

# **SIMPLE SOUPS AND STEWS FROM YOUR SLOW COOKER**

*Basics for Beginners*

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**Mara Michaels**

**Carolyn Stone**

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## **WHAT'S IN THIS GUIDE**

Cooking with a slow cooker is a great way to feed the whole family nutritiously yet inexpensively, using a great number of ingredients you probably already have on hand at home in your pantry or freezer. There is nothing quite like a hearty soup or stew on a cold winter's day, or any time you want filling fare for your family.

In this guide, the authors give you 25 handy soup and stew recipes that will have even the fussiest eaters in your family asking for more. From meaty meals to meatless recipes, you will discover some delicious one-pot meals slow-cooked to perfection in your slow cooker. Assemble your ingredients, set your slow cooker, and come home to terrific home-cooked meals that will tantalize your tastebuds for pennies on the dollar compared with eating out or takeaway.

Try Pizza Soup with Italian Sausage, Turkey and Vegetable Stew with Herb Dumplings, Chunky Chili, Slow Cooker Chicken Casserole, Vegetarian Soup Medley, and 20 other hearty recipes you can make as-is, or adapt to your family's tastes and budget.

If you are looking for ways to save time in the kitchen and stretch your food budget even further, try these recipes today, and hear all the compliments on your cooking tonight.

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## **ABOUT THE AUTHORS**

Mara Michaels and Carolyn Stone are the authors of more than 20 cooking and entertaining guides designed to help you live better for less.

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## INTRODUCTION

Cooking with a slow cooker is one of the easiest ways to eat well no matter how busy you are. All you have to do is prepare the ingredients in the morning, or perhaps the night before and let your slow cooker do the rest. The slow cooking process will combine all the flavors to create a thick, rich soup or stew that you and your family will all love.

Best of all, you won't be losing any nutrition from the foods you prepare in the slow cooker. All the goodness will be right in the broth or gravy.

In this guide we have tried to give you a variety of soups and stews using meat, poultry, and even seafood and fish. We have also included some vegetarian recipes, and of course, you might find that you can adapt many of these recipes through using vegetable broth, and perhaps tofu or Quorn (like chicken in its consistency) in these recipes.

A slow cooker is one of the best ways to come home to a flavorful, healthy and nutritious meal. All it takes is a bit of forward planning and a few last minute touches in the final 30 minutes of slow cooking time, and you can be sure the whole family will be asking for seconds.

Let's start with a simple but delicious chicken soup recipe and see what other treats your slow cooker has in store for you.

## **CHICKEN SOUP WITH ALMONDS AND WILD RICE**

2 T butter  
1/2 C dry wild rice  
6 C fat free low sodium chicken broth  
1/2 C onion, minced  
1/2 C celery, chopped  
2 C chicken, cooked and chopped  
1/2 C slivered almonds, toasted

Place the butter into a small skillet over medium heat.  
Allow the butter to melt completely then add the dry rice.  
Reduce the heat to low and sauté the rice, stirring occasionally, for 10 minutes.  
Remove the rice from the skillet and place in the slow cooker.  
Pour in the chicken broth and stir.  
Add the onion and celery and stir to combine well.  
Set the heat setting to low, cover the slow cooker and cook 4 hours.  
Add the chicken and continue cooking on low for 1 hour.  
Ladle the soup into bowls and top with the slivered almonds.

Serving Size: 8

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This soup is very low in fat due to the fat free chicken broth. Regular chicken broth can be added if you prefer. Chopped winter squash or carrots are also a great addition to the soup.

## CHICKEN SOUP ORIENTALE

- 1 lb chicken thighs, boneless and skinless
- 1 (16 oz) pkg. baby carrots cut in half
- 1 stalk celery, chopped
- 1 (8 oz) can bamboo shoots, sliced and drained
- 1 (8 oz) can water chestnuts, sliced and drained
- 1 (3 oz) pkg. oriental flavored noodle soup mix, seasoning packet and noodles
- 1 (32 oz) can chicken broth
- 1 C frozen sugar snap peas, thawed
- 2 green onions, chopped

Place the chicken thighs into the bottom of your slow cooker.

Layer the carrots, celery, bamboo shoots and water chestnuts in that order.

Sprinkle the oriental seasoning packet from the noodle soup.

Pour in the broth but do not stir.

Cover and cook on low temperature for 7 to 8 hours.

Remove the chicken from the slow cooker and carefully shred it with two forks.

Return the chicken to the slow cooker and stir to combine.

Break the noodles from the soup mix into the mixture.

Add the snap peas, cover, and continue cooking an additional 15 minutes or until the noodles are tender.

