

Summer Series, Day Six: Seafood Paella



This one pot dish is literally named for being made in a pot. It's the original one-dish cuisine.

This, my friends. This is the quintessential dinner that melds together land and sea and balances the forces of nature to create an amazing meal that would make even mermaids and pirates cheer. With more protein than a Brazilian meat festival, this one pot recipe will make you lift your anchors and set full speed ahead toward the coast. And you'll thank me for it. I thanked me for it- I've never made this dish before, but with so much fresh seafood available here in the Outer Banks, it was a challenge I was eager to attempt and declare victory for all.

There are a few more steps than normal because of the complexity of textures in paella (pronounced PIE-Ay-uhhhh) so bear with me and I'll try to break it down step by step so you

can recreate this on your next seaside adventure.

First, gather all of your ingredients. It's helpful to know what goes in at what point so you can simplify your timing.



1. Brown your boneless, skinless chicken thighs over medium-high heat to get a quick sear on the outside. The chicken will have plenty of time to finish cooking the whole way through when it's in the crock pot, but you want to seal in the flavor. After removing from heat, chop chicken into bite-size pieces.



2. Using the same skillet, brown the sliced andouille sausage quickly on both sides and remove from heat.



3. Put brown rice, seasonings, and fresh vegetables in the crock pot. Add broth and give it all a good stir. The turmeric and smoked paprika will flavor the entire dish but begins with this first step. Add bite-size pieces of chicken and cooked andouille sausage. Cook on low for six hours or until all liquid is absorbed.



4. After time is up, it's ok to remove the crock pot lid at this point and give everything a really good stir. Try to keep rice from sticking to the bottom of the crock pot.



5. Add seafoods– shrimp, sea scallops and clams. Be sure to properly clean your seafood before adding to the pot. A sandy clam does not add flavor! If you are peeling and deveining your own shrimp, you need [THIS TOOL](#). Seriously, just get one for yourself at the start of this trip. (You'll use it for the Crock Pot Low Country Boil as well.)

Cook on high for up to one hour– shrimp should be pink and clams should have all opened. You do not want to overcook seafood so try to be nearby for this last step.

And that's it! You have just mastered the Old World, cultivated classic of a seafood paella (technically a mixed paella because of the chicken, but let's focus on the gifts from the sea and the amazing local seafood markets located in the Outer Banks.)

Thank you to the owners of the [Ooh La La beach house](#) here in

Avon. This dish used many of the tools and cooking accessories and your stocked kitchen did not disappoint. I had everything I needed to prep, clean and cook all of my ingredients for this meal. This kitchen set-up made everything easy, including a spacious dishwasher to handle my mess!

Crock Pot Seafood Paella

Serves 6

1.5 cups brown rice

3 chicken thighs

7-8 oz andouille sausage

1 red bell pepper, sliced

2 stalks celery, sliced

1/2 onion, sliced

2 cloves garlic, minced

1 t. turmeric

1 t. smoked paprika

2 cups white wine

2 cups chicken broth

1 lb jumbo shrimp, peeled and deveined

1/2 lb bay scallops

1 dozen clams, in shells

Brown your boneless, skinless chicken thighs over medium-high heat to get a quick sear on the outside. The chicken will have plenty of time to finish cooking the whole way through when it's in the crock pot, but you want to seal in the flavor. After removing from heat, chop chicken into bite-size pieces. Using the same skillet, brown the sliced andouille sausage quickly on both sides and remove from heat. Put brown rice, seasonings, and fresh vegetables in the crock pot. Add broth and give it all a good stir. The turmeric and smoked paprika will flavor the entire dish but begins with this first step. Add bite-size pieces of chicken and cooked andouille sausage. Cook on low for six hours or until all liquid is absorbed. After time is up, it's ok to remove the crock pot lid at this point and give everything a really good stir. Try to keep rice from sticking to the bottom of the crock pot. Add seafoods— shrimp, sea scallops and clams. Be sure to properly

clean your seafood before adding to the pot. Cook on high for up to one hour– shrimp should be pink and clams should have all opened.

