

Crock Pot Chana Masala



So I recently riddled my fans on [Facebook](#) about whether they would want a crock pot chicken marsala or crock pot chana masala recipe... and of course, you guys asked for both! So as promised, I have created both recipes and I'm sharing them with you this week. First up, is chana masala (even though I made the other recipe first!), but since that is the smell filling

my house, it is the first to write up and share. It's like the amazing fumes are traveling through my body and out my fingertips as I type.

You might recognize this dish from your local Indian buffet. With just a few ingredients, but plenty of seasonings and flavor, it's a great side dish. Served with rice and naan bread, it makes a fantastic dinner. I think it's a great introduction to Indian food too because it's not too potent or unfamiliar in flavor. I would still consider myself a novice with cooking Indian food and I much prefer to go out and eat someone else's delicious recipes than my own, but sometimes it's nice to try something new and customize it yourself.

(I really like the [Simply Organic herbs](#) from Amazon. I think they are affordable and a quality product. I've linked each ingredient so you can buy them if you'd like to use what I use, too. I do not work with them directly, but I do use them consistently.)

So here's my go at crock pot chana masala. I hope you are inspired to try cooking something new, too!

Crock Pot Chana Masala

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 6 hours

Serves: 8-10 people

1 28 oz. can chick peas, drained

1 28 oz. can diced tomatoes, NOT DRAINED

2 cloves garlic, minced

1/2 yellow onion, diced (= about 1/2 cup)

1/2 t. [ground coriander](#)

1/2 t. [cumin powder](#)

1/2 t. [turmeric powder](#)

1 t. [garam masala powder](#)

1 t. minced fresh ginger

1 T. fresh cilantro leaves, sliced

1 lime, cut into wedges

Put all ingredients in crock pot and mix together. Cook on low for 6 hours. Serve with a lime wedge to squeeze for flavor, a side of basmati rice and naan bread for a complete meal.

[Crock Pot Tom Kha Soup](#)

A few years ago, I published [this watered down version](#) of my favorite Thai soup. I was just learning to experiment with Thai cooking and didn't have access to the necessary ingredients for this recipe, so I made it with the closest things I could find.

That recipe was FINE. It satisfied my craving for this delicious chicken and coconut milk soup, but I recently decided that I wanted to up the ante and do it correctly, with the legit ingredients. I accepted my own challenge and I'm thrilled with the results. The old version tasted good, no doubt. But this recipe tastes AUTHENTIC.



Thai basil is not the same as regular basil- make sure you grab the correct ingredient!

I can't really explain what makes this soup so good, other than it's ingredients I don't usually cook with at home. Please use fresh herbs, it makes all the difference. You can find fresh lemongrass and Thai basil at some grocery stores

and at many international grocery markets. Thai basil is not the same as regular basil- make sure you grab the correct ingredient!

I am blessed to have an amazing neighbor that is gifted with a green thumb; she shares fresh herbs with me and I, in turn, share the foods with her. It's a great exchange and I am grateful for her friendship. I am envious of her ability and patience to garden and someday, I'll be motivated to do more than just putting fresh herbs into mason jars on my bay window!

Try this recipe and see how it compares to your favorite local Thai restaurant. You might figure out that eating at home is just as good, if not fresher and better!

Crock Pot Tom Kha Soup

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 5 hours

Serves: 4

2 c. vegetable or chicken broth

1 13.5 oz can [coconut milk](#)

1 12" stalk fresh lemongrass, greens removed; bruise the stalk and then cut into 3" sections

1 2" fresh ginger root, peeled and slice into 6 quarter-sized slices

1/2 lb fresh oyster mushrooms, cleaned and quartered

1 lb. boneless, skinless chicken thighs, cut into bite-sized chunks

1 T. [fish sauce](#)

1 t. sugar

1 T. fresh lime juice

1 t. [Thai chili paste](#)

1/4 c. fresh kaffir lime leaves

1/4 c. fresh Thai basil leaves

1/4 chopped fresh cilantro leaves

1 lime, cut into wedges

Put all ingredients except cilantro and lime wedges into crock pot and stir. Cook on low for 5 hours. Before serving, remove all kaffir lime leaves, Thai basil leaves, and lemongrass stalks (optional to remove ginger slices, too). When serving, add chopped fresh cilantro leaves and lime wedge on top. Serve with bowl of white rice.

[Crock Pot Short Ribs](#)



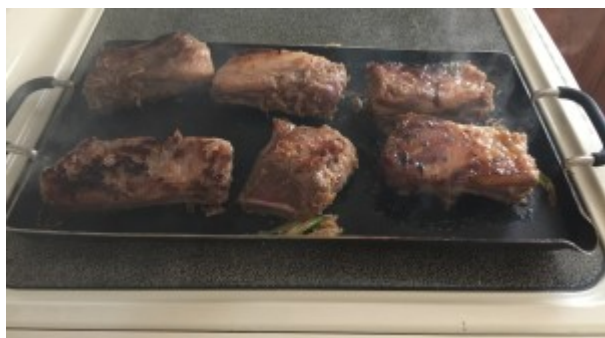
OK fans, THIS should be your new favorite holiday dish. I don't care what you celebrate, we all celebrate deliciousness. There's a little prep work involved, but it is worth every juicy morsel. I am making this dish for the upcoming Jewish New Year... and perhaps Halloween. Thanksgiving. Christmas. And an early happy Valentine's Day to me.

Since the beef is the focal point of the entire meal, I wanted to make sure I had quality beef and plenty of it. I bought six short ribs equally just over three pounds. That sounds like a lot, but you have to take into account the bones. We each ate two ribs at dinner. You can adjust the serving size as needed. I served my meat with green beans tonight and that's eat. I mean, it. I'm still thinking about eating those short ribs!