Sprinkle in the green onion just before serving.

Serving Size: 6

3/4 C of regular sweet peas can be used in place the sugar snap peas. Using chicken thighs is important when it comes to cooking in a slow cooker. They keep their shape better and remain moist during the long cooking time. They also enhance the flavor of the soup better than chicken breasts.

## **SLOW COOKER CHICKEN CASSEROLE**

3 C butternut squash, peeled and cubed  
1 (8 oz) pkg. fresh mushroom slices  
1 C celery, chopped  
1 small onion, chopped  
1 garlic clove, minced  
6 chicken thighs, boneless and skinless, halved  
1 C wild rice  
4 C chicken broth  
1 t thyme  
1 t salt  
1/4 t pepper  
1/2 C whipping cream  
3 T cornstarch

Place the squash, mushroom slices, celery, onion and garlic into the slow cooker.

Lay the chicken thighs on top.

Next add in the uncooked rice.

Pour in the broth.

Add the thyme, salt and pepper being sure to stir well to incorporate all the ingredients together.

Cover and cook on low 6 hours.

Pour the whipping cream into a small bowl.

Whisk in the cornstarch until smooth.

Stir the cornstarch mixture into the slow cooker.

Place the heat on high, cover and continue cooking an additional 30 minutes or until the mixture is the desired thickness.

Serving Size: 6

Boneless chicken thighs can be hard to find in some areas. If you are having trouble finding them, you can use thighs with the bone in. First, remove the skin before placing them into the slow cooker.

Second, before adding the whipping cream mixture, remove the thighs and shred the meat off the bone using 2 forks.

For a real treat, you can add dumplings to this recipe by using a roll of pop and fresh biscuits. About 30 minutes before the recipe is going to be finished, pop the roll of dough and separate the biscuits. Lay them on top of the casserole and let them cook in the heat from the casserole.

## **CHICKEN STEW WITH MUSHROOMS**

1 (10 3/4 oz) can cream of mushroom soup  
1/4 C of water  
4 chicken breast halves, boneless and skinless cut into cubes  
1/2 t salt  
1/4 t pepper  
1/2 lb fresh mushrooms, sliced  
1 C fresh baby carrots  
2 stalks of celery, chopped  
1/2 t garlic powder

Place the soup into the slow cooker.

Add the water and stir to combine well.

Salt and pepper the chicken cubes then add them to the slow cooker.

Place the mushrooms, carrots and celery into the mixture.

Sprinkle in the garlic powder and stir to incorporate all the flavors together.

Cover and cook on the low temperature setting 7 hours.

Serving Size: 4

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Any type of mushrooms can be used as long as they are fresh, not canned. Try white mushrooms and Portobello mushrooms together for added flavor. If you really like mushrooms, double the amount and 3 tablespoons of cornstarch to make the soup thicker and offset the liquid from the mushrooms. No extra cooking time will be needed. This will also work well with extra firm tofu instead of the chicken, for a vegetarian version.

## **CHICKEN SOUP WITH PEARL BARLEY**

1/2 lb pearl barley  
1 small stewing chicken  
2 carrots, chunked  
2 stalks celery, sliced  
2 T parsley, chopped  
Water to fill the slow cooker

Place the barley in the slow cooker.

Add the stewing chicken.

Place the carrots and celery on top of the chicken.

Sprinkle the parsley over the top of the other ingredients.

Cover just over the top of the ingredients with water.

Cover the slow cooker and cook on low 5 hours,

Remove the chicken from the slow cooker.

Use two forks to remove the chicken meat from the bones.

Discard the bones and any skin.

Return to the chicken meat to the slow cooker.

Recover and continue cooking on low 1 hour or until the barley is soft or to your desired texture.

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Serving Size: 6

Pearl barley is processed by removing the hull and bran. This type of barley is used more often in cooking because it cooks much faster than regular barley. This type of barley can be found in most supermarkets in the dried peas and beans section, or near the rice.

## **TURKEY AND VEGETABLE STEW WITH HERB DUMPLINGS**

1 turkey carcass, quartered  
8 C water  
4 chicken bouillon cubes  
1 (10 oz) can of diced tomatoes  
1 celery stalk, diced  
1 carrot, diced  
1 turnip, peeled and diced  
1 onion, diced  
4 t dried parsley, divided  
1 bay leaf  
1 1/2 C flour  
2 t baking powder  
3/4 t salt  
1/2 t dried rosemary  
3 T solid shortening  
3/4 C milk

Place the turkey carcass into the slow cooker.

Pour the water into the slow cooker over the turkey.

Add the bouillon cubes.

