

Crock Pot Peach Cobbler

The only thing better than a local farmer's market is a neighbor with an amazing garden and fruit trees. I had the pleasure of pillaging the peach trees yesterday and came home with about two dozen little peaches, ripe and ready to be enjoyed. They were sweet and juicy, broke easily off the pit and cooked down perfectly into my peach cobbler. I'm not sure what makes me happier— the warm cobbler with it's sticky sweetness stuck to my spoon... or the fact that I can walk next door, fill my basket and make another pot full tomorrow.

I like to keep the flavor of my cobbler simple. The peaches are already so sweet, I really just want to be able to cook them down a little. And I like the oatmeal topping, it makes me think of a cookie up on top. This recipe definitely craves a big scoop of vanilla ice cream, but it's also really good with some vanilla yogurt or just a little half and half... or nothing at all. It's really good that way, too. Enjoy!

(You'll see in the recipe directions that I use the crock pot in an unconventional way. I cook the dessert on low, half uncovered, for the last hour. This helps the peach portion thicken up and the crumbly top crisp a little bit.)

4 lbs peaches, peeled, pitted and sliced

1/4 c. brown sugar, not packed

1 t. cinnamon

1 t. vanilla

cobbler topping:

2 c. old-fashioned oatmeal

1/2 c. brown sugar, not packed

1/2 t. cinnamon

1/4 t. salt

1 stick butter, melted

Put the first four ingredients in the crock pot and stir together. In a separate bowl, pour in the oatmeal, brown sugar, cinnamon and salt. Stir, then slowly pour in the melted butter and continue stirring. Then, pour the crumbly mixture on top of the peach mixture already in the pot. Cook on high for 2 hours. Remove lid and turn it so that steam can easily escape and cook on low (half covered) for one more hour. Serve warm.

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 Cowpea Soup



Most of you probably just read the title of this recipe and giggled. Yes, cowpea sounds a lot like cow pie. In fact, cow pee makes it seem even more funny. So if you haven't heard of a cowpea before, let me tell you a little about it. But seriously, you can stop giggling

now. Cowpeas are meaty little legumes that come in long pods. Once you pull the string off, you'll see the tightly packed peas pop out of the pod. They are sometimes classified as a black-eyed pea, but you can also get purple-eyed ones, they

can be green, white or dark in color and they are hearty little nuggets to cook.

When you can get them fresh, you are good to go once they are out of the pod. If you get them dried, then you need to soak them in water overnight for about 8 hours and then rinse them a few times before you throw them in the pot.

Cowpeas are common in a lot of African recipes and provide excellent protein in many soups and rice dishes. These “beans” are also used in a lot of southern recipes in the USA. I even found a great recipe online for chow chow salsa that included canned black-eyed peas, but would be awesome with fresh cowpeas instead.

I thought that split pea soup sounded great to make this week—fresh cowpeas are readily available at my local farmers market right now and if I make it now and freeze it, it will make a great meal later this fall when the weather cools off a bit. I decided not to go the traditional route and cook the soup with a ham hock, but to keep it vegetarian instead. If you’d like to, you can add diced cooked ham or turkey sausage after you puree the soup and then heat it for an additional hour to warm the meat. Either way, the soup is filling and satisfying and an easy meal when served with a crusty bread.

Kudos to you for trying something new. Cowpeas are a nice variation, especially if your family already likes peas and beans. Plus, if you can get them fresh, it’s fun to pull the string and unleash the pea from the cow. Enjoy!

2 c. fresh cowpeas

1 medium onion, chopped

2-3 carrots, chopped

2 stalks celery, chopped

3 garlic cloves, chopped

2 parsnips, peeled and chopped

3 c. water

1 t. salt

1 t. black pepper

1 T. fresh parsley, chopped

Put all ingredients in the crock pot and cook on high for 4-6 hours. Using a hand blender, puree soup in the crock pot. If desired, add 1/2 lb. diced cooked ham or turkey sausage to the pot and heat for one additional hour on low.

