

# Crock Pot Beef Stroganoff

Ok fans, this is the recipe you chose for today! Beef stroganoff is a great one-pot meal. You've got meat, dairy and carb (when served on noodles or rice) and if you count mushrooms as a veggie, then don't bother serving this with side dish. There is something great about the creaminess of this recipe that really makes the flavors melt together.

While skillet beef stroganoff really focuses on browning everything in a pan, the crock pot version really fuses the flavors together in a better way. The skillet version tastes to me like butter and burning, so I like that in the crock pot everything turns out soft and sweet.

While you might like trying everything light or fat-free, I'd rather see recipes that use moderation, but keep to the true versions. If you want to save calories, eat less stroganoff and serve it with a salad or steamed vegetable. And drink it with a Diet Coke, of course. Enjoy!

1 lb. beef tenderloin, cut into thin strips

1 medium sweet onion, sliced thin

8 oz. baby portobello mushrooms, cleaned and sliced

1 c. beef bouillon

2 cloves garlic, minced

1/2 t. black pepper

1/8 t. ground nutmeg

1 T. parsley flakes

1 T. flour

1 c. sour cream

1 lb cooked pasta (egg noodles, farfalle or fettuccine) or 4 c. cooked white rice

Place beef, onion, garlic, mushrooms in the crock pot. Pour in bouillon and then sprinkle with seasonings. Cook on low for 4 hours. In a separate bowl, mix together flour and sour cream and add to crock pot, then cook for another 1 hour on low. Serve on a bed of hot noodles or rice.

*VARIATIONS: If you don't have beef tenderloin, try one pound of browned ground beef or chicken. If you don't like mushrooms, then use green beans, corn or just go without.*

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## Crock Pot Mozzarella Dip

Summer is a great time for backyard BBQs, gathering with friends and family and enjoying lots of tasty treats. Here is a great recipe that is quick and easy to make, but everyone loves to enjoy! Serve this in the crock pot so that it stays hot and creamy. Accompany this spicy crowd-pleaser with crackers, pull-apart bread or just some cool, crisp veggies. Enjoy!

1 lb. mozzarella cheese, cubed

1 c. mayonnaise

1/2 medium onion, chopped

2 cloves garlic, chopped

1/2 t. paprika

2 t. Worcestershire sauce

1 4-oz. can chopped green chiles (NOT DRAINED)

Coat crock pot in non-stick spray. Combine all ingredients in separate bowl, mix well. Pour into crock pot and cook on low for 2-3 hours. Serve hot.

*Looking for some more flare?? Try adding 1/2 c. crisp bacon bits or a few shakes of Tabasco to add more flavor to this cheesy appetizer.*

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## Crock Pot Barbequed Salami

My nana didn't make cookies. She didn't make tea sandwiches. She didn't make cute food like fruit, desserts, hors d'oeuvres, cordials or ganache. But she made amazing, hearty dishes in mass quantity like spaghetti and brisket and homemade potato salad. But anyone in my family could tell you that the one dish that she was known for was her barbequed salami. It is spicy and soft and just the right amount of sauce to smother a plain hamburger bun and make it melt.

Nana always bought the big tubes of kosher salami and hand sliced in and then quartered it. I don't know how she made it so thin. I suggest using the tubes of Hebrew National salami, but here's an easier way to prepare it— cut it in half longways and then in half longways again (it will almost look like four hot dogs at this point). Then, run it through your food processor to slice it really thin. Or, you can do it by hand, like Nana, if you have a sharp knife and a lot of patience.

Kudos to Nana for always serving this amazing feast to our family, for getting us all together and giving us memories to last forever. This will always be a favorite meal for me and I can't wait to share it with all of you, too. Make it for your next picnic, family gathering or game night. Barbequed salami is best served with a pickle, some wavy potato chips to scoop up anything that falls off the bun and a huge stack of napkins. Enjoy!

2 lbs salami, sliced and quartered

2 12 oz. bottles Heinz chili sauce

1 c. ketchup

1 onion, quartered and sliced

1 green pepper, minced

2 stalks celery, minced

2 T. white vinegar

1/4 c. brown sugar

1 t. dry mustard

1 t. chili powder

1 t. Worcestershire sauce

1/2 t. Tabasco sauce

Prepare meat to be sliced and quartered. Place in crock pot. Cook onion, green pepper and celery in a pan until soft, but not browned. Add to meat. Mix remaining ingredients in a separate bowl and then pour into crock pot. Mix all ingredients together. Heat on low for 2-3 hours. Serve on soft, plain hamburger buns.

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# Crock Pot Chicken Divan



This recipe gives me crazy flashbacks! My mom use to make this when I was a kid. She made it in the oven, but it was almost the same recipe—broccoli, chicken, rice and some sauce that had a little bit of an orange color but didn't taste at all like oranges. It took me a few more years of life to find out that the color was from the curry powder. I think Crayola should add the crayon color "curry".