Marinating the meat is essential to get the flavors going and the apples to break down and tenderize the beef. I soaked mine for 24 hours— you could do as little as 6-8 hours, but I wouldn't go much more than a full day.



I first tried to fit everything into a gallon size bag, but that was a futile effort. You could use a bowl or storage container. I like to keep these [HUGE bags](#) on hand exactly for this type of need. Whatever you use needs to fit back into the refrigerator, don't forget that detail!



Crock Pot Short Ribs is one of the only recipes where I braise the meat before I put it into the crockpot. The flash of heat helps caramelize the flavors quickly and seal in the juices. It's worth the extra step, trust

me! It's also necessary in my house to open the windows or disarm the smoke detector when braising. Something about that quick heat and sugar causes some excess "fog" in the air—that's what my kids call it, cooking "fog"!



When you are braising the meat, make sure you save the juices and marinate from the bag or container— that goodness goes straight into the crock pot. Do not dump it out! Once the meat is done braising, you just gently place the meat on top of the sauciness and let it

continue its cooking all together.

Yes, there are more steps to this dish, but the end result is soft and juicy and smiles all around. And isn't that the point of holiday meals?!

Happy everything to you. I hope you enjoy this dish and everything you celebrate throughout the year.

Crock Pot Short Ribs

Serves 3 (Double or triple the recipe as needed!)

3 lbs beef short ribs, bone IN

1 c. shredded sweet onion

2 medium gala apples, shredded (skin on)

1 inch fresh ginger, peeled and then shredded

8 cloves garlic, whole

5 stalks green onion, cut the greens only into 2 inch strips

1/2 c. soy sauce

1/4 c. Mirin or rice wine

3 T. sesame oil

3 T. honey

1/4 c. sugar

Begin by shredding onions, apples and ginger and put into [large bag](#) or bowl. Add garlic cloves and green onions. Add remaining ingredients (except ribs) and combine well. Add beef short ribs and massage marinate onto all sides of meat. Cover bowl tightly or seal bag and refrigerate for up to 24 hours. When you are ready to proceed, remove ribs from marinate



and put everything else into the crock pot. Heat pan on high and then braise all sides of short ribs quickly, but do not cook through. Add ribs to mixture already in crock pot, cover and cook on high for 3-4 hours or low for 4-6 hours.

The meat will pull away from bones when it is soft and ready. Serve bone-in with extra juice. The whole cloves of garlic will taste amazing- do not throw them out- spread them on

bread or eat like candy!

Crock Pot Hot and Sour soup

I had three reasons for creating crock pot hot and sour soup this week...

1. Chinese New Year was on Monday and I forgot to order takeout.
2. I've been trying to do at least one meatless meal each week.
3. Hot and sour soup is amazing for clearing up a stuffy nose and a winter cold!



As with all my soups, I like more “stuff” than “broth” so my hot and sour soup is more crowded than what you get at a Chinese restaurant, but I think you’ll like this as a full meal and not just an appetizer. Plus, it can be made completely vegetarian and I think it’s

gluten-free, so this is a great dish if you are cooking for people with food limitations.

If you didn’t get a chance to celebrate the Chinese New Year either, then whip up a quick batch of this hot and sour soup to start the year out like a fire-breathing dragon! (but you don’t need to make it that spicy if you don’t want!)

3 oz. shiitake mushrooms (I bought a 6 oz. jar of mushrooms

in liquid and used half)

2 cups baby carrots, quartered

3 medium green onions, sliced

3 cups bok choy, chopped

4 c. low-sodium chicken broth

1/3 c. rice vinegar

1 T. soy sauce

1 t. ground ginger

1 t. sesame oil

2 t. sriracha sauce (Asian red pepper sauce, also sometimes called rooster sauce)

1 package extra-firm tofu, drained and cut into half-inch cubes

Put all ingredients EXCEPT TOFU into crock pot and stir into mixed. Cook on high for 3-4 hours (or until carrots are soft enough) then add cubed tofu and cook for one more hour.

Crock Pot Thai Chicken soup

One of my favorite new indulgences is Thai food. I started a few years ago with Pad Thai. It's like the thai version of lomein, which is really just a step above the college-grade ramen noodle. But it started to introduce me to new flavors. Then, I moved up and through a few of the curry dishes; I

quickly learned my ridiculously low capabilities for spicy food. I like my thai dishes with either chicken, tofu or shrimp- I just think think that these proteins absorb the most flavor from everything else it's cooked in.

There are some particular seasonings for Thai food, though, and I just don't keep these things in my kitchen yet. So while I'd love to have lemongrass and keffir lime leaves abundantly available or even know where to buy some galangal, I'm replacing some of these flavors with some easier go-to foods that you can find at your regular grocery store.

My crock pot Thai chicken soup is an interpretation of a traditional Thai tom kha soup. It still has the coconut milk, chicken and mushrooms, but I use ginger instead of galangal and lime juice for the citrus twist. I also haven't broken down and bought fish sauce yet, so I just leave it out. Fish sauce's first impression is that it just tastes salty, so the broth really already fulfills that requirement for me.

I hope you enjoy the new flavors of this soup. If you want to make it more of a Thai dinner, try adding some white rice and veggies with curry sauce to make this a complete cultural meal!

3 boneless, skinless raw chicken breasts cut into strips

2 c. chicken broth

1 13.5 oz. can lite coconut milk

1 T. ginger root, peeled and minced

2 T. lime juice

6-8 mushrooms, cleaned and sliced

2 stalks celery, sliced

1 c. baby carrots

1 t. red chili pepper flakes

cilantro or basil leaves, sliced for garnish

Combine all ingredients in crock pot and cook on high for 4 hours. Serve with some green leaves sprinkled on top.