

Crock Pot Scalloped Potatoes



After some trial and error with cooking potatoes in the crock pot, I've finally got some advice for you. First off...don't try to make mashed potatoes. The long amount of time and lack of high heat sort of ruin the effect. But, if you want to make them on the stove and then keep them heated in a crock pot, that

works out fine.

I really wanted to make a side dish of potatoes that was easy to cook and didn't take an excessive amount of prep work (or extra dishes or pots). These scalloped potatoes turned out bubbly and flavorful without having to add a canned creamy soup. Give this a try, especially if you have two crock pots, so you can do a meat main dish in one and this delicious accompaniment in the other. Enjoy!

4-5 medium-sized potatoes, skin on

1 medium onion

1/4 c. flour

2 T. parsley flakes

1 T. salt

1 t. black pepper

1 1/2 c. milk

paprika

1 c. shredded cheese (try cheddar or mozzarella)

Use a food processor to slice potatoes and onions thin (this is much thinner than what you can do with a knife!). Put in pot and then mix in flour and seasonings. Smooth out mixture so that is it flat, then pour milk over entire surface area. Potatoes should not be completely covered by milk. Shake paprika on top as garnish. Cook on high for 2-3 hours or low for 3-4 hours. Stir in shredded cheese before serving.

(This is a really good recipe to use a [crock pot liner](#), the edges crisp first and get stuck to the sides. If you use a liner, it is much easier to clean out the pot! You can buy some by clicking [here](#).)

Crock Pot Country Ribs

Let's make a play list for today's recipe to put you in the mood! By the time you sing along to *Sweet Home Alabama* (Lynyrd Skynyrd), *Little Bitty* (Alan Jackson) and the beginning of *Sweet Caroline* (Neil Diamond), you'll have a pot full of home cookin' set for a down-home country feast. Whether you live in the north, south, east or west, you'll enjoy this soothingly savory dish that goes great with any variety of side dishes. I'll be serving mine with steamed broccoli and maybe some scalloped potatoes. If I can figure out how to do the potatoes in the crock pot, you'll see it posted later this week!

Once your meal is made, add some more songs to your play list so you can dance around and sing when you are doing the dinner dishes later tonight. Enjoy!

1.5-2 lbs pork country ribs

1 cup ketchup

1/4 c. brown sugar

1/2 c. apple juice

2 T. apple cider vinegar

2-3 cloves garlic, chopped

1 t. celery seed

1/2 t. ground mustard

2 T. parsley flakes

Spray pot with non-stick spray. Place country ribs side by side in one layer (best if using an oval shaped crock pot). Mix remaining ingredients in a separate bowl and then pour on top of meat. Cook on low for 6-8 hours.

Crock Pot Enchiladas

Happy Cinco de Mayo! This is a really easy recipe for enchiladas– you buy the sauce already made and a handful of other ingredients. When you put it all together it tastes authentic and just the right balance of flavors and spice. I always keep a bag of flour tortillas in the refrigerator, so even though enchiladas are traditionally made with corn tortillas, I'm going to use the ones I already have.

Enchiladas are pretty much a corn (maize) tortilla wrapped around any variety of fillings, including meats, potato,

seafood, vegetables, cheese, beans or any combination of these, covered in a red chili sauce. The Spanish word "enchilado" means spicy or hot, but that doesn't mean that your taste needs to be extreme. You can add intensity with jalapenos or Tabasco if you'd like to crank it up a bit. This dish is also a great way to get your family to fill up on protein and you can use shredded beef or chicken if you prefer it over ground meat.

I suggest serving this dish with some Spanish rice or refried beans and some shredded lettuce, diced tomatoes and a dollop of sour cream. And if you serve dinner and request "dos cervezas, por favor", I say cheers to you and enjoy your celebration!

1 lb ground turkey

1 medium onion, sliced thin

1 can diced green chiles

1/2 c. salsa

3 T. olive oil

10 tortillas (corn is traditional, flour ones still work)

1 can enchilada sauce

1 c. shredded colby jack cheese

2 T. jalapenos (from the jar)

Heat olive oil in a separate pan and brown meat until crumbled and cooked throughout. Add onion and saute until translucent. Add green chiles and salsa to mixture and stir, turn off heat. Pour a little enchilada sauce into the crock pot, just enough to coat the bottom. Roll 2-3 T of meat mixture in each tortilla and then place each one in separately, seam-side down (this works easiest in an oval shaped crock pot). Cover

tortillas with remaining enchilada sauce, then the cheese and then sprinkle with the jalapenos. Cook on low for 3-4 hours. Ole!!

