

Crock Pot Sweet Potato Soup

I've always been a fan of our grill... really, for two reasons. 1. In the summertime, it's a great way to eat healthy and not heat up the kitchen and 2. when we grill, my husband is usually the one cooking! Since it's been such a mild winter, we've been taking advantage of the unseasonably warm evenings and grilling our food. But since local produce isn't as plentiful in January, I've been getting creative.

So I've been grilling sweet potatoes. Sure, they get their glory at Thanksgiving when they are smothered and covered by marshmallows or syrup or sugar. Sometimes they even make a repeat performance at Christmas or Easter or Passover, but my new absolute favorite way to eat a sweet potato is by grilling it to perfection.



It's so easy, let me tell you the few easy steps... Wash your sweet potatoes. Poke fork holes all over. Wrap sweet potato in aluminum foil. Grill on med-high heat for one hour, turning the sweet potato halfway through. That's it! When the sweet vibrant goodness is done, it will be easy to squeeze the flesh with tongs. Please be cautious though, sometimes the sweet juices will run out of the foil (and I don't want you to get burned).

So a couple nights ago, I grilled five sweet potatoes. I figured we would eat the leftovers so I made a couple extra.

And these extra potatoes became the inspiration for tonight's new recipe! With a few ingredients I already had on hand, I was able to literally "whip together" this amazing meal. This crock pot sweet potato soup is thick and hearty and even though soup might not be fresh and exciting for a winter meal, adding in the flavor from the grill really makes a difference.

2 medium sweet potatoes, already cooked in grill or oven, cooled and then skinned

3 c. chicken broth

1/2 c. [caramelized onions](#)

1/4 t. nutmeg

1/4 t. chili powder

1/4 t. celery seed

1/4 t. curry powder

1 clove garlic, minced

1/2 c. heavy cream

Put all ingredients (except heavy cream) in crock pot, stir and then cook on low for 3-4 hours. Use a hand blender and puree mixture until smooth, then stir in heavy cream. Serve hot with a tiny sprinkle of nutmeg or curry on top.

[Crock Pot Sweet Potato and](#)

Corn Chowder

This recipe comes from my friend I.H.K. and she is an amazing cook. This soup is thick and chunky and a whole meal in one bowl. She recommends serving it with tortilla chips or corn bread. Using an immersion blender can really change a soup from drab to fab by altering the consistency to be smooth and creamy instead of watery.

Since this recipe takes 8 hours on low, it's a great one to start before you leave for work in the morning and then come home to a beautiful dinner. Take a chance on this vegetarian chowder and enjoy!

2-3 large sweet potatoes, peeled and cubed (about 1/2 inch)

1 medium onion, chopped

1 can whole-kernel corn (15-16 oz.), drained

1 can creamed corn

1 teaspoon salt

fresh ground black pepper, to taste

2 cups broth (I use the vegetarian "chicken" flavor)

2 cups half-and-half or whole milk (depending on how virtuous you want to be)

4 tablespoons unsalted butter

1 teaspoon smoked sweet or hot paprika (optional)

1 cup of shredded cheddar cheese

Put first set of ingredients in crock pot and cook for about 8 hours on low or for 4 hours on high. Once the sweet potatoes are tender, stir everything together. Use an immersion blender to break up the ingredients as much as you want—I like my chowder chunky, but breaking up some of the sweet potatoes and corn makes the soup thicker and more luxurious. When only 1 hour of cooking time is left (if the slow cooker has been on high, turn down to low) ADD: half and half or milk, butter,

paprika and cheddar cheese.

Purple Sweet Potato Biscuits

Happy New Year, friends and fans!

So to be perfectly honest, I haven't done a lot of cooking since January 1. We've relished in some easy dinner like grilled cheese and tomato soup, grilled chicken with steamed veggies and even ordering in Chinese food. But yesterday I tried a little baking and the result turned out so funny, I thought I would share.

I recently bought some organic veggies, including purple sweet potatoes. These potatoes are the same size and shape as regular sweet potatoes, but the insides are a vibrant purple (think the color of Barney or pansies!!) When I roasted the purple sweet potatoes, they were beautiful, but when I used them in this biscuit recipe, they turned out to be a purplish/blueish/greenish color instead! We were all entertained and they were really funny to see. But the taste and light, fluffy texture was great.



So here's the recipe for you to try. This is NOT my recipe. It's from www.foodnetwork.com with the original recipe provided by "Mama Dip", whoever that is. You can use regular sweet potatoes if that is what you can find, but I assure you that the purple variety is much more entertaining. Enjoy!

I will work on new crock pot recipe



2 cups cooked, mashed sweet potatoes (skins removed)

1 stick butter, melted

1 1/4 c. milk

4 cups self-rising flour

3 T. sugar

pinch of baking soda

Mix together the sweet potatoes, butter and milk until well blended. Stir in the flour, baking soda and sugar. Shape the dough into a ball and knead about 10 times on a well-floured board. Roll the dough out 1-inch thick and cut with a biscuit cutter. Bake in a greased baking pan in a 400-degree oven for 15-20 minutes or until brown on top.

