

Crock Pot Brisket-- easy, medium and hard

I'm pretty sure everyone has a grandmother-aged person in their life that makes the "perfect brisket". It's moist, juicy, flavorful and pulls apart perfectly. We've tried and tried to repeat the old world secrets, but somehow our ovens continue to dry out the meat or make it tough to chew. Look no further— grandma might not have used a slow cooker, but these recipes are very easy and have amazing results.

Here's a great little nugget for you: my mom always cut off the last inch of the brisket before cooking it. I figured it was because of how she trimmed off the fat, skimming the top of the cut of meat and then cutting off the chunk at the end. I asked her about it and she said that it was how her grandmother did it. So I asked my grandmother why her mom cooked the meat in that particular way and she said, "because her pan was too small, the meat never seemed to fit right so she cut off the end so the brisket would lay flat." It's funny how traditions begin.

If you are looking for a pulled beef sandwich to serve at a spring BBQ, fork apart the meat when it is done, then top it with your favorite BBQ sauce and serve it on a braided roll. Oh— was it mean to say BRAIDED ROLL to those of you celebrating Passover? My bad.

EASY difficulty brisket

1 3 lb. beef brisket

1 bottle italian dressing

Pour half the dressing over the brisket and let it marinate overnight. In the morning, move the meat into the slow cooker

and top with the remaining dressing. Cook on low for 8 hours. Now, wasn't that easy?!

MEDIUM difficulty brisket

1 3 lb. brisket

1 medium-sized onion, sliced thin

1 12 oz. can of Coke (not diet)

1/2 c. ketchup

1 t. black pepper

1/2 t. cayenne pepper

pinch of salt

Place brisket into crock pot, use trivet if you have one. Surround meat with sliced onion. Mix together Coke and ketchup and pour on top of meat and onions. Sprinkle seasonings on everything. Cook for 8 hours on low or 4-5 hours on high.

If you want to vary the flavor, try using 12 oz. apple juice or 12 oz. of beer INSTEAD of the Coke.

HARD difficulty brisket

1 3 lb. brisket

1 t. of each seasonings: cracked black pepper, rosemary, paprika, parsley, celery seed

2-3 cloves garlic, chopped fine

1 t. olive oil

water

Rinse meat and pat dry. Using your fingers or a pastry brush, lightly coat meat with olive oil. Then mix together all seasonings and coat meat in dry rub. Let marinate overnight in the refrigerator. In the morning, take meat out and sprinkle with garlic. Heat up a pan and brown meat on all sides, then put meat in crock pot. Add enough water to the crock pot to cover the bottom of the pot. Also, if you have a trivet that fits in your crock pot, use that under the meat. Cook on low for 6 hours.

Crock Pot Roasted Chicken (and curried chicken salad)

It's Friday! I work hard all week waiting for today. Tonight we get to start our weekend. I can't think of a better way to welcome the weekly 2-day vacation than to have a family meal together at home. To make it more special, we are having guests this evening as well. Ok crock pot, it's time to do your thing and make dinner tonight taste like it was hard to make (but really it's only noon o'clock and it's already done).

The most challenging part of this recipe is making sure that your meat will fit in the crock pot. If you have a round and more vertical design of a crock pot, you might have to use a cornish hen instead of a chicken if you want it to fit! This recipe really works best in a 5-6 qt. crockpot that is **oval shaped**. I just thought you should know this before you start trying to shove everything in and then being disappointed when it doesn't fit. *(check out my next post about buying a new crock pot!)*

If you have leftover chicken after tonight, I'd recommend making curried chicken salad tomorrow. Add a stalk of fresh, chopped celery (not a cooked one from the pot), add a small can of diced water chestnuts, 1/2 c. quartered red grapes and then enough mayo to make it a good consistency. Then, add curry powder, a little salt and pepper— I can't tell you how much because I don't know how much chicken you have left, but remember that curry powder becomes more potent after it gets a chance to fester. Make this salad up and then put it in the fridge for a couple hours— when it turns a darker copper color (from the curry), it's ready to eat!

Well there you go, I guess it's a two recipe day. You have one for today and one for tomorrow!

Now for to the roasted chicken recipe:

1 3-4 lb. fresh chicken, thawed, rinsed and patted dry

2 T. olive oil

2 cloves garlic, chopped

8 oz. baby carrots

3 stalks celery, cut into 2 inch chunks

1/2 med. onion, cut into chunks

dash of paprika

salt and pepper

If you have a trivet that fits in your crock pot, I'd recommend using it. It keeps your chicken just elevated from sitting in it's own juices and makes it MUCH easier to pull the chicken out when it is done (which makes for a nicer presentation too). Place chicken in pot— to know it's on the correct side, you should see the smooth skin covering the chicken breasts. Brush the skin with the olive oil and

sprinkle with the chopped garlic. Position the carrots, celery and onions around the bird. Sprinkle all contents with paprika, salt and pepper. Cook on low for 8-10 hours, depending on bird size.