

Crock Pot Pork Chops in Spaghetti Sauce

This is such an easy recipe, I'm almost ashamed to post it. But it made the best spaghetti sauce I've EVER tasted. Honestly, I considered licking the pot. I always try to "amp up" store-bought spaghetti sauce and this is now my favorite way to do it. This might just revolutionize pasta night at your house too.

I used bone-in pork chops because I think they have great texture and just the right amount of fat. By searing them first, you keep the moistness in the meat, but by prolonging the cooking process and finishing them in the crock pot, the meat becomes so tender, it will literally fall off the bone and you can cut it with a fork.

The leftover sauce in the crock pot can be used on the meat, the pasta, on garlic bread... or cook a little extra and then freeze the pork-infused sauce for another dinner. Seriously... sometimes I even impress myself. This sauce is now a new family favorite after just one meal. Enjoy!

1.5-2 lbs bone-in pork chops

2 T. olive oil

3 cups spaghetti sauce (traditional style)

1 lb box thin spaghetti

Heat oil in flat skillet. Cook pork chops for 4-5 minutes on each side or until brown sear forms. Pour half of the spaghetti sauce into crock pot, put pork chops onto sauce and then cover them with remaining sauce. Cook on high for four hours or until meat is soft enough that it pulls away easily from the bone. Cook pasta according to package

directions. Serve meat with pasta and cover both with sauce.

Crock Pot Barbecue Beer Chicken



One of our local organic grocery stores ran a deal last month for free boneless, skinless chicken breasts so I made the trip and bought the meat. I brought it home and stuck it in the freezer and the pretty brown paper has been staring at me every day since then. You've read in my other posts that I'm not a huge fan of plain chicken breasts, but it was such a good deal, I couldn't pass it up.

Living in North Carolina, barbecue here is done two different ways— sloppy, smokey and sweet OR vinegar-based and tart. I'm more a fan of the first, so it's easy to go out and buy a barbecue dinner, but even more difficult to find a good bottled sauce to use at home. I've tried A BUNCH of store-bought sauces and have found a few favorites.

My #1 choice above all else is [Montgomery Inn Barbecue Sauce](#), from Cincinnati, Ohio. It isn't distributed everywhere, but you can buy it online. It's smokey and just the right thickness and I love it on the meat on the grill or in the crock pot.

I also recently discovered Budweiser's Sweet Barbecue Sauce.

It's sweet and sticky, but great flavor for pulled chicken sandwiches. I added some additional flavors in today's meal, but this sauce was delicious.

Make this recipe and then serve it on warmed sesame buns or in a wrap with some shredded cheddar cheese. You can vary the flavors by switching out what kind of beer and what kind of barbecue sauce you choose to use. Enjoy!

2 lbs boneless, skinless chicken breast

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

6 oz. beer (your choice!)

1 28 oz. bottle Montgomery Inn Barbecue Sauce (or your favorite)

Put chicken in crock pot and pour beer over meat. Add caramelized onions on top of meat. Cook on low for 6 hours. Use a baster and remove the excess liquid from the pot and then shred the meat with a couple of forks. If cooked properly, the meat should fall apart very easily. Pour enough barbecue sauce over the meat that it coats it well but isn't soupy. (You can always add more, you can't really get it back out!) Cook on low for one additional hour.

Crock Pot Caramelized Onions

I can't believe I haven't published this recipe for you yet! I make this once a month and then use it in other dishes. This is so easy and tasty and lasts for up to a month in the refrigerator— unless you are like me and use it all up first! Three pounds of onions fits in a one quart plastic container

when cooked. Make sure the lid shuts air tight (tupperware, rubbermaid, gladware, mason jars, etc.).

Suggested uses for caramelized onions: put a scoop in any dish that you usually would use fresh chopped onions, like meatloaf, hamburgers or potato soup) or make it into super easy french onion soup– put a scoop in a bowl, cover with beef broth. Then put a crostini on top and some cheese and broil until cheese is melted. Seriously– french onion soup in five minutes or less!

You will save so much time if you take 8 hours and make this in advance. Enjoy the extra time and the extra flavor!

3 lb. yellow onions, sliced 1/4 inch thick

1 stick butter

Put onion slices into the crock pot. Put one stick butter on top. Cook on low for 7-8 hours. Cool. Store in airtight container in the refrigerator for up to one month.

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.)

Crock Pot Corned Beef and Cabbage



If you have survived your St. Patty's Day green beer hangover and still haven't had enough Irish fun, then go to the grocery store and get another corned beef and another head of cabbage– this recipe is SO EASY and is a total crowd pleaser. Honestly– you can't mess this up and it tastes so good. Try it with different beer... both IN the pot and IN your belly. The variety of beers will alter the flavor of the meat and the cabbage, so try it

light or dark, bitter or brown, cheap or expensive–beer and beef, what a great combination!

