

Crock Pot Pot Pie



Did anyone else just do a double take to the title of this recipe? It's funny to read Pot Pot and not giggle... but this pot pie is indeed made in your CROCK pot. I guess I could just call it crock pot pie, but then it makes me think of ooey gooey

apple filling and flaky, buttery crusts and sorry fans... that is not this recipe. I will, however, promise that this recipe is for a new favorite for your whole family. It has meat, dairy, vegetable and carb and if you serve it with a side of fruit (maybe cranberry sauce??), you've fulfilled every food group. Except dessert... and I'm ok with that still being it's own food group.

I will probably repost this recipe around Thanksgiving, because it's the PERFECT thing to do with leftover turkey. I actually roasted a whole turkey this past weekend and have enjoyed easy meals all week from all the leftover meat. You can also do this dish just as easily with a rotisserie chicken that you pick up at the grocery store though.

Here's another worthwhile note: I use a pancake mix that is entirely egg-free because my son has allergies... so I just made pancake mix according to the directions on the box for 12-14 pancakes (2 cups mix, 1.5 cups water). I would recommend that you follow the directions on YOUR box, so if it asks for eggs, you should probably include it.

Also- please be cautious when you put the crock pot (removed from the heating unit) into the oven and then taking it out. I scalded my arm nicely on this one because I wasn't paying attention. Ahhh, the things I'm willing to do for great

cooking and blogging... yeah, you're welcome. ☺ Enjoy!

1-1.5 lbs cooked turkey or chicken, skin and bones removed,
then meat cut into bite-sized pieces

2 cans cream of chicken soup

1 lb bag of frozen mixed vegetables, thawed

1 c. frozen corn, thawed

1/2 t. black pepper

1/2 t. salt

1/2 t. thyme

1/2 t. rosemary

2/3 c. milk

(separately combine pancake mix and water mixed to the equivalent to 12-14 pancakes... so for me 2 c. mix and 1.5 c. water, beaten together until fluffy)

Put all ingredients in crock pot and mix together until everything is well coated. Cook on low for 4 hours, then remove carefully from crock pot's heating unit. Pour pancake mixture on top of hot mixture and bake at 350 degrees for 30-40 minutes until top is slightly browned and crisping on the edges. Remove crock pot from oven carefully and cool for 10 minutes before serving.

Crock Pot Pork Roast

Ok fans, this one is really easy. It might surprise you to think about doing a roast in your crock pot, but again—anything that can be cooked in the oven, can be cooked in the crock pot. I started this roast while I drank my breakfast coffee and it was done by lunchtime. Dinner tonight is going to be a breeze. (I should note that my crockpot cooks quickly, even on low. You will want to use a meat thermometer to determine when your roast is cooked through. Pork is done when the internal temperature of the meat reached 160 degrees).



I like that the dry rub on this roast is simple and you can vary up the flavor and switch out other seasonings, if you prefer. I think that the brown sugar really complements the flavor of the pork, but if you'd rather cut down on the sweetness or calories, you can use other seasonings and leave out some of the brown sugar.

Enjoy this roast from your crockpot and savor the flavors. Add a couple side dishes and you'll have a complete meal for dinner tonight or even entertaining. Enjoy!

2 lb. pork loin rib end roast

1 t. thyme

1 t. parsley

1 t. garlic powder

1 t. cumin

1/2 t. black pepper

1/2 t. salt

3 T. brown sugar

1/2 c. water

Rinse roast and pat dry, then place in crock pot on metal trivet (this lets the juices run without letting the meat sit in the juice). Mix all seasonings and brown sugar in a separate bowl and place mix on the meat, patting down with your fingers until mixture is evenly distributed. Add 1/2 c. water to crock pot, but do not pour it on top of meat. Cook on low for 4-6 hours.

Crock Pot Grits with Sausage

Our county schools have been out of school for three days and the grocery has been out of milk for two. Oh, the fun of a southern winter! I have decided not to venture out until the roads are better so I'm getting creative with foods from the pantry and freezer.

Since we've already had crock pot soup and grilled cheese sandwiches and also crock pot Cincinnati chili, I thought it would be fun to do a crock pot breakfast for dinner. I like finding new ways to remake some of our favorites, using the crock pot to my advantage. So this is my rendition of our breakfast favorites.