Crock Pot Tortellini Soup



The title of this recipe is a lie. This isn't a soup. But it's not a stew and it's not just a pasta main course, so I don't know what else to call it. Technically, it does have broth in it, so therefore I qualify it as a soup. And since it's my blog, I get the right to label it however I want to! But this

is my disclaimer– there is nothing light weight or soupy about this dish. It is delicious and easy and full of flavor and takes just a few ingredients and a few minutes to make a whole meal. BUT– all of those details are way too much to put in the title, so I just call it tortellini soup. Enjoy!

1 28 oz. can of diced tomatoes (do not drain)

1 brick of frozen chopped spinach (no need to thaw, just dump it in frozen)

3 cloves garlic, minced

2 cups chicken broth

1/2 small onion, chopped

2 12-oz. packages of frozen cheese tortellini

Parmesan cheese

Put all ingredients EXCEPT tortellini in the crock pot. Cook on high for 3 hours. Add frozen tortellini to the pot, stir it around and cook on high for one more hour. Top with a little Parmesan cheese when served.

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 everyones' 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 Summer Vegetable Puree



As much as winter is the time for soups and stews, I really like summer soups too. This one isn't too hearty since it's a puree and I think it tastes really light when it is served warm, not hot. I've had to become really creative with vegetables this summer— with so

much amazing local produce, I tend to over buy!

I like to base this recipe on carrots, because the orange color of the puree is so inviting, but feel free to experiment with whatever is in your basket. Just remember to include a starch (potato, sweet potato, kohlrabi, etc.) to help thicken the dish and something sweet (apple, beet, melon, peach) to make this unique for summer. Herbs are totally up to your discretion, too. I like fresh basil, but if you have rosemary or thyme or some oregano, those would be great as well.

Whatever you do, you are making a crock pot of wonderful by using fresh vegetables and your imagination. This should be served in a bowl, but it's perfect when it's thicker than soup, but thinner than mashed potatoes. PS- it's also a GREAT puree for baby food, but you can make it for your whole family to eat. Enjoy!

4 c. fresh carrots

2 stalks celery, chopped

2 yellow squash, cut into chunks

1 medium sweet onion, chopped

2 medium potatoes, cut into chunks

1 medium apple, cut off of core

2-3 cloves garlic, chopped

1 t. salt

1/2 t. black pepper

6-8 leaves fresh basil

2-3 c. vegetable broth

Put all vegetables and herbs into the crock pot, pour broth on top. Cook on high for 6 hours. Using immersion blender, puree in pot. (If you don't have one, then let dish cool and puree in batches in a standard blender.) Serve with a dollop of sour cream or greek yogurt on top and a sprinkle of fresh herbs.

Crock Pot Chicken Cacciatore



Happy birthday to my husband. He is an amazing man, father, lover and friend. And he loves my cooking. So for tonight, I wanted to make him a nice dinner. But of course, I still have the kids to take care of today, a house to clean before company and a dog that is begging to go out, so my options for fine dining were a little limited. I decided to start a crock pot of food at lunchtime instead of at breakfast—our dinner will be done right as the kids are going to bed... so we can eat a meal as adults and maybe even partake in a glass of wine.

I had totally planned on doing chicken fajitas for dinner tonight or some sort of hearty “man” food, but my hubby went out with his coworkers for lunch at a Mexican restaurant, so I needed to reroute my dinner plans. Since I already had the chicken, I decided to make chicken cacciatore (pronounced catch-ahh-toe-ree) instead. It's robust and filling, but an easy one pot meal.

Cacciatore is usually served over a thin pasta like angel hair, but it can also be served over rice, if you prefer. I like to top mine with grated Parmesan cheese instead of putting the cheese in when it's cooking. You can also add other vegetables if you'd like— many cacciatore recipes add mushrooms and/or fresh basil leaves.

You don't need a celebration to dine on this great chicken dish. Enjoy!

4 frozen boneless, skinless chicken breasts

1 small onion, sliced thin

1 green pepper, sliced thin

1/2 red pepper, sliced thin

1/2 yellow pepper, sliced thin

1 medium zucchini, sliced thin

4 cloves garlic, minced

1 28 oz. can petite diced tomatoes

1 c. spaghetti sauce

1 T. parsley flakes

1 t. basil flakes

1 t. oregano flakes

1/2 t. celery seed

1/2 t. black pepper

1/2 t. salt

Combine vegetables in crock pot, top with all seasonings and stir together. Pour in tomatoes and sauce and stir again.