It's hard sometimes for my taste buds to explain the flavors to my head, but I think I've figured out most of my mom's recipe. I've added the crock pot. Maybe the celery seed, too, but I think it adds a nice flavor. I start with frozen chicken breasts because I never think ahead to thaw it out and I don't like when I defrost it in the microwave and then the edges get a little cooked and weird. Using frozen chicken breasts works just fine, it will defrost and cook and fall apart into the creamy goodness of the sauce and the starch of the rice and absorb all of the spices by the time it's done.

This home cooking will serve a table full of happy tummies and happy hearts. Enjoy!

1 lb. frozen broccoli cuts

1 c. uncooked white rice

3-4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts

1 can cream of chicken soup

1 t. Worcestershire sauce

1 t. fresh lemon juice

2 t. curry powder

1/2 t. celery seed

1/2 t. ground black pepper

2 T. melted butter

1 c. shredded cheddar cheese

1/2 c. Parmesan cheese sprinkles

1/2 c. milk

1/2 c. mayonnaise

Put frozen broccoli in crock pot first. Sprinkle with rice. Lay chicken breasts on top. Mix remaining ingredients in a separate bowl and then pour on top of chicken. Cook on high for 4 hours. Prior to serving, shred chicken and mix everything together.

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## **Crock Pot Beet Salad**



In the midst of summer heat, I love to use my crock pot to cook the season's ripe vegetables. My kitchen stays cool and my taste buds get to dance. This week, I had friends bring me fresh beets from their community CSA. I love roasting beets in a little bit

of olive oil, salt and pepper, so I thought this would be a fun challenge for the crock pot.

When you roast beets in the oven, there is the chance of overcooking, resulting in a dried, wrinkled sad result for this moist and vibrant treat. With the locked-in moisture of the crock pot, I really think that beets get the chance to both marinate and cook to perfection.

Please note— this recipe calls for FRESH produce. This recipe is not intended for canned beets. When you are preparing fresh beets, be cautious that the juice doesn't dye your hands, your counter or your cutting board. But you will benefit greatly by doing the preparation, because the taste and texture of using fresh produce for this recipe is so much better than you could ever replicate with a canned product.

6 large fresh beets, greens removed and skins peeled, sliced

3-4 fresh white radishes, greens removed and skins peeled, then sliced

1/4 c. water

3 T. olive oil

1/2 t. salt

1 t. ground black pepper

1 t. celery seed

1/2 t. ground mustard

1/4 onion, sliced thin

2 T. red wine vinegar

topping: 1/2 c. crumbled feta cheese

Put all ingredients in crock pot and stir together. Cook on low for 4 hours. After beet salad cools, transfer and refrigerate until salad is cold. When serving, top it with 1/2 c. crumbled feta cheese.

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## 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.

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# Crock Pot Nacho Fries

I remember as a kid going to diners and cute little restaurants with good homecooking and a little grease on everything. It was always a treat to get something smothered or covered or dipped or drizzled. I don't usually eat a lot of fried and greasy, especially not in the crock pot, but today it just sounded good. I'm serving my crock pot dish with a side salad and low-cal dressing. Maybe if I wash it down with a Diet Coke it will just cancel out the bad stuff.

One of my favorite appetizers from my youth was "not-so-fries"— it was cheese and bacon and sour cream on top of silver dollar shaped french fries. The fried coins were coated in toppings and best when shared with friends! I also really like bar food like nachos— again with the cheese covered goodness! My other favorite food isn't as unhealthy, but I really like pita and tzatziki sauce. There is something about the cold, creamy cucumber that becomes highly addictive. As you can probably conclude, I am completely food-oriented, so most of my memories include visual and culinary associations.

So, it is now my intention to combine three of my favorite snack foods in one amazing crock pot side dish. Enjoy!

1 lb. bag frozen french fries

1 c. shredded cheddar cheese

1/2 c. frozen corn kernels

2 oz. jarred jalapeno slices

4 oz. salsa

toppings:

sour cream

1/2 English cucumber, peeled, sliced and quartered

Coat crock pot with non-stick spray. Spread frozen french fries in bottom of pot, layer with ingredients. Cook on high for 2 hours. Serve with a dollop of sour cream and some cucumber. Feel free to use a fork or your fingers to consume!

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## Crock Pot Chicken and Quinoa

This is great sick food. Not food that will make you sick, but a food that falls into the same category as matzah ball soup, egg drop soup and homemade mashed potatoes– these foods all make you feel better! I'll warn you that this dish is very bland, so if you'd like to eat it when you are aren't queasy or feverish, you might want to add some more veggies and seasonings. When you read this recipe, save it to your favorites so that next time you are sick, you have a go-to recipe for an easy dish to make everyone feel better. Enjoy! (and stay healthy!)

