

# 2023 NEW CROCK-POT RECIPES

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## APPETIZER:

### Slow-Cooker Spiced Mix Nuts

What slow cookers do for soups and stews, they do for mixed nuts too. The scent of the spices is delightful, and the nuts are simply delicious.

1 large egg white  
2 tsp. vanilla extract  
1 cup packed brown sugar  
4 tsp. ground cinnamon  
1 tsp. ground ginger  
1 tsp. ground nutmeg  
1 tsp. salt  
2 Tbsp. water  
1 cup un-blanched almonds  
1 cup pecans halves  
1 cup shelled walnuts  
1 cup un-salted cashews  
1 cup sugar

In a large bowl, whisk egg white and vanilla until blended, stir in nuts. In a small bowl, mix sugars, spices and salt. Add to nut mixture and toss to coat.

Transfer to a greased 3-qt. slow cooker. Cook, covered, on high 1 ½ hours, stirring every 15 minutes. Gradually stir in water. Cook, covered on low 20 minutes. Carefully spread onto waxed paper and/or parchment paper; cool completely. Store in airtight container up to 1 week; Makes approx. six cups of nuts.

## **SOUPS:**

### **Slow-Cooked Cheddar Soup served in Pretzel Bun Bowls**

This would be a great soup to serve on a chilly afternoon with a group of ladies, writers, card players or any other such gathering.

4 cups chicken stock  
2 cups chopped sweet onion (from one large onion)  
½ cup peeled and chopped carrot  
½ cup peeled and chopped celery  
½ cup red bell pepper (from one small red pepper)  
¼ cup unsalted butter  
1½ tsp. kosher salt  
½ tsp. black pepper  
¼ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes  
12 oz. sharp Cheddar Cheese, shredded  
1 8-oz. pkg. cream cheese  
1¼ cups whole milk – divided  
¼ cup cornstarch  
8 soft Pretzel buns,  
Crumbled cooked bacon and sliced scallions – for garnish

Place stock, onion, carrot, celery, bell pepper, butter, salt, black pepper, and crushed red pepper in a 6-quart slow cooker. Cover and cook on HIGH until vegetables are tender, about 3 hours.

Whisk Cheddar cheese, cream cheese, and 1 cup of the milk into mixture in slow cooker. Cover and cook on HIGH until cheese is melted and smooth, whisking occasionally, about 30 minutes.

Whisk together cornstarch and remaining ¼ cup milk in a small bowl until smooth. Whisk into soup in slow cooker. Cover and cook on HIGH, whisking occasionally, until thickened, about 15 minutes.

Slice ½ inch from the top of each pretzel bun using a serrated knife. Scoop out centers of bun bottoms, leaving a ¼-inch thick shell. Ladle soup evenly into bun bottoms, garnish with bacon and scallions. Serve alongside bun tops. Serves 8

### **Slow-Cooker Potato-Leek Soup**

Potato-Leek soup is the workhorse of the French kitchen and has sustained many a soul on a cold night. You really don't have to worry about proportions, though I did use a leek for every potato. It tastes just as good made with water as with broth. You just cook the vegetables, puree, and *voilà!* Your soup is prepared for dinner.

4 medium-size leeks (white part only), washed well and thinly sliced (about 4 cups)

4 medium-size to large russet potatoes, peeled and diced

4 to 6 cups water or vegetable or chicken broth

Salt to taste

2 tablespoons unsalted butter

French bread for serving

Put the leeks and potatoes in the slow cooker. Add enough of the water or broth to just cover them. Cover and cook on LOW until the potatoes are tender, 5 to 7 hours.

Puree the soup with a handheld immersion blender or transfer to a food processor or blender and puree in batches. Add the salt and butter, swirling until it is melted. Ladle the hot soup into bowls and serve immediately with French bread. Serves 6

### **Slow-Cooker Zucchini Bisque**

Zucchini is a favorite vegetable that becomes very soft with slow cooking. It makes a delightful light soup. The bit of rice added is for body, it will be pureed so your diners will never know it is in the mix. Note: If you can find organic half-and-half, do use it: the soup is so simple that the flavor of the fresh cream will really come through.

6 tablespoons (3/4 stick) unsalted butter, cut into 3 or 4 pieces  
1 large yellow onion, chopped  
½ teaspoon curry powder  
1½ pounds fresh Zucchini, ends removed, and cut into chunks  
2 heaping tablespoons white basmati rice or long-grain white rice  
1 tablespoon chopped, fresh basil  
3 cups chicken or vegetable broth  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste  
1 cup half-and-half  
Croutons (optional) for serving

Put the butter, onion, curry powder and zucchini in the slow cooker, cover and cook on HIGH to sweat the vegetables for 30 minutes. After 30 minutes, add the rice, basil, and broth, cover, and cook on LOW for 5 to 6 hours.

