meat apart and adding BBQ sauce for pulled sandwiches or chopping up chicken for curried chicken salad (see roasted chicken post for recipe). The vegetables can be glazed or broiled and served as a side dish with any future meal.

Hopefully, this post has you thinking ahead to future meals and you'll let your crock pot do your base preparations. Enjoy!

## A la "cart": how to manage your crock pot grocery list

### MEAT/SEA TOPPERS

Chicken  
Pork  
Beef  
Fish  
Hot Dogs  
Steak

### CHEESE EGGS/EGGERS

Cheddar Swiss  
American Cheese  
Shredded Cheese  
Cream Cheese  
Eggs  
Yogurt

### SEMI-SOLID

Sauce  
Pasta or macaroni salad  
Dips

### DESSERTS

French bread  
Bagels/Eng. muffins  
Buns  
Pie/croissants

### CEREAL/BREAKFAST

Oatmeal  
Granola  
Milk  
Cereal  
Custard  
Yogurt

### CRACKERS/COOKIES

Ritz crackers  
Crackers  
Tortilla chips  
Pretzel sticks  
Cookies  
Oreos  
Garden of Eatin'

### BEVERAGES

Salt  
White Vinegar  
Olive Oil  
Vegetable Oil  
Sesame Oil  
Raisins  
Other oils

### COOKING ITEMS

Flour  
Sugar or Splenda  
Chocolate chips  
Bread crumbs  
Cocoa  
Cooking spray  
Soy sauce  
Corn starch

### FRUITS/VEGETABLES

Bananas  
Apples  
Onions  
Garlic  
Carrots  
Potatoes  
Lentils  
Beans  
Tofu  
Milk  
Eggs  
Yogurt  
Cheese  
Cottage cheese  
Sour cream  
Butter  
Olive oil  
Vegetable oil  
Sesame oil  
Raisins  
Other oils

### CONDIMENTS

Ketchup  
Mustard  
Mayo  
Soy sauce  
Hot sauce  
BBQ sauce  
Pasta sauce  
Cajun seasoning  
Garlic powder  
Onion powder  
Dried herbs  
Spices  
Salt  
Pepper  
Sugar  
Splenda  
Corn starch  
Flour  
Breadcrumbs  
Egg powder  
Gelatin  
Cocoa powder  
Instant noodle seasoning  
Instant noodle packets  
Instant noodle cups  
Instant noodle bowls  
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### CANNED/DELI

Beef and chives  
Pasta  
Spaghetti sauce  
Rice  
Beans  
Canned tomatoes  
Milk  
Condensed milk  
Applesauce  
Peanut butter  
Jelly  
Honey  
Syrup

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Do you ever feel like your day is moving so fast, you might get a metaphorical speeding ticket? And that you'd enjoy being pulled over in the traffic of life because it means that you could stop moving for just a minute?! Some days definitely feel like that, but in order to maintain less madness, I try to be (ok, obsessively) organized. I have lists: to do lists, grocery lists, lists for my husband, wish lists and even a few mental notes to self. There is

nothing more gratifying to me than seeing an entire list illuminated by bright pink highlighter and to feel the page wilting from the weight of my successes. Yeah, I'm like that.

And while it's somewhat entertaining, I think my lists are actually pretty useful, so I'm going to share one with you today. I downloaded this a couple years ago and then adapted

it to my specific wants/needs. My apologies to whatever web site posted this originally, I honestly don't remember where it came from. But when I need to restock the kitchen, this helps me stay focused and ultimately get only what I need, so that I save myself from the frivolous whims of grocery store end caps.

Start list list from the bottom- fill in what you'd like to have for dinner most nights. It's ok if you just write "Monday- chicken, veggie" or "Tuesday- CP lentil soup" (CP= crock pot). Give yourself a target of what you'd like to eat and then work up the list, adding the ingredients you need to purchase. It's also helpful to keep this [crock pot grocery list](#) on your refrigerator so that when you- or someone else in your house- finishes something, they can just check it off so that you know to buy it next time you shop.

This list does not need to stay pretty! Start by checking things off, then circle, add in, redefine, put questions marks... whatever helps you. Also, go through the weekly ads for the store (at home or when you get to the store) and then add in sale items that are a good buy for the week. You may even want to look at the ads before you make your meal suggestions.

Depending on how your grocery store is set up, you may want to move the categories around to make the flow easier. Feel free to make this your own. It needs to be functional to how YOU shop if it's going to make YOUR life easier. I also like that I can divide up this list and give certain sections to my husband, this cuts a lot of time off the trip and even removes some of those tempting tasty distractions that I might have been inclined to buy.

I hope you find this helpful as you continue to venture into the adventure of crock pot cooking. Take it one step at a time and soon enough you'll be eating home cooked, easy meals on more nights of the week. Enjoy!