Crock Pot Cabbage and Onions



My family has requested perogies for dinner tonight and as much as I'd like to try to make them homemade, that just isn't going to happen. So I figured if our main dish at dinner is from a frozen blue box, then our side dishes should be fresh and flavorful.

Perogies are an amazing Polish entree that can have a variety of fillings inside. I remember a booth at the West Side Market in Cleveland, Ohio, that offered dozens of options– meat-filled, cheese, fruit, dessert, the list just kept on going. I'm making a sautéed cabbage and onion recipe in the crock pot today and the taste will really go nicely with my smooth, simple potato and noodle pockets. But someday, I'd love to go back to that booth in Cleveland and stock up on some crazy combinations instead.

This side dish would go great with almost any meat. The salt helps the cabbage break down and the wine and sugar really add to the natural sweetness of the onion. If you'd like a different color for presentation, try swapping julienned carrots for the red cabbage instead. I like the red cabbage because it gives the onions a really nice translucent purple color. Enjoy!

1 small head cabbage, sliced thin

1 medium sweet onion, sliced thin

1 c. shredded red cabbage

1/2 c. white wine

1 t. salt

1 t. celery seed

1 T. sugar

Put everything in the crock pot and stir together. Cook on low for 4 hours.

Crock Pot Apricot Pork Chops



It's time for some more of that other white meat. I've got my sides ready, all I needed to do was check the freezer for some meat. I have just over a pound of thin pork chops and now dinner is ready. No really, in less than 5 minutes, dinner will be set for tonight. I don't want to turn on the oven and I

don't even want to make any gravy, I just want something yummy with very little effort.

Sound good to you, too? Good. Enjoy!

1- 1.5 lb thin pork chops, frozen

1 10 oz. jar of apricot jam (ALL fruit, no fillers)

4 oz. white wine

Lay pork chops flat in crock pot. Cover meat with jam. Pour white wine around the edges, not on jam. Cook on low for 4 hours.

If you don't like pork, try this with chicken thighs instead. Cook for 6 hours on low.

Crock Pot Chimichurri Steak

The word "chimichurri" might make you think of that silly little ditty from Mary Poppin's chimney sweep friend, but I assure you, there is nothing dirty or British about this recipe (not that the two are synonymous!). I think of chimichurri sauce as an Argentinian version of pesto, but with parsley instead of basil. I love it as a marinade, but it can also be used as a garnish or a dipping sauce for pretty much any meat. I challenge you to try this on as many grilled meats as possible this summer and to find any single one that it doesn't complement.

But since I don't feel like firing up the grill and cinging my eyebrows, I'm going to cook my beef in the crock pot. Chimichurri is often served with steak, so I am using a flank steak and I sliced it into half inch sections before cooking it. I think this will help really get all the flavors into the steak. I marinated the meat overnight in the refrigerator, but that isn't necessary. I would recommend marinating it for at least four hours, just to give it enough time to fester.

I don't have enough fresh produce on hand to make this with the real ingredients, but if you do— use 1 c. fresh flat-leaf parsley and some fresh oregano, too. I assure you this will taste good with the dried stuff, but even more amazing with fresh herbs.

I'm serving my chimichurri steak with some steamed veggies (at least I know my kids will eat those things!), but you can also try roasting some potatoes with the meat or serving it on a nice bed of salad. Enjoy!

Meat: 2 lbs. beef (flank steak, skirt steak, London Broil, flat iron steak... if you don't love beef, use chicken)

Chimichurri sauce:

1/2 c. white wine

1/3. c. vegetable oil

1/4 c. red wine vinegar

2 lemons

3-4 cloves garlic, minced

4 T. parsley flakes

2 T. oregano flakes

1 T. red pepper flakes

1/2 t. salt

1/2 t. black pepper

Combine all seasonings, liquids and the juice of two lemons in a bowl and mix well. Put meat in a sealable bag and pour marinade on top of meat. Mash around and then let it sit for 4-24 hours in the refrigerator. When ready to start cooking, dump meat and marinade into crock pot and cook on low for 6-8

hours.

