

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 Rhubarb Sauce

This weekend, I visited an amazing little organic grocery store, that seriously had two aisles, a delicious bakery and an old man with four teeth. I was tickled to browse the spices and produce, all of local variety. My search for local honey was finally complete and I bought "summer glory" that was harvested just last week. This time of year also produces one of my seasonal favorites, rhubarb, which was readily available and very affordable at this little corner store.

It doesn't surprise me anymore how many of my friends can only list about five different kinds of vegetables that they will eat, usually: lettuce, carrots, celery, corn and some sort of a bean. Come on, people, there is a rainbow of colorful delights growing in and on our earth! It's time to broaden your horizons and try something new... maybe grill a zucchini or steam an artichoke with dinner. Indulge in fresh mushrooms for a stir-fry or bake some beets to a sweet crisp. But today, I am going to introduce you to rhubarb, an unfamiliar stalk that cooks down into a mouth-twisting tartness that is best complemented by spring fruits or pastry sugariness.

There are very few ingredients in this dish and it takes almost no prep time. Serve it warm with angel food cake and vanilla ice cream or freeze the sauce and scoop it up as sorbet. It's non-dairy, can be sugar free, full of vitamins and a real treat. Enjoy!

5 stalks of rhubarb, cut into 3 inch sections (leaves and end removed, washed well)

1 lb. strawberries (tops removed)

3 ripe bananas

1/4 c. sugar (OPTIONAL)

Put all ingredients in crock pot, cook on high for 2-3 hours. Puree with immersion hand blender until consistency is smooth. Serve warm, cold or frozen.

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 Creamy Tomato Soup

I understand that the red label of canned tomato soup is probably very patriotic and that eating grilled cheese and tomato soup is one of our commandments or laws or requirements as Americans. I support that, I do. But— I don't think my grilled cheese sandwich deserves to bathe in a mixture of weird canned goop and water. It needs more than that. So today I made homemade creamy tomato soup.

I think the key difference here is the spices and the heavy

cream, you just can't get those flavors in a can. Another detail that is critical to this recipe is the use of an immersion hand blender. Thirty seconds of power will take this soup from delicious to heavenly. If you don't have an immersion hand blender, then you can cool your soup off and then put it into a blender to puree, then return it to the crock pot, add the heavy cream and heat it back up. That way is more work but will deliver the same smooth result.

Your soup should have an equal counterpart— a perfect grilled cheese sandwich. But you have to define that for yourself. For me, it's swirled pumpernickel/rye bread with swiss and havarti cheeses. For my kids, it's American cheese on whole wheat. For my husband, it's italian bread with sharp cheddar and colby jack. I am willing to entertain everyone's favorites, since the soup is so easy to make. Another trick for your sandwich is to change up from using butter or margarine on the outside of your bread— try using a light smear of mayonnaise instead and get a sweeter, crisper result. Or you can quickly dip the sandwich in a couple beaten eggs and turn your grilled cheese into a monte cristo instead. Discover whatever combination tickles your taste buds and then let it swell with the sweetness of the soup. Enjoy!

2 14 oz. cans of diced tomatoes

1 small onion, diced

2-3 cloves of garlic, chopped

1 bay leaf

1 t. of each seasoning: salt, black pepper, rosemary, oregano and celery seed

1 T. sugar

8 oz. heavy cream

Combine all ingredients except heavy cream in the crock pot.

Cook on low for 4 hours. Remove bay leaf. Use immersion hand blender and puree until smooth. Add heavy cream, stir and heat for one more hour. Serve with your favorite grilled cheese sandwich, of course!

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 Blueberry Cobbler

Forget dinner— let's skip straight to dessert. What could possibly be better than dumping everything in the crock pot and having your entire house filled with the glorious, sweet, satisfying smell of freshly baked dessert?! Cooking dessert in the crock pot requires a little more attention to detail than the normal dump-and-go meal prep, but I think you'll really

like this recipe. In all honesty, it still only took me 6 minutes from start to finish to get everything into the crock pot. Since this is a slow cooking method, you won't dry out or burn the edges of your tasty treat like you might in the regular oven. Plus, it is way better to use the crock pot for a few hours than to heat up the entire house with conventional baking.

This cobbler recipe can also be made using a variety of other fruits. Go for what is in season, grown locally or on sale in the freezer section; I would suggest trying cherries, peaches, apples, mixed berries or maybe some ripe pears. If you want this dish to be even more divine, throw in a 1/2 c. of butterscotch morsels or chocolate chips with the top layer. Enjoy!

1 c. flour

2 t. baking powder

1/2 t. salt

1/2 c. granulated sugar

1/2 c. packed brown sugar

2 eggs

2 t. vanilla

2 t. butter, melted

1/2 c. half and half or milk

16 oz. fresh or frozen blueberries

topping:

1 c. quick oats

1/3 c. flour

2 t. melted butter

1/2 t. cinnamon

2 T. brown sugar

Spray the entire crock pot with a non-stick spray. In a separate bowl, mix together the flour, baking powder, salt, sugars, eggs and vanilla. Add the melted butter and half and half. Dump in blueberries and stir well. Pour into crock pot. Then, in another separate bowl, cut together the topping ingredients. Sprinkle topping on top of mixture already in crock pot and DO NOT MIX. Cook 4 hours on low or 2 hours on high.

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.