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 London Broil

My head had been swirling with a mix of the traditional children's song about a certain London Bridge and the contemporary naughty version of the song by a certain Mrs. Black-Eyed Pea. While I might not have the cute sequin British flag on a pair of boy shorts, I think my London Broil is a fine salute. The funny thing about the name "London Broil" is that there actually isn't any connection to London or English foods and you don't actually have to broil this cut of meat, even though that direction is clearly stated in the name.

This beef steak is a good balance of muscle and fat and is moist and juicy. It can also be labeled as top round steak or flank steak and it's still the same part of the cow. It is helpful to marinate this cut of meat overnight before cooking in the oven, but you can get that same effect by cooking it on low with the marinade on the meat in the crock pot. If the meat doesn't fall apart when it's done cooking, you can remove

it from the crock pot and make thin slices across the grain of the meat. Leftover slices also make really good cold roast beef sandwiches.

A simple meat and potatoes dish is a great way to have a filling dinner without having a lot of fuss. So be American and crock pot your London Broil today!

2-3 lb. London Broil (also called flank steak or top round steak)

4 potatoes, cut into chunks

6 carrots, peeled and cut

1 medium onion, quartered

1/4 c. Worcestershire sauce

2 T. red wine vinegar

2 T. olive oil

3 T. ketchup

2 cloves of garlic, chopped

1 t. black pepper

1 t. rosemary

Place veggies in crock pot first, then lay meat flat. Mix together all remaining ingredient, except rosemary, in a separate bowl. Slowly pour marinade over meat then sprinkle rosemary on top of it. Cook on low for 5-6 hours.

Crock Pot Chicken Caesar

It's not the ides of March, but I feel the need to honor our dear friend, Julius. After an intense workout this morning, I feel like an Olympian! I am in need of good, lean protein, so I came home and started a healthy pot of meat and veggies with some great flavor. This recipe is super easy and I promise that you'll feel full and pleased at dinner tonight.

Frozen chicken can be a little ridiculous. I'm not sure where some companies find the Pam Anderson's of chickens, but the serving size of one frozen breast is much too large for one person. Fresh chicken breasts are usually even a little less reasonable so I prefer to buy fresh, cut them each in half and then freeze them myself. My advice is to be picky about your meat; buy the lean kind, fresh or frozen, and accompany your proteins with full flavors from seasonings and vegetables.

If you plan ahead and prep your food, you can have a little more control over your portions and still make your favorite meals. So while this chicken recipe calls for TWO chicken breasts, it actually can usually feed four people. If you have leftovers, put the chicken on a mixed green salad tomorrow for lunch and you'll be cheering "All hail, Caesar!" all afternoon. Enjoy!

3 medium potatoes, diced

6 oz. frozen green beans

2 frozen boneless, skinless chicken breasts

1/2 c. light caesar dressing

Layer ingredients in crock pot in order provided. Cook on high for 4 hours.

Crock Pot Orange Tofu



I think it's a wonderful community celebration when a baby is born. Friends and family gather to welcome the sweet little child and help the new parents with meals and errands and extra hands for diaper changes. Tonight, it's my turn

to bring dinner to some friends and I'm pretty sure that they already assume it's going to be something from the crock pot. The debate begins about what to make— it doesn't have to be for an occasion, let's admit that this debate happens practically every day, right?!

Let's see— vegetarian or dairy is requested and the meal needs to feed two adults and a 2-year-old, too. I'm guessing that pasta dishes and soups have already been dropped off or stocked in the freezer, so I decided to do an Asian tofu dish and serve it with rice. Tofu is a unique protein, but it cooks up nicely and can suck up a whole bunch of flavor from whatever it accompanies. There are different consistencies of tofu sold, but I suggest using an extra firm one, it's easiest to work with as a substitute for meat.

If you are scared of squishy food, you could make this dish with chicken instead. But give it a try— you might actually like tofu! The toughest thing about cooking it, is that sometimes it can really stick to the pan. Let it cook on each side without moving it around in the pan and then flip it quickly with a thin spatula. Enjoy!