Place frozen chicken breasts on top of mixture. Cook on high for 4-6 hours. Serve over thin pasta or rice.

Crock Pot Cabbage and Onions



My family has requested perogies for dinner tonight and as much as I'd like to try to make them homemade, that just isn't going to happen. So I figured if our main dish at dinner is from a frozen blue box, then our side dishes should be fresh and flavorful.

Perogies are an amazing Polish entree that can have a variety of fillings inside. I remember a booth at the West Side Market in Cleveland, Ohio, that offered dozens of options— meat-filled, cheese, fruit, dessert, the list just kept on going. I'm making a sauteed cabbage and onion recipe in the crock pot today and the taste will really go nicely with my smooth, simple potato and noodle pockets. But someday, I'd love to go back to that booth in Cleveland and stock up on some crazy combinations instead.

This side dish would go great with almost any meat. The salt helps the cabbage break down and the wine and sugar really add to the natural sweetness of the onion. If you'd like a different color for presentation, try swapping julienned carrots for the red cabbage instead. I like the red cabbage because it gives the onions a really nice translucent purple color. Enjoy!

1 small head cabbage, sliced thin

1 medium sweet onion, sliced thin

1 c. shredded red cabbage

1/2 c. white wine

1 t. salt

1 t. celery seed

1 T. sugar

Put everything in the crock pot and stir together. Cook on low for 4 hours.

Crock Pot Apricot Pork Chops



It's time for some more of that other white meat. I've got my sides ready, all I needed to do was check the freezer for some meat. I have just over a pound of thin pork chops and now dinner is ready. No really, in less than 5 minutes, dinner will be set for tonight. I don't want to turn on the oven and I

don't even want to make any gravy, I just want something yummy with very little effort.

Sound good to you, too? Good. Enjoy!

1- 1.5 lb thin pork chops, frozen

1 10 oz. jar of apricot jam (ALL fruit, no fillers)

4 oz. white wine

Lay pork chops flat in crock pot. Cover meat with jam. Pour white wine around the edges, not on jam. Cook on low for 4 hours.

If you don't like pork, try this with chicken thighs instead. Cook for 6 hours on low.

Crock Pot Gumbo



I opened up my weekly CSA delivery and was so excited to see the ripe, fragrant produce. One thing in particular caught my attention– OKRA. The first thing I thought of was some hot, spicy gumbo. I think half of what I unpacked is going to end up in the gumbo– okra, tomatoes, basil, corn, green pepper... now

if only I stopped at a farm for some chicken and then headed to the coast for some shrimp, but I guess I'll have to buy those at the grocery store.

Gumbo is a perfect recipe for the crock pot because it needs to simmer for a long time to fuse all those flavors together. Cut your veggies into small pieces so you can have a bit of each morsel in your mouth! This soup would also freeze really well, so make the gumbo for dinner this week and then enjoy all these fresh treats again later this fall when they aren't

so available.

This soup can also be made vegetarian if you leave out the chicken, sausage and shrimp. I'd amp up the amount of veggies though and maybe get a little more okra, so that this tastes more robust and unique than just vegetarian vegetable soup. You can also use Morningstar Farms chicken strips (fake meat) if you'd like to add some protein. Enjoy!

2 boneless, skinless chicken breast, cut into 1/2 inch cubes

1/2 lb. okra, sliced

1 c. of corn (cut off of fresh ears)

1/2 sweet onion, chopped

1 green pepper, seeded and chopped

3-4 ripe, sweet tomatoes, seeded and chopped

3 carrots, peeled and sliced thin

2 stalks celery, sliced

4-6 leaves fresh basil, chopped

3 cloves garlic, minced

1 t. salt

1 t. black pepper

1/2 t. cayenne pepper

1/2 t. paprika

1/2 t. chili powder

1 T. parsley

2 T. Worcestershire sauce

2 T. Tabasco sauce

2 c. water

3 pork sausages, cooked and sliced

1/2 lb shrimp, peeled and cleaned

2 c. cooked white rice

Combine all vegetables in crock pot. Add liquid ingredients. Sprinkle with all seasonings. Place chicken pieces on top of mixture next. Cook on low for 4-6 hours. Add shrimp, sausage and cooked white rice and cook for an additional 1 hour on low.