

Crock Pot Sausage-Stuffed Portobello Mushrooms



These 5-ingredient stuffed caps are a delicious main or side dish!

Two tips with today's amazing recipe.....

1. Find a ground sausage that you like. It can be a prepped tube from the grocery store or a visit to a special deli or anything in between. But when you find it, it becomes a mainstay in your home for breakfast, lunch or dinner. No endorsement here, but my personal favorite is the country pork sausage from The Fresh Market. I also like that they shape it into the face of a pig each day and that makes me smile. But I really like the combinations of spices that gives it a little kick and a lot of taste.

2. Learn how to clean a mushroom. Because it is a sad sad day when you didn't REALLY get all the dirt out of it and then after 4-6 hours your dinner actually tastes more like mud than anything else. That's disgusting.

How to Clean a Mushroom Cap

Here's my step by step process to clean a portobello mushroom properly. Sorry for the footage- I had the phone propped on my paper towel holder, but I promise to start uploading better videos soon!



The BEFORE mushrooms are on the left and the AFTER ones are beautiful on the right.

Now that your mushrooms are prepped, you just need to mix together the ingredients, much like making a meatloaf. This dish will taste much more complex than the basic ingredients because of all the seasonings in the sausage- so remember to pick a good one.

Crock Pot Sausage-Stuffed Portobello Mushrooms

Serves 2-3

4-6 portobello mushroom caps, properly cleaned of skin and “gills”

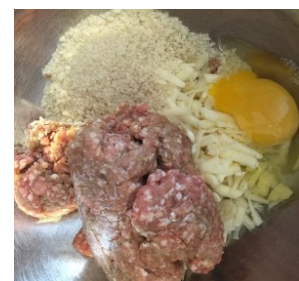
1/2 c. shredded gruyere cheese

1/2 c. shredded white cheddar cheese

1/2 cup panko bread crumbs

1 egg

Prep and wash mushrooms and then put in crockpot with the smooth side down and the underside facing UP. Mix the remaining ingredients in a separate bowl and then form into patties, much like a hamburger.



Place each patty into each mushroom cap and smush just a little so that the two things join together. Do not push so hard that you break the mushroom cap, but if you just did- it's ok. A broken mushroom tastes just the same.



Cook on high for 3-4 hours. The filling will cook through and brown just a little on top.

Crock Pot Meatloaf



This family favorite is now even easier to make!

This recipe requires no lead up. You know it, you like it, you probably have had it a million times with just as many little variations. Let's go simple and make a flavorful loaf for dinner that will please the whole family. Meatloaf also reheats and freezes well, so if you happen to have leftovers (yeah right!) go ahead and have a meatloaf sandwich for lunch tomorrow.

One note: You can make this with a mix of meats, if you prefer. Try half beef, half turkey or a mix of beef and bison. The directions stay the same, but the flavor and texture will change slightly.

Crock Pot Meatloaf

(serves 4-6)

1 pound 90/10 ground beef

1 egg

2 T. minced sweet onion

1/2 c. panko bread crumbs

1 T. brown sugar

1 T. ketchup (one good squirt!)

1/2 t. dried dill

1 t. fresh thyme leaves



Mix all ingredients together and form into a loaf shape. Put in crock pot or on trivet insert if you have one available. Cook on low for 4 hours.

(If you need a trivet for your crock pot, try this one: <http://amzn.to/1Iopz4m>)

Crock Pot Vegetarian Lasagna

I love lasagna! Anytime you can combine everything into one dish and it hits pretty much every food group, then I'm a happy girl. But oven-baked lasagna takes way too much work... all the boiling and layering and smoothing and baking and spilling, then oven cleaning... I would rather just order lasagna from a nice little Italian restaurant than go through this whole charade.



This one-pot dinner is a great meat-free option that leaves you full and satisfied.

So after doing a little research, I've figured out that crock pot lasagna is very doable. Not only can you assemble it in the pot, but I am convinced that most of the cooking should take place in the pot, too. This dish is easy to cook, doesn't take more than an afternoon to finish and you can even freeze the leftovers for another night. That is, if there are any leftovers!

I hope you enjoy this take on one of my favorites. Enjoy!

1 12 oz. box of lasagna noodles, uncooked

1 15 oz. container ricotta cheese

2 c. shredded mozzarella cheese

1 24 oz. container chunky spaghetti sauce

2 zucchinis, sliced thick

2 c. fresh spinach leaves

1/2 c. fresh basil leaves

1 egg

2-3 cloves garlic, minced

1/2 t. black pepper

1 t. dried oregano

3/4 c. water

1/2 c. parmesan cheese

This recipe is best made in an oval-shaped crock pot; a round one will work, it just creates a very tall lasagna.