1 corned beef (I don't care what size, as long as it fits in your crock pot)

1 head of cabbage

2 bottles of beer

water

Put the corned beef in the crock pot and throw out the extra packet of seasonings. Pour in the bottles of beer and then add enough water to reach the top of the meat. Cook on high for three hours. Add cabbage and make sure it is immersed in the liquid. Cook on high for one hour more. Remove meat to a cutting board and let it rest for a few minutes. Slice it thin and remove the top inch of fat. Serve with the beer-and-beef-infused cabbage and a cold beer.

Crock Pot Buffalo Chicken

I have a real problem with breasts. Even when they are big and juicy, I just don't like them.

Haha, now that I have your attention, let me explain. I'm not really a fan of boneless, skinless chicken breasts. I know that they are healthy and lean and great protein, but I just don't love the texture or the challenge of cooking them. When we grill them, I always feel like they get too done on the outside to make sure that they are cooked all the way through. In the oven, they just have too much of a tendency to dry out. So of course– I cook mine in the crock pot so that they stay moist and soft.

I thawed out a package of four chicken breasts and after staring at them for three days in the refrigerator, I knew I either had to cook them or throw them out. So here's what I did... I cooked them, I shredded them, I covered them in hot sauce and I served them on a bun with some cheese and ranch dressing. THERE WERE NO LEFTOVERS!!! It worked! I like (chicken) breasts!

I used a bottle of Ken's Steakhouse Buffalo Wing Sauce on my chicken, but if you'd rather have barbeque sauce or even something sweet like teriyaki, it would work well for this recipe. We really like chicken wings at restaurants, but it makes such a mess to fry them at home– this recipe gives the flavor without the mess or the fat. When you cook the chicken in the apple juice, it gives it a little extra zing and then the sauce just saturates the meat with flavor. Enjoy!!



1.5-2 lbs boneless, skinless chicken breasts

3/4 c. 100% apple juice

1 bottle Ken's Steakhouse Buffalo Wing Sauce

(hot dogs buns, cheddar cheese, ranch dressing... and celery sticks on the side, of course!)

Put chicken breasts in crock pot, then pour apple juice in. Cook on high for three hours. Use a baster to remove the excess liquid, then using two forks or a fork and a knife, shred the meat in the crock pot. Pour sauce in next and stir until all meat is coated. It's hard to say exactly how many ounces of sauce because it depends on how much meat you used. But add a little sauce at a time until you have enough, but the meat isn't swimming. Cook for one more hour on low. Serve meat on a hot dog bun with cheese and ranch (or blue cheese) dressing.

Crock Pot Parsnip and Potato Soup

I'm totally enjoying soups this week and I hope you are getting a chance to enjoy some of these recipes too. I love it when I can make an entire meal in ONE pot and feed the whole family. This soup is a variation on my crock pot potato soup recipe (search for it in the recipe index) and adds in the unique sweetness of parsnips and carrots and sweet onions.

Even though it's almost spring, we still need to survive on the rest of winter's vegetables. If you can already grow things in your garden or windowsill, try adding fresh herbs

like flat parsley, dill or chives to your soup when it is done cooking. I think you'll find the promise of spring in the soothing warmth of this chowder. Enjoy!

4 medium potatoes, peeled and diced

3 medium parsnips, peeled and diced

3 medium carrots, peeled and diced

2 stalks celery, diced

2 cloves garlic, minced

1/2 medium sweet onion, chopped

3 c. water

1 t. salt

1/2 t. black pepper

1 t. celery seed

1 c. milk

1 T. corn starch

1 can cream-style corn

Put all vegetables and seasonings in crock pot, cover with water. Cook on high for 4 hours. When vegetables are all soft, dissolve corn starch in milk and then add to crock pot. Add cream-style corn and mix ingredients together. Cook on low one more hour. Use an immersion blender and puree the soup until thick and creamy. Serve with fresh parsley, dill or chives on top.

Crock Pot Sweet Potato and Corn Chowder

This recipe comes from my friend I.H.K. and she is an amazing cook. This soup is thick and chunky and a whole meal in one bowl. She recommends serving it with tortilla chips or corn bread. Using an immersion blender can really change a soup from drab to fab by altering the consistency to be smooth and creamy instead of watery.

Since this recipe takes 8 hours on low, it's a great one to start before you leave for work in the morning and then come home to a beautiful dinner. Take a chance on this vegetarian chowder and enjoy!