((if you don't have self-rising flour you can substitute with all purpose flour and a few more ingredients and the result will be the same. 1 c. self-rising flour= 1 c. all-purpose flour+ 1 1/2 t. baking powder+ 1/2 t. salt))

Yields: 15 biscuits

Crock Pot Curried Sweet Potatoes

This recipe was a huge hit last night! Even the kids liked it. It's flavorful and when all these flavors fuse together, it's an amazing combination. These are not your candied Thanksgiving yams by any degree. When the coconut milk and curry gets a chance to melt into the sweet potatoes, the sweet smokiness will definitely make everyone at your dinner table ask for seconds.

4-5 large sweet potatoes, peeled and cubed



1 can lite coconut milk

1 T. curry powder

2 T. honey

Put sweet potatoes in crock pot and then drizzle honey on top. Shake curry powder into pot and then pour coconut milk on top of everything. Mix together a couple times to make sure potatoes are coated in all ingredient. Cook on high for 2.5. hours or until sweet potatoes are soft.

Crock Pot Sweet Potatoes - - kid friendly!

I'm always looking for new foods that will be tasty to my palate, but that my kids will still eat. This recipe is a compromise of an easy go-to baby food and a flavorful combination of sweets. The sweet potatoes turn out smooth in the crock pot and you don't have to worry about burned edges or the sugary syrup burning like when you cook sweet potatoes in the oven. I'd suggest serving this with something more bland- grilled chicken or tilapia maybe or even something easy like chicken nuggets or hot dogs. Any meal that can feed the masses and enjoyed by all is a winner in my household!

I like sweet potatoes almost any way they are prepared. At Thanksgiving, I love the marshmallows crisped to a sweet burn up on top; I love the Hawaiian dish made with crushed pineapple and coconut milk and I also love tzimmes (do a search on my site for the recipe!). Today's recipe is similar to tzimmes, but a better take on the old world concoction. This is a little lighter and the little oranges have a sweeter flavor.

Serve this to your whole family and even if your kids want to dip the potatoes in ketchup (like mine sometimes do), remember that they are getting lots of great vitamins and nutrients from this delicious, vegetarian side dish!

4 sweet potatoes, peeled and chunked

1 can (11 oz.) mandarin oranges in juice (not syrup) DO NOT DRAIN

3 T. honey

Coat crock pot in non-stick spray. Dump in sweet potatoes. Pour oranges and juice on top of potatoes. Drizzle honey over everything. Cover and cook on high for 3 hours.

Keepin' it simple

Some days you might consider dumping everything in a crockpot to still be too much work. I know some of you have great intentions, but that crockpot is still sitting in a box in your basement. Or, the idea of scrubbing the caramelized tidbits from the sides might convince you not to try. Trust me, one pot meals are the easiest way to save time in prep and clean up. Once you start with your crock pot, you'll realize that it is the best kitchen small appliance you have— other than your coffee pot, of course.

So let's start simple. Here are some easy things to try that don't require a lot of work, clean up or preparation.

1. Rice: your crock pot can also be a rice cooker. 1 cup rice to 2 cups water on high. You need to check it to see when it's fluffy and done because the time can vary depending on the rice, but the ratio should be the same for all varieties.

2. Sweet potatoes: wash them (don't pat dry), leave the skin on and put them in the crockpot for 4-6 hours on low. They will create enough liquid to cook all the way through. If you want to make it fancy, peel and cube the potatoes, then add a couple T. of butter and brown sugar to the pot for a sweet treat. I wouldn't be offended if you added mini-marshmallows at the end either!

3. Sauces: Many times you will read that I've created a sauce or a glaze or thickened up a gravy. But honestly, you can use most bottled sauces on meats and veggies just fine. BBQ, sweet and sour, teriyaki, italian dressing and broth all make for excellent flavors in the crock pot. The only down side is that these sauces are typically higher in sugar, which means it might make for tougher clean up, and also higher in sodium, which might make the cooked foods a little saltier. But by all means, you can totally keep it simple and use prepped sauces.

4. Owner's Manual: If you own a crock pot, you have some great resources to help you figure it out. This may sound silly, but check your owner's manual! There may be a conversion guide of oven cooking time to crock pot cooking time. It means you can crock pot so many more things now that you know how long to cook them! It might even have some great recipes to try. It also has the warranty information— if you find that your crock pot doesn't cook evenly, that it burns, that the lid doesn't keep a good seal, that it has a weird electrical smell, or any other bizarre cooking experience, then you should definitely call the company and follow up. Crock pot cooking should be simple and easy, if it isn't, then let's work together and figure out why!

5. Crock pot liners: One of the best accessories a girl can have. Except you can't wear this. But your crock pot can! You open it, put it in the crock pot and then dump everything into it. Cooking directions are exactly the same, but now there isn't any clean up. When it cools, you just pull it out and throw it away. It doesn't get any easier than that. Take my advice and put this item on your next grocery list.

I hope these nuggets are helpful to you and maybe this ounce of encouragement will motivate you to give crock pot cooking a try. Have fun with it! **Food isn't just about sustenance, it should entertain all of your senses!**