Puree with a handheld immersion blender or transfer to a food processor or blender and puree in batches. Season with salt and pepper; Stir in the half-and-half, cover, and continue to cook on LOW until heated through, 20 minutes; **do not boil**. Ladle the hot soup into bowls and garnish with croutons, if desired.  
Serves 4

### **Slow-Cooker U. S. Senate Bean Soup**

If you have ever eaten a meal in the Senate Dining Room, you probably have had this soup. Working 17 years up on Capitol Hill, this was a lunch staple for me. I hope you get to make this tremendous soup.

1 pound dried navy beans, picked over, soaked in water to cover overnight and drained  
1 large ham hock  
10 cups water  
2 medium-size yellow onions, minced  
2 medium-sized baking potatoes, peeled and cubed  
6 ribs celery, including some leaves, peeled and finely chopped  
1/3 cup chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper  
Salt to taste

Put the drained beans and ham hock in the slow cooker and cover with fresh cold water. Cover and cook on HIGH for 1 hour.

Draining care not to splash yourself with the hot water. Now add the 10 cups of water. Add the onions, potatoes, celery, and half the parsley. Cover, turn the cooker to LOW, and cook for 8 to 10 hours.

Stir in the remaining parsley and pepper, season with salt, cover and continue to cook on LOW 15 minutes longer.

Remove the ham hock, returning any bits of meat left on the bone to the soup; discard the bone. Ladle into soup bowls and serve hot with garlic bread. Serves 6

### **Southwestern Pork and Squash Soup**

This is a great dish because you can prep most of the dish ahead of time and freeze it. Thaw overnight in the refrigerator before use. All you need do is to add the chicken broth and the diced tomatoes to the slow cooker along with the defrosted prep and you have dinner in 4-5 hours.

1 medium butternut squash, peeled and cubed  
1 lb. pork tenderloin, cut into 1-inch cubes  
1 Tbsp. chili powder  
1 tsp. ground cumin  
1 tsp. dried oregano  
½ tsp. pepper  
¼ tsp. salt  
2 medium carrots, peeled and sliced  
1 medium onion, chopped  
1 cup reduced-sodium chicken broth  
1 can (14 ½ oz.) diced tomatoes with mild green chilies, undrained

Freezer Method:

In a 1-gallon re-sealable freezer bag or airtight freezer container, layer squash, pork, seasonings, carrots and onion. Seal and freeze: It can be kept in the freezer for up to six months. Remove from freezer and thaw over night in the refrigerator. Once defrosted, add to slow cooker, along with the chicken broth and the diced tomatoes. Cook on LOW setting for 4-5 hours or until the meat is tender.

Other option is to just add everything to the slow cooker and cook on LOW setting for 4-5 hours or until the meat is tender. Serves 6

## **ENTREES:**

### **Slow-Cooker Salsa Chicken**

Here's a dish to spice up your slow cooker. It takes only six ingredients to make this tender, tangy chicken that you'll want to eat all week long.

2 lbs. boneless, skinless chicken thighs

1 tsp. kosher salt

½ tsp. black pepper

2 (16-oz.) container refrigerated medium salsa

¼ cup chopped fresh oregano

8 cups hot cooked yellow rice (from 2 15.oz. packages such as Mahatma Yellow Seasoned Rice)

Chopped fresh cilantro and lime wedges, for serving

Place chicken in a 6-quart slow cooker and sprinkle evenly with salt and pepper. Add salsa and oregano. Cover and cook on HIGH until a thermometer inserted into the thickest portion of thighs registers 156-degrees, about 2 hours. Turn off slow cooker. Transfer chicken to a large heatproof bowl, and cool 10 minutes.

Shred meat into bite-size pieces. Add liquid in slow cooker to chicken, and toss to coat. Serve over hot rice. Garnish with fresh cilantro, and serve with lime wedges. Serves 8

## **Filipino-Style Slow-Cooker Chicken Adobo**

Here's an interesting dish with lots of flavor. The use of microwave-ready rice keeps this a one-pot dish. Enjoy!