1 c. quick grits

4 c. water

1 c. shredded cheddar cheese

6 turkey sausage precooked breakfast links, thawed and sliced thin

1/2 t. salt

1/2 t. black pepper

Put all ingredients in crock pot and stir. Cook on high for 3 hours. Consistency should be thick and almost creamy– all grit particles should be softened and cheese melted throughout. When serving, top with your choice of salsa, peppered gravy, shredded cheese, butter, salt and/or pepper.

Crock Pot Escalloped Apples



This recipe is the direct result of two completely different factors=

1. we've been getting great fall apples and need to use some up, especially the ones with bruises
2. it's almost the holiday season and I'm trying to find lower calories, but equally delicious dishes to serve up as dessert

This recipe is best served warm with a scoop of either vanilla ice cream or just a dollop of whipped cream. It tastes like the inside of a warm apple pie, but barely has more calories

that a cup of applesauce. It's soothing and comforting to the whole body and there is no reason to save this dish for dessert— try it for breakfast with your oatmeal, as a side to lunch or dinner or as a snack at any point of the day!

Unlike applesauce, this dish should be made with large chunks of apples. As they cook down, the apples might fall apart a little bit, but that will help the juices flow. Do not overcook this recipe or you will wind up with apple butter.

8 medium apples, peeled and cored and cut into large chunks

2 T. salted butter

1/2 c. brown sugar

1 t. cinnamon

pinch of nutmeg

1/2 t. black pepper

1 T. vanilla extract

1/4 c. cold water

1 t. corn starch

Put apples in the crock pot first, then sprinkle with brown sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg, black pepper and drizzle with vanilla. Put butter on top of mixture, it will melt as it heats. Cook on low for 4 hours or until apples are softened, but still firm. Dissolve corn starch in water and then pour over apple mixture and stir. Turn crock pot off and let sauce thicken until it gets syrupy and easily coats the apple chunks. Serve warm.

(Makes 8 servings)

Crock Pot Acorn Squash

As the seasons change so does the selection of produce. I love summer for its melon and berries, but fall is such a refreshing reminder of patience. Have you ever tried to grow acorn squash? You plant it and then wait and wait and wait. Two summers ago, I lost an entire crop to shield bugs. The summer before that, my summer pole beans took over and the acorn squash never got the space to grow. The tough part about fall produce is encouraging it to survive the summer.

This year, I didn't plant any of my own, but the local farmer's market is just started to offer beautiful varieties of squash, so I picked up an acorn, a butternut and a spaghetti squash and I am happy to have found fall in these forms. Tonight I made the acorn squash and baked it with a nice complement of baby carrots. This is a great side dish that is easy to make with very few ingredients. Enjoy!

1 acorn squash, cut in half and seeds removed

1 cup baby carrots

2 T. butter

2/3 c. water

Place acorn squash halves in the crock pot, facing up. Put 1 T. butter in each half, then 1/2 c. carrots. Pour the water in the crock pot, but not on or in the acorn squash. Cook on high for three hours.

Crock Pot Beef and Barley Stew



Here's your history lesson for today, folks... let's learn about barley. If you are a "meat and potatoes" kind of person, barley is a great item to add to your grocery list. Barley rations go all the way back to biblical times, I think, it's healthy, hearty and inexpensive; is one of the world's top harvested

grains; and here's a fun one— one of its main purposes is for producing beer and malted beverages.

Now that you've done your studies, let's prepare your eats! This stew is meaty and thick and satisfies the hungriest belly. It is a meal in itself, but I prefer a small bowl of it with a side salad— and a beer, so I can be consuming barley in multiple forms. ☐ This is a nice variation to the common beef stew.

On a nice fall day like today, your house will be filled with the warm smell of meat, vegetables and an easy dinner. Enjoy!

1 lb. beef stew meat chunks

1 c. baby carrots

4 stalks of celery, cut into chunks

1/2 medium onion, diced

3-4 cloves garlic, chopped

1 15 oz. can diced tomatoes, NOT drained

1 cup pearl barley

3 c. water

1 t. black pepper

1 t. salt

1 t. celery seed

Add all ingredients to the crock pot in this order. Give a little stir, just enough to promote mingling. Cook on low for 6-8 hours.

