

# Crock Pot Loaded Potato Casserole



Who doesn't love a baked potato with all the toppings?! The problem is, I rarely ever keep baking-sized potatoes in the pantry. ([Although has anyone ever used one of these?!](#)) So this recipe is a great way to fulfill that salty and savory craving with items that you can keep on hand. I used refrigerated shredded potatoes, but you can totally make this

dish using the frozen kind instead. The quantity and directions stay the same.

My mother-in-law used to make a potato casserole like this and my recipe is totally inspired by her dish. I remember lots of festive gatherings, summer BBQs, and family dinners with second and third helpings of potato casserole. Some nights, I'd rather just have this as my main dish with a side salad... and save room for dessert! Family recipes are the best—because they satisfy your soul and not just your appetite.

Crock Pot Potato Casserole

Serves 8-12



You can keep these ingredients on hand for an easy side dish anytime.

2 lb. shredded potatoes (just wanted to share... [I use THESE](#))

8 oz. sour cream

2 cups shredded cheddar cheese

1/2 onion, chopped

1 10.5 oz can Cream of Celery Soup

1 cup bacon crumbles

Put all ingredients in crock pot and give it a stir until everything is combined. Cook on low for 4 hours.

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# Crock Pot Beet Borscht

Dre's got nothing on me—my beets are fresh! Ha! Get it? See what I did there.



Beet borscht tastes great with a few boiled potatoes and a scoop of cold sour cream.

There is nothing that makes me think of the my family history more than a steaming hot bowl of neon pink soup. No, this isn't a serving of chemical warfare, it's a fresh and sweet, soothing bowl of beet borscht. My grandma still makes this and at most Jewish Deli's you can usually find it on the menu right next to corned beef, chopped liver and matzah balls. What can I say? My roots are authentic and so is my cuisine. Except grandma never made this dish in the crock pot!

Now if this was truly home cooking, I would use fresh beets, but I've found that the canned version works just as well and the pink juice adds a certain flavor feature as well. Grandma taught me to cut sliced beets into strips instead of buying the canned variety of matchsticks. Somehow the matchstick ones are too mushy. (According to grandma, of course.)

Authentically, I would hand slice some cabbage, but I love the fine style of angel hair cabbage that I can purchase at my

grocery store. It cooks up quicker and doesn't contrast the texture of the beets as much.



Keep a few of these items on hand in your pantry and you can have beet borscht anytime you want!

If you make this dish with fresh beets, just clean, peel and shred them before throwing them in the crock pot. The taste is very similar to this recipe, but the beautiful pink broth cannot be matched! It truly is extraordinary. But that pink color will most likely stain your cutting board. And your fingers. And your countertops, before you even realize the glow has been dripping!

This soup can be made vegetarian or meat-based. In fact, try cooking down beef bones or chicken bones to make your broth instead of using store bought. I know, I know... this meal is so "processed", but hey, it's a weeknight, and sometimes even the Crock Pot Queen needs a a quick meal to fix.

Give this a try and keep an open mind. Put on those Dre headphones and drop the beat. But not the beet. It will probably stain.

## Crock Pot Beet Borscht

Serves 8

2 15 oz. cans of sliced beets (do not drain)

1/2 sweet onion, sliced thin

1 package finely sliced cabbage (approx. 6 cups)

2 bay leaves

2 cloves of garlic, chopped

1 32 oz. box vegetarian stock

8 redskin potatoes

8 T. sour cream

Slice the onion and put in the crock pot with the cabbage, bay leaves, and garlic cloves. Drain the cans of beets into the crock pot and then cut the sliced beets into strips. Add stock and cook on high for 3-4 hours. Clean and quarter the potatoes and bowl separately. To each serving of soup, add a few chunks of boiled potatoes and a dollop of sour cream. Borscht is also refreshingly delicious served cold.

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## Crock Pot Chicken Tortilla Soup

The morning is half over and my whole family is still wearing pajamas. Yay for snow days! But since it's dreadful and cold outside, I need something hot and satisfying to fill our

bellies. I decided that we should head south of the border tonight and enjoy some Mexican fare, so today I am sharing my recipe for chicken tortilla soup. This recipe is simple and easy (and note— it freezes well, too!) and you can definitely vary the spiciness of the dish, depending how much heat your mouth can withstand.

I am sharing my basic recipe for this soup, but feel free to add any of the following to the pot for additional spice. I would recommend only picking one or two of these things as each one packs a punch:

1/2 t. cayenne pepper OR

1 chopped jalapeno pepper OR

1 t. Tabasco sauce

You can also decorate your chicken tortilla soup in a variety of ways. Try sprinkling some fresh, chopped cilantro on top, or a few slices of avocado. If the spice is more than you anticipated, cut it with some shredded monterey jack cheese or a dollop of sour cream. Most restaurants serve this soup with tortilla strips— you can crumble regular tortilla chips on top for the same effect. Or just like an old scantron test, you can select E. All of the Above (that's the correct answer!!)