In a separate bowl, combine ricotta cheese, egg, garlic and seasonings. Pour 1 c. of spaghetti sauce into the pot and stir it around so it coats the bottom of the crock pot. Fill the sauce jar up with 1 c. water and shake it around— this watered down sauce helps the noodles soften more when cooking. Place first layer of 3-4 noodles in crock pot. Cover noodles with 1/2 of ricotta mixture. Lay zucchini slices on next, followed by another layer of 3-4 lasagna noodles. Add 1 c. spaghetti sauce and cover noodles with 1 c. shredded mozzarella cheese, spinach leaves, basil leaves and then the remaining ricotta mixture. Add final layer of noodles. Cover with remaining sauce and then sprinkle with mozzarella cheese and parmesan cheese. Cook on low for 3 hours.

Crock Pot Baked Ziti with Mini Meatballs

We love pasta. Sometimes in a ridiculous way. I don't know if

that makes me a carb-a-vore or a carb-a-whore, but either way, it's one of my favorite meals to make... and eat. I especially like when the kids eat pasta because I know that the sauce sneaks in lots of great vegetables and nutrients. The problem with an elaborate dish like baked ziti is that it can take a lot more work and I don't have time to do all the steps in time for dinner. So, I've figured out a way to make some of my favorite dishes using my handy dandy crock pot. Time is no longer a nuisance.



All the parts of this recipe can be made separately and ahead of time, so if it helps you to make the meatballs and boil the pasta the night before, then go ahead and save yourself those steps. But I do recommend making homemade meatballs (recipe is listed below). In fact, you can make them and freeze them

without sauce so that when you want to eat them, you can decide later if you want them in marinara, stroganoff, alfredo, or sweet and sour. (PS- IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR A VEGETARIAN ENTREE, FOLLOW ALL THESE STEPS EXCEPT FOR THE MINI MEATBALLS. YOU CAN ADD FRESH ZUCCHINI, MUSHROOMS OR SPINACH IF YOU'D LIKE ADDITIONAL FLAVORS.)

After you make the mini meatballs, these are the other things you'll need for the baked ziti:

1 lb cooked ziti (al dente)

2 1/2 c. spaghetti sauce

2 c. shredded mozzarella cheese

1/2 c. parmesan cheese

1 T. oregano

Pour hot, drained pasta into crock pot. Top with spaghetti sauce, but save 1/2 c. for later. Stir until pasta is coated then add cheeses, but save 1/2 c. of mozz cheese for later. Stir until cheese is starting to melt. Top with oregano and stir through one more time. When meatballs are done, line them on top of pasta and sauce mixture. Pour remaining sauce on top of meatballs and then sprinkle with remaining cheese. Warm on low for 2 hours. Enjoy!

Mini Meatballs (makes 48 balls)

1 lb. ground turkey

1 c. bread crumbs

1/2 c. parmesan cheese

1 t. oregano

1 T. parsley

2-3 cloves chopped garlic

1/2 t. black pepper

1 beaten egg (if needed)

Mix all ingredients together with your hands. If consistency isn't wet enough to bind, add egg (I prefer mine without it). Roll meat mixture into small, bite-sized balls and place on foil covered cookie sheet. Cook in oven at 350 degrees for 25 minutes and then broil on high for 3-5 minutes to brown but NOT BURN outside of ball. When cooled, balls can be frozen and saved for later use.

Crock Pot Cabbage Rolls

This is already in the pot for dinner tonight! It helps to cook the cabbage the night before so you don't scald your hands trying to peel off the perfect leaves.

1 head cabbage

1 lb ground meat (I'm pretty sure anything will work, I've used beef and turkey)

1/4 cup brown rice, uncooked

1 egg, beaten

1 onion, diced

1/2 t. salt

1/2 t. pepper

1/3 cup cider vinegar

1/2 cup brown sugar

1 can tomato soup

1/2 cup Catalina dressing

1. Put cabbage in boiling water. Simmer for 5-10 minutes. Let cool completely before handling.
2. Mix meat, rice, egg, onion, salt and pepper.
3. In another bowl mix vinegar, sugar, soup and dressing.
4. Remove 12 large cabbage leaves from head and then chop remaining cabbage and put it in bottom of crock pot.
5. Put 2-4 T. of meat mixture in center of cabbage leave. Roll up, envelope style and place in crock pot, seam side down. (you can use toothpicks to hold the rolls together if you need to)
6. Pour tomato mixture over all of it.
7. Cover and cook on low for 8-10 hours.

(recipe is adapted from one on www.recipezaar.com)