Crock Pot Vegetarian Lasagna

I love lasagna! Anytime you can combine everything into one dish and it hits pretty much every food group, then I'm a happy girl. But oven-baked lasagna takes way too much work... all the boiling and layering and smoothing and baking and spilling, then oven cleaning... I would rather just order lasagna from a nice little Italian restaurant than go through this whole charade.



This one-pot dinner is a great meat-free option that leaves you full and satisfied.

So after doing a little research, I've figured out that crock pot lasagna is very doable. Not only can you assemble it in the pot, but I am convinced that most of the cooking should take place in the pot, too. This dish is easy to cook, doesn't take more than an afternoon to finish and you can even freeze the leftovers for another night. That is, if there are any leftovers!

I hope you enjoy this take on one of my favorites. Enjoy!

1 12 oz. box of lasagna noodles, uncooked

1 15 oz. container ricotta cheese

2 c. shredded mozzarella cheese

1 24 oz. container chunky spaghetti sauce

2 zucchinis, sliced thick

2 c. fresh spinach leaves

1/2 c. fresh basil leaves

1 egg

2-3 cloves garlic, minced

1/2 t. black pepper

1 t. dried oregano

3/4 c. water

1/2 c. parmesan cheese

This recipe is best made in an oval-shaped crock pot; a round one will work, it just creates a very tall lasagna.

In a separate bowl, combine ricotta cheese, egg, garlic and seasonings. Pour 1 c. of spaghetti sauce into the pot and stir it around so it coats the bottom of the crock pot. Fill the sauce jar up with 1 c. water and shake it around– this watered down sauce helps the noodles soften more when cooking. Place first layer of 3-4 noodles in crock pot. Cover noodles with 1/2 of ricotta mixture. Lay zucchini slices on next, followed by another layer of 3-4 lasagna noodles. Add 1 c. spaghetti sauce and cover noodles with 1 c. shredded mozzarella cheese, spinach leaves, basil leaves and then the remaining ricotta mixture. Add final layer of noodles. Cover with remaining sauce and then sprinkle with mozzarella cheese and parmesan cheese. Cook on low for 3 hours.

Crock Pot Thai Chicken Wraps

Tonight is open house at my son's school and the timing makes dinner as a family tough. So, it is going to be date night instead– but eating out is expensive, so I'll feed the kids

early and then us parents can eat when we get home (and the kids are sleeping!). But since I'm not sure what time we'll get home from the school, I'm going to start the crock pot late this afternoon so that dinner is ready when we get back.

One of my favorite appetizers is those amazing sauced up thai chicken wraps that you can get at fancy Asian-inspired restaurants. The unfortunate part is that the lettuce is totally an illusion making you think this is a healthy choice. The typical sauce is usually full of really salty, sugary, high calorie ingredients that I totally don't want to indulge in tonight. So I've come up with a healthier way to enjoy this treat, using the crock pot to get the most out of all the flavors and then whipping up a quick sauce in a pan to coat the whole mixture.

Most restaurants serve this dish with iceberg lettuce because it is crisp, but you can also use leaves of romaine lettuce or even tortillas. I hope you get to enjoy this at your next date night at home, too!

2 stalks celery, chopped

2 carrots, chopped

1/2 onion, chopped

6 oz. mushrooms, sliced

3 cloves garlic

1 8.75 oz. can water chestnuts, chopped

2 10 oz. cans white chicken in water

sauce:

1/2 c. peanut butter

1/4 c. soy sauce

1/4 c. water

3 T. rice wine vinegar

2 packets of Splenda

Put all filling ingredients in the crock pot and cook on low for four hours. In a saucepan, cook all sauce ingredients over medium heat (yes, on the stove), until it reaches a smooth consistency. If it is too thick, add 1/4 c. water and continue stirring. Pour the sauce into the crock pot and stir the mixture well. Serve with chilled lettuce leaves.