We might be skating on the lawn and building a snowman on the porch, but at dinner tonight, we'll all be saying "Ole!"

1 28 oz. can petite diced tomatoes

2 10 oz. cans diced tomatoes with green chiles

1 15 oz. can sweet corn, no salt added (drained)

1 lb. frozen chicken breasts or tenders

1/2 medium onion, chopped

2-3 cloves garlic, minced

1 T. chopped fresh cilantro

1 bay leaf

1 t. chili powder

1 t. cumin

1/2 t. black pepper

1/2 t. salt

Put all ingredients in crock pot and stir so that the spices mingle with all of the solid foods. Cook on low for 6 hours. Remove chicken, shred it and then put back in crock pot for one hour. Serve with any of the additional spices or toppings outlined above.

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## Crock Pot Noodle Kugel

This is one of my favorite foods from my experience with Jewish holidays. This casserole is sweet and dense with a wonderful warmth of cinnamon and vanilla. The noodles are soft and bound with the creamy egg filling. But my favorite taste is the plump raisins that swell with flavor and are a great contrast to the texture of the noodles.

I've made this dish many times in the oven, so it seemed like an easy transition to do it in the crock pot. Plus, it was so much easier to serve this dish hot as a buffet item when guests could just scoop it up still steaming. Plus— no one had to be embarrassed to have seconds when they could just go back to the crock pot for more!

1 lb. yolk-free broad egg noodles, cooked

5 eggs, beaten

16 oz. sour cream

16 oz. cottage cheese

1/2 c. sugar

1 t. cinnamon

1 T. vanilla

1 c. raisins

1 c. Special K cereal (crushed)

2 T. butter, melted

Mix all ingredients except noodles in crock pot until smooth. Fold noodles into mixture gently. Mix crushed cereal and melted butter in a separate bowl and then flake on top of casserole mixture. Cook on low for 4 hours. For last 15 minutes, position lid sideways so that air can escape during final moments of cooking.

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## 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 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 Vegetarian Bean Dip**

We're going to a party this weekend and everyone is supposed to bring a side dish to go with a taco bar main course. It sounds like lots of fun (hoping for margaritas, good music and salty lime tortilla chips) and I figured I'd make something in the crock pot that would be hot and spicy, just like the crowd! While other people might bring chips or cold dips, this dish is really easy and yummy and a little unique. It's nice to have a hot dip that doesn't get crusty and weird from sitting out. Feel free to serve this with some additional jalapenos, salsa and sour cream.

1 15 oz. can of vegetarian refried beans

1 c. chunky salsa (mild, medium or hot)

1 c. sliced black olives

1 c. shredded colby jack cheese

1 15 oz. can of black beans, drained and rinsed

1 t. cumin

1 t. chili powder

1/2 c. sour cream

Mix all ingredients together in crock pot, except for sour cream. Cook on low for 3 hours, then add sour cream, mix and heat for 1 more hour on low. Serve with tortilla chips meant for scooping.

*(If you have leftovers, try putting a hearty serving into a soft taco shell tomorrow with some shredded lettuce and diced tomatoes, it makes a great second meal!)*

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## Crock Pot Pomme de Tara

A friend of mine wants to use her crock pot more, but has an allergy to tomatoes. After doing a little research, I agreed with her— most crock pot recipes seem to have some sort of tomato or tomato-based product in them! It is an injustice that my friend should not be able to embrace easy crock pot cooking more often. So, my next few recipes will definitely not be red. And if it's just that you don't like tomatoes, these might just become some of your new favorites too.

This is an easy potato casserole that gets jazzed up by the cheese and chips. Since the french word for potato is "pomme

de terre", I am honoring my friend Tara with this recipe for "Pomme de Tara". Enjoy! ☐

**(Is there a recipe you'd like to see or an ingredient you'd like to avoid?? Click on my contact page and send me a note—I'm happy to post something just for YOU!)**

6-8 potatoes, diced

1 onion, chopped

4 T. butter, melted

1 c. milk

1 c. sour cream

1-2 garlic cloves, chopped fine

1 t. parsley

salt and pepper

1 cup Cool Ranch Doritos— crunched up into little bitty pieces

1 cup shredded cheddar cheese

Put potatoes and onions in the crockpot first. In a separate bowl, mix together melted butter, milk, sour cream and seasonings. Pour mixture over potatoes and onions and stir. Cook on low for 6 hours. Turn pot off and mix shredded cheese and Doritos into pot, but don't overstir— you don't want your soft potatoes to turn into mashed potatoes. Feel free to top this with crumbled bacon, chives or green onions. Makes a great side dish for breakfast, lunch or dinner!