

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.

Crock Pot Mozzarella Dip

Summer is a great time for backyard BBQs, gathering with friends and family and enjoying lots of tasty treats. Here is a great recipe that is quick and easy to make, but everyone loves to enjoy! Serve this in the crock pot so that it stays hot and creamy. Accompany this spicy crowd-pleaser with

crackers, pull-apart bread or just some cool, crisp veggies.
Enjoy!

1 lb. mozzarella cheese, cubed

1 c. mayonnaise

1/2 medium onion, chopped

2 cloves garlic, chopped

1/2 t. paprika

2 t. Worcestershire sauce

1 4-oz. can chopped green chiles (NOT DRAINED)

Coat crock pot in non-stick spray. Combine all ingredients in separate bowl, mix well. Pour into crock pot and cook on low for 2-3 hours. Serve hot.

Looking for some more flare?? Try adding 1/2 c. crisp bacon bits or a few shakes of Tabasco to add more flavor to this cheesy appetizer.