1 c. quinoa, rinsed and drained

2 c. chicken broth

1/2 medium onion, chopped

3 carrots, sliced

6 skinless chicken thighs (about 1.5 lbs)

2 bay leaves

1 t. salt

1 t. black pepper

1 T. parsley flakes

1 t. celery seed

Put quinoa and broth in crock pot and stir. Add onions and carrots, stir again and then place chicken thighs in. Sprinkle seasonings all over everything. Cook on high for 2.5-3 hours. How to tell it's done: each quinoa grain has a white string that appears on it when it's cooked, chicken thighs need to be cooked through and carrots need to be soft.

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## Crock Pot Stuffing Balls



Stuffing is an under-appreciated side dish. It completely defines a Thanksgiving dinner and can sometimes be found at kitschy homecooking restaurants, but there is no reason to leave it alone for the rest of the year. Plus, it's a great way to use leftover or stale bread. The more variety you use in your bread selection will equal a total change in the taste of the end result.

In my fridge right now, I have half a loaf of wheat bread (very dense and yeast-smelling) and half a loaf of what was labeled a "tomato bread" (tastes like Italian bread with a swirl of seasoned tomato paste in it). Here is how to prep your bread for stuffing: cut into slices and then into bite-sized cubes. For example, I would cut a normal piece of wheat bread four times each way = 16 smaller pieces. Then, lay cubes

out in one layer on a cookie sheet and cook for about 10-15 minutes at 350 degrees, just until the bread toasts.

Instead of just pouring the stuffing into a pan, I love the idea of hand rolling the stuffing into balls. It cooks into nice individual servings and leaves lots of surface area to crisp. These balls also freeze really well, so make a full recipe and then save what you don't consume. Enjoy!

6 cups homemade stuffing cubes

1/2 medium onion, chopped

1/2 green pepper, chopped

2 eggs, beaten



1/4 c. water

1 16 oz. can cream-style corn

1 T. parsley

1 t. salt

1 t. black pepper

1 t. celery seed

1/2 t. paprika

2-3 cloves garlic, minced

10 little pads of butter or margarine

In a bowl, mix together all ingredients, except butter or margarine. After combined, mixture should be moist, but not dripping wet. Form 10 balls, using your hands and mush it together so that it can stand on it's own. Coat oval-shaped crock pot with non-stick spray. Place stuffing balls side by side in crock pot. Place one little pad of butter or margarine on top of each stuffing ball. Cook on low for 3 hours.

*(The original inspiration from this dish came from crock pot maven Mable Hoffman's Crockery Cookery Cookbook. No offense, but her recipe was bland and suggested using packaged stuffing mix; my adaptation takes it up a notch and makes it flavorful and heartier.)*

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## Crock Pot Tuna Casserole

OK, so this one might seem a little like "school lunch", but I like the combination of creamy noodles and easy protein. Anytime I make this in the oven, I always wind up burning the edges. When I make it in the crock pot, it keeps the meal warm and creamy and doesn't get crispy crusts. (Although, if the crispy crusts are your favorite part, feel free to use this recipe and just shove it in the oven for an hour instead.)



One of the things that is really unique about my tuna casserole is that I used diced water chestnuts. I like the surprise burst of these moist, crunchy morsels. They keep to the neutral color of the dish and add a little bit of jazz that is pleasing to the palate. I also suggest using tuna from a foil

packet, not from a can. The canned fish is great for tuna salad, but I like that the foiled fish has better texture and bigger chunks. If you are not a fan of peas, you can try any frozen vegetable— corn, green beans and mixed veggies are good ones to try, too.

One last big difference in my version is that most tuna casseroles call for cheddar cheese and mine adds something extra. While I think melted cheddar cheese adds to the creaminess, I think including something like feta actually gives the whole dish more flavor and an overall better success. With these modifications, we are taking “school lunch” into the adult world. You could serve this to family or friends on real plates.

The only thing that could be better than this tuna casserole would be if the school lunch ladies could be here to serve and clean everything up. Enjoy!

1 lb. broad egg noodles, cooked and drained

1 6 oz. foil packet of albacore tuna

1 can cream of mushroom soup

1 c. milk

8 oz. frozen peas

1 8 oz. can of diced water chestnuts, drained

1 c. crumbled feta cheese

1 c. shredded cheddar cheese

1/2 t. salt

1.2 t. black pepper

1 T. parsley

1/2 t. celery seed

1/4 t. ground mustard

Cook noodles according to directions on package. Combine all ingredients in crock pot and stir until well mixed. Warm on low for 2-3 hours.