2 tbsp. vegetable oil  
2 lbs. boneless, skinless chicken thighs  
1/3 cup reduced-sodium soy sauce  
½ cup distilled white vinegar  
1 head garlic, smashed and unpeeled  
1 onion, quartered  
2 dried bay leaves  
1 tsp. whole black peppercorns  
2 (8.8 oz.)bags of Natures Promise Jasmine Rice  
Sliced green onions, for severing – optional

In a slow-cooker that has a sauté setting or a 12-inch skillet on medium-high, heat the oil. Season all the chicken thighs with salt and pepper. Add chicken and cook 3-4 minutes, per side, until golden (chicken will not be cooked through). Transfer to a plate.

To a 6-quart slow-cooker, add the soy sauce, vinegar, garlic, onion, bay leaves, and peppercorns. Stir until combined. Add seared chicken thighs. Cover and cook on LOW 5½ to 6 hours, until tender.

To serve, microwave the rice according to package directions. Remove the bay leaves, and garlic from chicken mixture and discard. Serve chicken over rice and drizzle with sauce from slow cooker. Garnish with sliced green onion, if desired.  
Serves 6

## **Slow-Cooker Vegetarian Chili Mac and Cheese**

For those cold winter evenings, here's a meal that sticks to your ribs and is full of flavor. This is easy to fix and serves a lot.

1 (16. oz.) package frozen chopped onions and peppers, thawed  
1 (15.5 oz.) can dark kidney beans, drained and rinsed  
1 (15.5 oz.) can low-sodium black beans, drained and rinsed  
2 (10 oz.) cans diced tomatoes with mild green chilies  
½ of an 8 oz. package of reduced-fat cream cheese  
1 tsp. sweet paprika  
2 cups low-sodium vegetable broth  
12 oz. dry elbow pasta  
2 cups shredded Cheddar cheese, divided  
Sour cream and chopped green onion, for garnish

To a 5-quart slow-cooker, add the onions and peppers, beans, diced tomatoes with chilies, cream cheese, paprika and broth. Season with salt and pepper; stir to combine. Cover and cook on HIGH for 3 hours, or LOW for 6 hours. *Note: If you do not like too much spice, use 2 cans of either just diced tomatoes or diced tomatoes with garlic and basil instead of the ones with chilies.*

When ready to serve, stir in the dry elbow pasta and cook on HIGH for 30 minutes until pasta is fully cooked, stirring halfway through. Stir in the half the cheese and let it melt. Garnish with the sour cream and green onions, and additional cheese to serve. Serves 6

### **Sweet Breakfast Grits**

Cornmeal grits are fantastic with apples, pears, peaches, and all tart berries from raspberries to cranberries. As a cooked mush, it is good sweetened with honey, maple syrup, or molasses. I think cornmeal grits goes with just about everything, except, chocolate.

½ cup corn grits, stone-ground if possible  
2 cups water  
Pinch of salt  
3 tablespoons honey or pure maple syrup  
Sliced fruit or berries for serving



Combine the grits, water, and salt in the small, round slow cooker. Cover and cook on LOW for 7 to 9 hours, or overnight. Stir the grits a few times during cooking with whisk and stir in the honey just before serving.

Stir well and scoop into bowls with an oversized spoon. Serve with milk and/or  $\frac{1}{2}$  &  $\frac{1}{2}$ , sliced fruit or berries. Serves 2

## **SIDE DISHES:**

### **Soy-Sake Asparagus**

Fresh asparagus is one of the glories of springtime; the season runs from mid-February through June. Here's a way to enjoy it that goes much beyond steaming in the flavor department. If you can find them, buy Japanese sesame seeds; they are usually sold in a tall plastic cylinder and come conveniently already toasted. Light brown in color and larger; they are more flavorful than the usual kind. If you have a spare moment, re-toasting them in a small skillet over medium heat for a couple minutes will intensify the flavor even more.

1  $\frac{1}{4}$  to 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  pounds medium to thick asparagus  
1 tbsp. olive oil  
1 tbsp. sake  
1 tsp. soy sauce  
Pinch of brown sugar  
Pinch of salt  
1 to 2 tsp. toasted sesame seeds (optional) for garnish

Wash and drain the asparagus. Hold a spear in both hands and bend the spear at the stem end until the end snaps off. What I usually do instead of doing this to each spear, is to line them up next to each other and cut the bottoms off where the first spear broke. Discard the stem ends. Place the asparagus in a slow cooker, drizzle in the olive oil, sake and soy sauce. Sprinkle with the brown sugar and salt. Using your hands, gently toss the spears to coat them with the seasonings. Cover and cook on HIGH until tender when pierced with a sharp knife, 1 $\frac{1}{4}$  to 1 $\frac{1}{2}$  hours.