1 brick of tofu, drained

3 T. olive oil

1/2 c. orange juice

1/4 c. honey

1/4 c. soy sauce

2 cloves of garlic, minced

1/2 medium onion, sliced thin

2 t. rice vinegar

1/2 t. paprika

12 oz. of any green vegetable (broccoli florets, snow peas, shredded cabbage, green beans or peas)

First you need to prep your tofu, it usually has an excessive amount of water in it that you want to drain off before cooking. Put a paper towel on a plate and then center the tofu on it. Add another paper towel up on top of the tofu and then put another plate on top. It looks like you've made a plate sandwich with the tofu in the middle. Add something heavy on top (can of food, metal pan, small child) and let sit for at least an hour. The paper towels will fill with water and the tofu will still have it's shape. Then cut tofu into 2-bite sized cubes.

Heat oil in a pan on medium heat. Brown tofu for 5-6 minutes on each side. Add the green vegetable, garlic and onion to the crock pot in that order, then put tofu on top. Mix the remaining ingredients in a separate bowl and then pour on top of everything in the crock pot. Cook on high for 3-4 hours and then serve with white rice.

Crock Pot Sloppy Joes

Here's your mission if you choose to accept it: *make dinner for four adults and two kids when you are staying at a friends house, you found one pound of ground turkey in the freezer and there is a pantry of assorted cans. And... GO!*

While visiting friends this week, I figured it was only appropriate to help with meals since they are at work all day. I know there is a crock pot on staff in the kitchen, so I accepted this mission without hesitation. Crock pot cooking is just the easiest way to make a crowd-pleasing dish without making a huge mess.

With our mix of adults and kids, I figured crock pot sloppy joes would be great. But with only one pound of meat, I knew that I needed to pump up the dish with some added ingredients. This recipe worked out great because it kept the true flavor of sloppy joes, but included some extra protein. Try this out next time you have to feed friends or family members or are looking for a no-fuss take on an old-time favorite. Enjoy!

1 lb. ground turkey

1/2 medium onion, diced (or 3 T. dried minced onion)

1 green pepper, seeded and diced

1 14 oz. can of black beans, drained and rinsed

1 6 oz. can of tomato paste

1/2 cup brown sugar

1 t. cumin

1 t. black pepper

1 t. chili powder

1 t. garlic powder

1/2 t. salt

1 t. worchestershire sauce

2 t. apple cider vinegar

1 t. yellow mustard

1 c. tomato juice or vegetable juice

1/4 c. water

Brown ground meat thoroughly in 1-2 t. of vegetable oil. Then add green peppers and (fresh) onions, cook until they are soft, and add to crock pot. In a separate bowl, mix together the rest of the ingredients and the pour on top of cooked items in crock pot, stir together. Add in the black beans and stir once more. Cook on low for 4-6 hours. Serve on hamburger buns for traditional presentation or use King's Hawaiian Original Rolls to make cute little sloppy joe sliders.

Crock Pot Fish Chowder

This recipe has evolved from an amazing chowder that I once had at the Columbus International Festival in Ohio. I think it was the Scandanavian table that was honoring their long-standing countrymen's careers of treacherous trips on the ocean. I think it was really to honor the countrywomen's careers of having boatloads of fish to cook and trying to come up with new recipes that didn't resemble a fish face.

Now this recipe can easily be done in a pot on the stove and done in an hour, but then the flavors wouldn't have a chance to fester all together. I prefer it in the crock pot, usually made from leftover salmon or tilapia. You could probably use halibut, red snapper or maybe even some trout if you wanted to, depending on what you like. If you don't have leftovers to use, then just throw the (deboned, please) fish filets into a pan with a little butter, salt and pepper and then bake it, let it cool and flake it. Realistically, a budget-minded mama could also use a couple cans of pink salmon and still have a similar result.

Well, if we wanted to, we could start by sauteeing up some diced bacon with the mirepoix (fancy word for chopped carrots, celery and onions) and then including it all in the pot for a smoky and salty addition. Or, we could throw in half a pound of shrimp at the end of the day and make the chowder heartier. But I keep it simple and it's still a crowd-pleaser and probably a little healthier too.

4 carrots, peeled and diced

3 celery stalks, diced

1 medium onion, diced

1 chopped zucchini, unpeeled

3 cups vegetable broth

2 bay leaves

1 clove garlic, minced

salt and pepper

1/2 – 1 lb fish– no skin, no bones; cooked, cooled and flaked
(1 T. corn starch dissolved into 2 cups cold milk)

Put all ingredients (except corn starch and milk) in the crockpot, with the fish being last. Cook 4-6 hours on high. Remove bay leaves. Dissolve corn starch in cold milk and then add to the pot 1 hour before serving.

If you'd like to add some variety, offer cheddar cheese, chopped scallions and puffy oyster crackers to top your fish chowder. Or a toy boat, if you can find one that hasn't been in the bath.