2-3 large sweet potatoes, peeled and cubed (about 1/2 inch)

1 medium onion, chopped

1 can whole-kernel corn (15-16 oz.), drained

1 can creamed corn

1 teaspoon salt

fresh ground black pepper, to taste

2 cups broth (I use the vegetarian "chicken" flavor)

2 cups half-and-half or whole milk (depending on how virtuous you want to be)

4 tablespoons unsalted butter

1 teaspoon smoked sweet or hot paprika (optional)

1 cup of shredded cheddar cheese

Put first set of ingredients in crock pot and cook for about 8 hours on low or for 4 hours on high. Once the sweet potatoes are tender, stir everything together. Use an immersion blender to break up the ingredients as much as you want—I like my chowder chunky, but breaking up some of the sweet potatoes and corn makes the soup thicker and more luxurious. When only 1 hour of cooking time is left (if the slow cooker has been on

high, turn down to low) ADD: half and half or milk, butter, paprika and cheddar cheese.

Crock Pot Pot Pie



Did anyone else just do a double take to the title of this recipe? It's funny to read Pot Pot and not giggle... but this pot pie is indeed made in your CROCK pot. I guess I could just call it crock pot pie, but then it makes me think of ooey gooey

apple filling and flaky, buttery crusts and sorry fans... that is not this recipe. I will, however, promise that this recipe is for a new favorite for your whole family. It has meat, dairy, vegetable and carb and if you serve it with a side of fruit (maybe cranberry sauce??), you've fulfilled every food group. Except dessert... and I'm ok with that still being it's own food group.

I will probably repost this recipe around Thanksgiving, because it's the PERFECT thing to do with leftover turkey. I actually roasted a whole turkey this past weekend and have enjoyed easy meals all week from all the leftover meat. You can also do this dish just as easily with a rotisserie chicken that you pick up at the grocery store though.

Here's another worthwhile note: I use a pancake mix that is entirely egg-free because my son has allergies... so I just made pancake mix according to the directions on the box for 12-14 pancakes (2 cups mix, 1.5 cups water). I would recommend that

you follow the directions on YOUR box, so if it asks for eggs, you should probably include it.

Also- please be cautious when you put the crock pot (removed from the heating unit) into the oven and then taking it out. I scalded my arm nicely on this one because I wasn't paying attention. Ahhh, the things I'm willing to do for great cooking and blogging... yeah, you're welcome. ☺ Enjoy!

1-1.5 lbs cooked turkey or chicken, skin and bones removed, then meat cut into bite-sized pieces

2 cans cream of chicken soup

1 lb bag of frozen mixed vegetables, thawed

1 c. frozen corn, thawed

1/2 t. black pepper

1/2 t. salt

1/2 t. thyme

1/2 t. rosemary

2/3 c. milk

(separately combine pancake mix and water mixed to the equivalent to 12-14 pancakes... so for me 2 c. mix and 1.5 c. water, beaten together until fluffy)

Put all ingredients in crock pot and mix together until everything is well coated. Cook on low for 4 hours, then remove carefully from crock pot's heating unit. Pour pancake mixture on top of hot mixture and bake at 350 degrees for 30-40 minutes until top is slightly browned and crisping on the edges. Remove crock pot from oven carefully and cool for 10 minutes before serving.

Crock Pot Pork Roast

Ok fans, this one is really easy. It might surprise you to think about doing a roast in your crock pot, but again—anything that can be cooked in the oven, can be cooked in the crock pot. I started this roast while I drank my breakfast coffee and it was done by lunchtime. Dinner tonight is going to be a breeze. (I should note that my crockpot cooks quickly, even on low. You will want to use a meat thermometer to determine when your roast is cooked through. Pork is done when the internal temperature of the meat reached 160 degrees).



I like that the dry rub on this roast is simple and you can vary up the flavor and switch out other seasonings, if you prefer. I think that the brown sugar really complements the flavor of the pork, but if you'd rather cut down on the sweetness or calories, you can use other seasonings and leave out some of the brown sugar.

Enjoy this roast from your crockpot and savor the flavors. Add a couple side dishes and you'll have a complete meal for dinner tonight or even entertaining. Enjoy!

2 lb. pork loin rib end roast

1 t. thyme

1 t. parsley

1 t. garlic powder

1 t. cumin

1/2 t. black pepper

1/2 t. salt

3 T. brown sugar

1/2 c. water

Rinse roast and pat dry, then place in crock pot on metal trivet (this lets the juices run without letting the meat sit in the juice). Mix all seasonings and brown sugar in a separate bowl and place mix on the meat, patting down with your fingers until mixture is evenly distributed. Add 1/2 c. water to crock pot, but do not pour it on top of meat. Cook on low for 4-6 hours.