Crock Pot Chicken Cordon Bleu

After three days of amazing holiday weekend barbecues, I am ready for something without sauce, sides of beans or cool whip desserts. I have had the pleasure of attending festivities at friends' homes so I actually haven't had to do much cooking! My crock pot has been sitting pretty for a few days now and I will neglect it no longer— it's time for a new recipe. I've had some requests for more chicken recipes, so today I am presenting you with a classic favorite, plus an alternative way to do it.



Chicken Cordon Bleu is a popular dish, but I think it's more American than French cuisine. Stuffed meat isn't that new of a concept and there is nothing actually blue in this dish. From what I understand, Cordon Bleu actually means "blue ribbon" in French and is an award given to culinary masterpieces. Here in

the states, I advocate for using deli ham and swiss cheese in your chicken, but if you'd like to make it more exotic, feel free to try prosciutto and gruyere cheese for more bite.

You need to start by venting your frustrations on a piece of meat. Place each boneless/skinless chicken breast in a zipped plastic bag and go to town on it. Use a rolling pin, a mallet, a can of soup... anything that will apply weighted pressure. You

want the meat to be tenderized and spread thinner.

If you'd like to make this dairy-free/kosher/healthier, try using different filling in your meat. I suggest trying a combination of fresh spinach, sliced mushrooms and roasted garlic instead of ham and swiss in your chicken rolls. You can use all the same directions, just substitute your inner components. Feel free to experiment and find out what earns the "blue ribbon" in your kitchen. Enjoy!

4 boneless/skinless chicken breasts

1/4 lb. deli ham, sliced thin

1/4 lb. swiss cheese, sliced thin

4 t. dijon mustard

1 t. celery seed

1 T. dried parsley flakes

salt and pepper

1 c. white wine

Beat chicken into flat, thin pieces. Lay flat and smear with mustard. Layer one piece of cheese and one piece of ham, then start at end and begin rolling chicken. Place each roll seam side down in the crock pot. Sprinkle seasonings on chicken rolls, then pour wine into crock pot, but do not rinse the seasonings back off. Cook on low for 4 hours. Remove rolls from pot and let cool for a few minutes so that juices can settle. Serve hot.

Crock Pot Salmon- Crock for the Cure



This morning I am participating in the **Susan G. Komen's Race for the Cure**. It has been my privilege to support this cause and all the amazing women and men that are fighting cancer every day. We all know someone, have loved someone or have experienced this battle ourselves. We must provide courage and compassion to support each other and on a day like today we add enthusiasm and charisma as well. I am proud of my community for running (no pun intended) such an amazing event every year.

One of the goals of the I AM THE CURE campaign this year is to "start the fight by living right!" It only makes sense that I challenge myself today to make a healthy PINK meal. I think we'll call it Crock for the Cure. Maybe someday I'll run my own fundraiser along these lines, but for today, I'd like to provide you with an easy colorful recipe. Enjoy!

(to find a Race for the Cure in your area, visit <http://ww5.komen.org/findarace.aspx>)

4 salmon steaks (about 1-2 lbs of salmon; deboned, skin on)

1 red bell pepper, seeded and sliced thin

1 T. pink peppercorns

1 c. white wine

1 T. olive oil

2 T. fresh dill, chopped

1/2 t. salt

Start by coating crock pot with a non-stick spray. Place salmon steaks side by side in the crock pot. Drizzle with olive oil, peppercorns, salt and fresh dill. Scatter sliced red pepper on top. Pour wine around edges of fish, but don't rinse off the seasonings. Poach for 2 hours on high.

To continue the theme, mix 1 T. softened cream cheese into 1/2 c. cocktail sauce and serve with the fish. It will be pink and spicy and will complement the opaque color of the fish.