Crock Pot Cowpea Soup



Most of you probably just read the title of this recipe and giggled. Yes, cowpea sounds a lot like cow pie. In fact, cow pee makes it seem even more funny. So if you haven't heard of a cowpea before, let me tell you a little about it. But seriously, you can stop giggling

now. Cowpeas are meaty little legumes that come in long pods. Once you pull the string off, you'll see the tightly packed peas pop out of the pod. They are sometimes classified as a black-eyed pea, but you can also get purple-eyed ones, they can be green, white or dark in color and they are hearty little nuggets to cook.

When you can get them fresh, you are good to go once they are out of the pod. If you get them dried, then you need to soak

them in water overnight for about 8 hours and then rinse them a few times before you throw them in the pot.

Cowpeas are common in a lot of African recipes and provide excellent protein in many soups and rice dishes. These “beans” are also used in a lot of southern recipes in the USA. I even found a great recipe online for chow chow salsa that included canned black-eyed peas, but would be awesome with fresh cowpeas instead.

I thought that split pea soup sounded great to make this week—fresh cowpeas are readily available at my local farmers market right now and if I make it now and freeze it, it will make a great meal later this fall when the weather cools off a bit. I decided not to go the traditional route and cook the soup with a ham hock, but to keep it vegetarian instead. If you’d like to, you can add diced cooked ham or turkey sausage after you puree the soup and then heat it for an additional hour to warm the meat. Either way, the soup is filling and satisfying and an easy meal when served with a crusty bread.

Kudos to you for trying something new. Cowpeas are a nice variation, especially if your family already likes peas and beans. Plus, if you can get them fresh, it’s fun to pull the string and unleash the pea from the cow. Enjoy!

2 c. fresh cowpeas

1 medium onion, chopped

2-3 carrots, chopped

2 stalks celery, chopped

3 garlic cloves, chopped

2 parsnips, peeled and chopped

3 c. water

1 t. salt

1 t. black pepper

1 T. fresh parsley, chopped

Put all ingredients in the crock pot and cook on high for 4-6 hours. Using a hand blender, puree soup in the crock pot. If desired, add 1/2 lb. diced cooked ham or turkey sausage to the pot and heat for one additional hour on low.

Crock Pot Gumbo



I opened up my weekly CSA delivery and was so excited to see the ripe, fragrant produce. One thing in particular caught my attention– OKRA. The first thing I thought of was some hot, spicy gumbo. I think half of what I unpacked is going to end up in the gumbo– okra, tomatoes, basil, corn, green pepper... now

if only I stopped at a farm for some chicken and then headed to the coast for some shrimp, but I guess I'll have to buy those at the grocery store.

Gumbo is a perfect recipe for the crock pot because it needs to simmer for a long time to fuse all those flavors together. Cut your veggies into small pieces so you can have a bit of each morsel in your mouth! This soup would also freeze really well, so make the gumbo for dinner this week and then enjoy all these fresh treats again later this fall when they aren't

so available.

This soup can also be made vegetarian if you leave out the chicken, sausage and shrimp. I'd amp up the amount of veggies though and maybe get a little more okra, so that this tastes more robust and unique than just vegetarian vegetable soup. You can also use Morningstar Farms chicken strips (fake meat) if you'd like to add some protein. Enjoy!

2 boneless, skinless chicken breast, cut into 1/2 inch cubes

1/2 lb. okra, sliced

1 c. of corn (cut off of fresh ears)

1/2 sweet onion, chopped

1 green pepper, seeded and chopped

3-4 ripe, sweet tomatoes, seeded and chopped

3 carrots, peeled and sliced thin

2 stalks celery, sliced

4-6 leaves fresh basil, chopped

3 cloves garlic, minced

1 t. salt

1 t. black pepper

1/2 t. cayenne pepper

1/2 t. paprika

1/2 t. chili powder

1 T. parsley

2 T. Worcestershire sauce

2 T. Tabasco sauce

2 c. water

3 pork sausages, cooked and sliced

1/2 lb shrimp, peeled and cleaned

2 c. cooked white rice

Combine all vegetables in crock pot. Add liquid ingredients. Sprinkle with all seasonings. Place chicken pieces on top of mixture next. Cook on low for 4-6 hours. Add shrimp, sausage and cooked white rice and cook for an additional 1 hour on low.