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LIVING

Taste The Best

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Let me see if I can find the words to describe my Crock-Pot. It's awesome. It rocks! It's "da bomb!"

In other words, I love it.

How can you not love an appliance that you load up with food, turn a simple switch and leave all day, only to come home hours later to an aroma that says, "Dinner is served"? It's that easy!

I'm apparently not alone in my love for this kitchen helper, be it a Crock-Pot, a slow cooker or any other description. Readers have been asking for recipes to put to good use, and several have told me they're anxiously awaiting the "Crock-Pot column."

The wait is over. Our friend, Druceil Henry of the Homesteads, kicks off this week's Crock-Pot recipes with an easy yet tasty pork shoulder recipe. Other slow cooker recipes have been gleaned from some favorite Web sites, including CrockeryKitchen, Tasty Crock-Pot Recipes, Southern U.S. Cuisine and The Rival Co., maker of the Crock-Pot.

You'll also find a fast and easy recipe from Judith Holden of Crossville. Her corn chowder is one of those delicious dishes you can prepare in a hurry with ingredients on hand.

Corn Chowder

5 slices thick bacon

1 medium onion

2 potatoes, diced

1/2 c. water

1 can creamed-style corn

2 c. milk

OR 1 can evaporated milk and 1 can water

salt and pepper, to taste

Fry bacon on low, turning often to crisp. Drain; set aside to crumble when cool. Pour out all but 2 tablespoons grease and cook onions until golden. (Do

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not get too hot, or the bacon residue will burn, and that will make the taste bitter.) Put potatoes and water in when onions are don, and cook until potatoes are done. Add creamed-style corn, milk or evaporated milk and water. Heat; do not boil. Place in bowls topped with crumbled bacon. Makes 4 servings.
From the kitchen of Judith Holden, Crossville

Smoked Picnic Shoulder

Up to 8 lb. picnic shoulder

10-12 whole cloves

1 small can pineapple slices

3/4-1 c. brown sugar

Trim off all visible fat from picnic shoulder. Place should in Crock-Pot, cut side up, with small slits in meat. Stud with whole cloves. Drain and reserve liquid from pineapples. Place pineapple slices on top and down side of shoulder, securing with toothpicks. Sprinkle brown sugar over top of shoulder. Pour pineapple juice over all. Place lid on Crock-Pot and cook on low for 10-15 hours.

Cook's notes: Have small ends of should cut off so it will fit into 3 1/2-quart Crock-Pot. Have the cut ends split and wrapped separately. Freeze and use for seasoning beans.

From the kitchen of Druceil Henry, The Homesteads

Seven Layer Casserole

1/2 lb. ground beef, browned and drained

2 T. bacon bits

1 small onion, chopped

15 oz. tomato sauce

1/2 c. water

1/2 tsp. chili powder

salt and pepper

2/3 c. long grain rice

8 oz. whole kernel corn, drained

1/2 c. chopped green bell pepper

Place beef in bottom of Crock-Pot. Top with bacon bits and onion. Combine tomato sauce, water, chili powder, salt and pepper. Pour half of the mixture over the ingredients in Crock-Pot. Sprinkle rice over top. Add in corn and green pepper. Pour remaining tomato mixture over top. Cover; cook on low for 5-6 hours or until rice is done.

From the kitchen of CrockeryKitchen

www.crockerykitchen.com

Sausage and Egg Casserole

12 beaten eggs

14 slices bread

2 1/4 c. milk

2 1/2 c. grated Cheddar or Monterey Jack cheese

1 lb. sausage, cooked and drained

1 tsp. salt

1 tsp. pepper

2 tsp. mustard (optional)

Grease sides of Crock-Pot (or spray with Pam). If desired, spread mustard on one side of the bread and cut bread into large squares. Make layers in the

Crock-Pot of bread, followed by sausage, followed by cheese, ending with a cheese layer. Beat together eggs, milk, salt and pepper. Pour over Crock-Pot mixture; cover and cook on low for 8-12 hours. Makes 8 servings.

From the kitchen of CrockeryKitchen

www.crockerykitchen.com

Crock-Pot Chicken Tortillas

meat from 1 whole chicken

1 can cream of chicken soup

1/2 c. green chili salsa

2 T. quick-cooking tapioca

1 medium onion, chopped

1 1/2 c. grated cheese, such as Monterey Jack

1 dozen corn tortillas

black olives

Tear chicken into bite-size pieces; mix with soup, chili, salsa and tapioca. Line bottom of Crock-Pot with 3 corn tortillas, torn into bite-size pieces. Add a third of the chicken mixture. Sprinkle with a third of the onion and a third of the grated cheese. Repeat layers of tortillas, topped with chicken mixture, onions and cheese. Cover and cook on low for 6-8 hours. Garnish with sliced black olives.