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# Crock Pot Drunk and Cheesy Sausages

There is something special about the first time we take the cover off the grill, fill the tank of gas and scrub off all the crisps from last season's leftovers still charred to the grill. But while we might be eager to welcome warmer weather, there are lots of great ways to enjoy grillable meats without having to unearth your outdoor kitchen. If you are still buried in snow or are out of gas for the grill, this recipe is a good way to try your brats in a new way.

When you pick your beer, think about the flavors and aftertaste that you get when you drink it. A heavy and bitter dark beer may taste smooth when cold, but it may become a little too intense when it cooks and evaporates. A light easy beer that reminds you of cheap nights in college isn't going to add much to your meat. I suggest trying an amber, a red or a seasonal beer. It doesn't make much of a difference if you use a can or a bottle, just as long as it isn't flat when you pour it in. There is something very unique about the effervescing smell of carbination bubbles soaking into freshly sliced onions and fresh sausages that just makes me think of summer BBQs, outdoor concerts and sitting in the stands at baseball games. Are you with me? Then "go team go" and enjoy your drunk and cheesy sausages!

6 italian sausages (hot, mild or sweet mild)

6 oz beer

1/2 onion, sliced

1 c. shredded cheddar cheese (at least)

Lay sausages flat in the crockpot and lay thinly sliced onions on top. Pour half a beer onto the meat and if it's after noon o'clock, drink the other half! Cook on high for 4 hours. Put one sausage and some onions on a bun and then sprinkle with lots of shredded cheese. Feel free to decorate your drunk and cheesy sausage with any variety of condiments.

*(if you want more specific details– I made this yesterday with hot italian chicken sausages, Amstel Light beer and shredded mild cheddar up on top with a squirt of yellow mustard) ☐*

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## 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.

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# Crock Pot Escalloped Cabbage Casserole

My husband's family use to have this amazing tradition; every Wednesday night we would all go to his grandmother's house for dinner. Gaga's recipes usually start with butter or oil and a little salt and pepper and from there, it could be chicken or beef or vegetables or any number of simply wonderful simple dishes. But one of my favorites is Gaga's cabbage casserole.

Every time Gaga made this, I knew that the kitchen would be uncomfortably warm from the oven being on and that it would taste so good that there would rarely be leftovers. This dish doesn't even taste like cabbage, it tastes like fluffy goodness that you can say is actually good for you. Save yourself the perspiration and make this dish in your crock pot instead. If you want to finish the casserole off, remove the crock and place it under the broiler for a couple minutes, just so the top layer crisps.

This dish is simple and the salt and pepper really give it most of its flavor, so it's great to make as a complement to pretty much any meat. It's not a main dish, but it will probably be a favorite! I wouldn't recommend freezing this casserole, but refrigerating it and reheating it is fine.

1/2 head cabbage

1 sleeve of saltine crackers (if you want it to taste more buttery, use a Ritz style cracker instead)

milk

3 T. olive oil

salt and pepper

Shred the cabbage, the smaller the pieces, the better. Put the crackers in a zipper bag and smash them till they are itty bitty, but not powder. Layer the cabbage and then the cracker crumbs in the crock pot; in between layers drizzle about 1 T. of olive oil and a pinch each of salt and pepper. When all of the cabbage, crackers, seasonings and oil have been layered, pour milk into the crock pot until it almost reaches the top layer, but not quite. It usually takes about 4 cups of milk. Cook on high for 3 hours. There shouldn't be much liquid left when the casserole is done— the crackers absorb most of it, but make sure that your cabbage is soft, it shouldn't be crunchy at all.

Enjoy this with pretty much anything. Gaga would be proud if you made this on a Wednesday night at your house, too.

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## [Crock Pot Cranberry Pork Loin](#)

Sometimes it's tough to figure out how to cook a large piece of meat— especially if you don't want it to taste, well... tough. I know some of my readers don't eat this "other white meat" so you can also try this recipe with a turkey tenderloin if you'd prefer.

This recipe makes me think of holidays. There is something very festive about using cranberries; these unique fruits are tangy and sweet and really can be complemented with an array of side dishes and other flavors. Try this dish at your next family gathering or for dinner tonight!

1-2 lb. pork loin

1/4 c. cranberry juice

1/2 c. black cherry preserves

1/4 c. dried cranberries

1/4 t. all spice

1/2 c. sugar

Place pork loin in crock pot and if you have it, use the trivet underneath. Mix together preserves, juice, allspice and sugar. Pour mixture over meat and then add cranberry juice to the pot. When you pour the juice, be careful not to rinse the seasonings and preserves off of the meat. Cook for 6 hours on low. If you want to use the juices as gravy, then remove meat and add 1 T. corn starch dissolved into 1/4 c. water to the remaining juices and cook until gravy thickens.