Use a pair of tongs to place the spears on a serving platter. Pour the liquid from the crock over the asparagus. Sprinkle with the toasted sesame seeds before serving. Serves 4 to 5

### **Slow-Cooker Candied Yams**

This side dish won't compete for limited oven space and will fill the house with great aromas.

Cooking spray  
3 lbs. medium yams or sweet potatoes  
3 tbsp. cornstarch  
1¼ cups freshly squeezed orange juice  
1 cup packed brown sugar  
½ tsp. cinnamon  
½ tsp. ground ginger  
4 tbsp. unsalted butter, sliced

Lightly coat the inside of a 6-quart slow cooker with the cooking spray. Peel the yams or sweet potatoes. Halve each potato lengthwise and cut into 1-inch pieces. Place in slow cooker and season with salt and pepper.

In a medium bowl, whisk together the cornstarch and orange juice until smooth. Add the brown sugar, cinnamon, and ginger and mix until combined. Pour this over the yams and mix to coat. Top with the sliced butter. Cover and cook on HIGH for 3 hours or LOW for 5-6 hours, stirring halfway through. Serve Warm. Serves 8

### **Parmesan Risotto**

This simple risotto is creamy and comforting. Try it with a nice roasted chicken.

¼ cup olive oil  
2 medium-sized shallots, minced  
¼ cup dry white wine  
1¼ cups Arborio rice  
3 ¼ cups chicken broth  
½ tsp. salt  
¾ cups freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese

In a small skillet over medium heat, warm the oil. Cook the shallots until softened, 3 to 4 minutes; do not brown. Add the wine and cook, stirring for a minute or so. Add the rice and cook, stirring, until it turns from translucent to opaque (do not brown), about 2 minutes. Remove from the heat and scrape using a heat-proof spatula into the slow cooker. Add the broth and salt. Cover and cook on HIGH until all the liquid is absorbed, but the rice is still moist, 2 to 2½ hours. The risotto should be only a bit liquidy, and the rice should be *al dente*, tender with just a touch of firmness.

Stir in the ½ cup of the cheese and pass the remainder for sprinkling. Serve immediately, spooned into bowls. Risotto will keep on the KEEP WARM setting for an hour or so. Serves 3 to 4

### **Orange Black Beans with Cumin**

Here is a fabulous recipe for a tasty and healthy side dish. Canned black beans are incredibly versatile and, since they are also easy to digest, should be a regular part of every bean lover's diet.

Two 15-ounce cans black beans, rinsed and drained  
2 tbsp. firmly packed light or dark brown sugar  
1 medium-sized shallot, minced  
1 rib celery, peeled and minced  
½ cup orange juice  
½ cup chicken broth  
½ tsp. ground cumin  
Pinch of ground cinnamon or cardamom  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

For Serving:

Hot cooked white rice

¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro leaves

½ cup chopped fresh tomatoes

Combine the beans, brown sugar, shallot, celery, orange juice, broth, cumin and cinnamon in the slow cooker. Cover and cook on HIGH for about 1½ hours. Season with salt and pepper and serve hot ladled over rice and garnished with the cilantro and tomatoes. Serves 2 to 4

## **DESSERT:**

### **Jasmine Rice Pudding with Coconut Milk**

Fragrant jasmine rice pairs naturally with coconut; it seems to accentuate the aroma of the nut. Remember to stir gently so as not to make mush out of the delicate cooked rice. The pudding will thicken considerably as it cools. Serve with sliced fresh mangoes or peaches. Whipped cream or a pool of heavy cream is optional and very decadent.

¾ cup jasmine rice

One 14-ounce can of unsweetened coconut milk

1 quart half-and-half

½ cup sugar

2 tsps. Vanilla extract

1 tsp. coconut extract

1 to 2 ripe mangoes or peaches (optional), peeled pitted and chopped (1 to 2 cups)

Whipped cream or heavy cream (optional) for serving

Coat the slow-cooker with butter-flavored nonstick cooking spray. Combine the rice and coconut milk in the cooker.

In a large heavy saucepan over medium-high heat, combine the half-and-half and sugar; Heat until bubbles appear around the edges to dissolve the sugar. Pour the

hot cream into the cooker and stir with a whisk. Cover and cook on LOW until thick, about 3 hours. While cooking, the milk will be gently bubbling.

Gently stir in the extracts. Turn off the cooker and let the pudding cool, partially covered, for at least 30 minutes. Fold in the mangoes or peaches, if using. Serve warm, at room temperature, or cold, with the cream, if desired.