From the kitchen of Tasty Crock-Pot Recipes

www.tastycrockpotrecipes.net

Slow-Cooked Honey Chicken

1 (3 lb.) whole chicken, cut into pieces

1/4 c. butter, melted

1/2 c. honey

1/4 c. prepared mustard

1 tsp. salt

1 tsp. curry powder

Place chicken in slow cooker. Combine all remaining ingredients and pour over chicken. Cook for 4-6 hours on high or 6-8 hours on low.

From the kitchen of Tasty Crock-Pot Recipes

www.tastycrockpotrecipes.net

Lasagna

1 lb. ground beef

1 onion, chopped

1/8 tsp. garlic powder

2 (15 oz.) cans tomato sauce

1 (6 oz.) can tomato paste

1 1/2 tsp. salt

1 tsp. dried oregano

1 (12 oz.) carton cottage cheese

1/2 c. grated Parmesan cheese

12 oz. lasagna noodles, uncooked

12 oz. shredded Mozzarella cheese

Brown ground beef and onion in skillet. Add garlic powder, tomato sauce, tomato paste, salt and oregano. Cook long enough to get it warm. Spoon a layer of meat sauce onto the bottom of the slow cooker/Crock-Pot. Add a double layer of uncooked lasagna noodles (break to fit) and top with cheeses.

Repeat with sauce, noodles and cheeses until all are used up. Cover and cook on low for 6-8 hours. Makes 10 servings.

From the kitchen of Southern U.S. Cuisine

www.southernfood.about.com

Fuss-Free Swiss Steak

2 T. flour

2 (15 oz.) cans diced tomatoes

1 tsp. celery seed

2 T. tomato paste

1 T. prepared mustard

1 T. Worcestershire sauce

1 T. brown sugar

3 ribs celery, thinly sliced

1-2 carrots, sliced 1/4-inch thick

1 small onion, chopped

OR 1 T. minced dried onion

1-1 1/2 pounds round steak, 1/2-inch thick, cut in serving-size pieces

Measure flour into a Reynolds cooking bag. Add tomatoes, celery seed, tomato paste, mustard, Worcestershire sauce and brown sugar. Squeeze bag (carefully hold the top to keep it from spilling) to mix all ingredients. Add vegetables and steak. Secure top of bag with tie; place in Crock-Pot. Cut several small vents in the top to allow steam to escape. Cover and cook on low for 7-9 hours, then pour into a serving bowl. Serve with mashed potatoes and green beans. Makes 4-6 servings.

From the kitchen of Southern U.S. Cuisine

www.southernfood.about.com

Carolina Barbecued Pork

2 onions, quartered

2 T. brown sugar

1 T. paprika

2 tsp. salt

1/2 tsp. pepper

1 (4-6 lb.) boneless pork butt or shoulder roast

2/3 c. cider vinegar

4 tsp. Worcestershire sauce

1 tsp. red pepper flakes

1 1/2 tsp. sugar

1/2 tsp. dry mustard

1/2 tsp. garlic salt

1/4 tsp. cayenne pepper

hamburger buns

cole slaw (optional)

Place onions in stoneware. Combine brown sugar, paprika, salt and pepper; rub over roast. Place roast over onions. Combine vinegar, Worcestershire sauce, red pepper flakes, sugar, mustard, garlic salt and cayenne stir to mix well. Drizzle a fourth of vinegar mixture over roast. Cover and refrigerate remaining vinegar mixture. Cover cook on low 10-12 hours or on high 5-6 hours. Remove meat and onions and drain. Chop or shred meat and chop onions. Serve meat and onions on buns. If desired, top sandwiches with cole slaw. Pass remaining vinegar mixture to drizzle over sandwiches.

From the kitchen of The Rival Co.
www.crock-pot.com

Chicken with 40 Cloves Garlic

2 sprigs fresh thyme
2 sprigs fresh rosemary
2 sprigs fresh sage
2 springs fresh Italian parsley
40 cloves garlic, unpeeled
1 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. ground black pepper
4 lb. whole chicken
2 stalks celery, sliced
1 loaf French bread, sliced

Place 1 sprig thyme, rosemary, sage and parsley in chicken cavity. Place celery in stoneware. Put chicken on top of celery. Add garlic around chicken. Chop remaining herbs sprinkle herbs, salt and pepper over chicken. Cover cook on low 8-10 hours or on high 4-6 hours. To serve, place chicken, garlic and celery on serving platter. Squeeze roasted garlic out of skins onto toasted French bread slices and spread with knife.

From the kitchen of The Rival Co.
www.crock-pot.com

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