



The Slow Cooker Corner

Nothing is quite so satisfying after a hard day's work as a hot soothing meal at home! The problem is most of us don't have the time to prepare these time consuming meals for our busy families when we are *arriving* home at dinnertime. Enter our hero—the crock-pot or slow cooker! This little kitchen appliance is worth its weight in gold. With only about five minutes of effort in the morning or the night before, you can produce sumptuous meals that look like you labored for hours. Here are a few favorite recipes to get you started.

Slow Simmered Beef Stew

(Ready in about 8 hours)

- 1 ½ cups fresh baby carrots
- 2 medium potatoes, peeled, cut into small pieces
- 1 small onion, diced
- 1-2 stalks celery, cut into small pieces
- 1 package beef stew seasoning
- 1 lb. beef stew meat (to reduce fat content, use round steak cut into cubes)
- 1 cup water
- 1 cup frozen corn (optional)
- 1 cup green beans (optional)

In 3½ to 4-quart slow cooker, layer carrots, potatoes, onion and celery. Place stew seasoning on waxed paper or in plastic bag. Add beef; coat with seasoning. Add beef to slow cooker; sprinkle with any remaining seasoning. Add water. Layer frozen corn and green beans on top.

Add salad and hot bread to round out your meal.

Turkey and stuffing

(Ready in about 7 hours, 20 minutes)

- ¼ chopped onion
- 1 celery stalk, diced
- 2-2½ lbs. boneless skinless turkey breast half
- 2 (12-oz.) jars turkey gravy (to lower fat, use low fat or fat free gravy)
- ¼ cup apple juice
- 1 (6-oz.) package stuffing mix

Spray 3½ -4-quart slow cooker with nonstick cooking spray. Place the onion and celery in the bottom of the slow cooker. Top with turkey breast half. Pour 1 jar of gravy and apple juice over top. Top with dry stuffing. Cover, cook on low setting for 6-7 hours.

About 15 minutes before serving, remove turkey from slow cooker; place on cutting board. Stir stuffing and cooking juices until mixed. Cover; let stand 10 minutes. Heat remaining jar of gravy in small saucepan. Cut turkey into slices. Serve turkey and stuffing with gravy. Serve with green beans, sweet potatoes and cranberry relish to round out your meal.

Slow-Cooked Minestrone

- 2 medium carrots cut into small slices
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 1 stalk celery, coarsely chopped
- 1 garlic clove, minced or 1 tsp. prepared minced garlic
- 1 (14-oz.) can chicken broth
- 2 (15-oz.) cans kidney beans, drained, rinsed
- 1 (15-oz.) can Italian-seasoned diced stewed tomatoes, undrained
- ½ teaspoon of salt (optional, to taste)
- ? teaspoon of black pepper
- 1 cup frozen cut leaf spinach, thawed
- 1½ cups cooked pasta

In a 3½ to 4-quart slow cooker, combine all ingredients except spinach and spaghetti; mix well. Cover; cook on low setting for 7-9 hours. About 5 minutes before serving, stir thawed spinach and pasta into soup. Increase heat setting to high, cover and cook until pasta is heated through. Serve with crisp salad or broccoli slaw and hot bread sticks to round out your meal.