Place the diced tomatoes, celery, carrot, turnip and onion into the slow cooker.

Sprinkle in 2 t of the dried parsley.

Place the bay leaf into the mixture.

Cover and cook on the low temperature setting 7 hours.

Remove the cover and take the turkey carcass out of the soup.

Remove the meat from the bones and return the meat to the slow cooker.

Place the flour, baking powder, salt rosemary and remaining parsley into a bowl.

Cut the shortening into the dry ingredients with a pastry cutter until the mixture becomes coarse.

Add enough of the milk to the flour mixture to moisten it but leaving the mixture thick enough to make mounds on the end of a spoon.

Drop the mixture by spoonfuls into the slow cooker.

Cover, place the temperature setting on high and cook for 20 without lifting the lid.

Serving Size: 8

This is a great way to get the most out of your Thanksgiving turkey once you have carved most of what your family wants to eat in slices. Waste not, want not, when it comes to all the meat that will usually still be on the bone, and the dark meat that many people do not eat. This is also a way to get rid of any turkey meat that people complain is too dry.

The vegetable can make even a small turkey stretch to many more meals, thanks to this great

recipe.

When adding the milk to the flour mixture, just add a little bit at a time. This will help in making sure the dry ingredients are moistened but still remain thick.

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## **SWEET AND SOUR BEEF**

1 1/2 lb beef for stew

1 (16 oz) pkg. frozen stew vegetables (turnips, parsnips, carrots and so on)

2 (10 3/4 oz) cans beef and mushroom soup, low sodium if possible

1/2 C Oriental sweet and sour sauce

1/2 C water

Trim the stew meat and cut into 1 1/2 inch pieces.

Place the meat into the bottom of the slow cooker.

Place the vegetables in the slow cooker with the meat.

Stir in the soup and sweet and sour sauce.

Pour in the water and mix together to combine.

Cover and cook on low 10 hours or high 5 hours.

Serving Size: 6

Use 1 can of golden mushroom soup in place of 1 can of the beef and mushroom soup for a lighter, less intense flavor. If you like your meal with more of a soup-like consistency, add 1/2 C of low sodium beef broth along with the water. Serve with white or brown rice and a handful of Asian crispy noodles sprinkled on top.

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## **MEXICAN BEEF SOUP**

1 lb extra lean ground beef  
4 C water  
1 lb potatoes, peeled and chopped  
1 medium onion, chopped  
2 small carrots, chopped  
1 12 ounce can of black beans, drained  
1 envelope dry onion soup mix  
1 (16 oz) jar chunky salsa

Place the meat in a skillet and heat over a medium flame.

Cook the meat 12 minutes or until completely browned.

Drain the meat well in a colander which you have lined with a paper towel, and pat the meat dry.

Pour all of the water into the slow cooker.

Add the ground beef, potatoes, onion and carrots.

Pour in the drained beans.

Sprinkle the dry onion soup mix in with the vegetables and meat.

Blend in the salsa and stir well, making sure that all the ingredients are incorporated together.

Cover and cook on low for 8 hours.

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Serving Size: 8

If you aren't partial to ground beef, ground turkey or pork will also work. Stew meat cut into small chunks and half the water also makes this into a great stew.

## **THICKENED MEATBALL SOUP**

1 pkg. fresh baby carrots  
1 lb small red potatoes, quartered  
1 large green pepper, cut into wedges  
1 onion, cut into wedges  
1 (18 oz) pkg. frozen cooked meatballs  
1 (12 oz) jar low sodium beef gravy  
1 (14.5 oz) can diced tomatoes  
1/4 t pepper

Lay the carrots in the slow cooker.

Place the potatoes on top of the carrots.

Add the pepper wedges over the top of the carrots.

Layer the onion wedges over the mushrooms.

Add the meatballs.

Pour the jar of gravy over the top.

Add the tomatoes, including the juice.

Sprinkle in the pepper.

Be sure not to stir the soup and disturb the ingredients.

Cover the slow cooker and cook on the low heat setting for 9 hours, or until the baby carrots are completely tender.

Stir to combine the ingredients just before serving.

Serving Size: 8

It is important to layer the ingredients as indicated in the recipe and not to stir until you are ready to serve the soup. By doing this the vegetables remain at the bottom of the slow cooker where they can heat quickly and cook completely in the allotted amount of time.

## **SLOW COOKER STEAK SOUP**

1 T olive oil  
1 1/2 lb beef flank steak cut into 1 inch cubes  
1 onion, chopped  
5 small carrots, sliced thinly  
4 C cabbage, shredded  
4 red potatoes, diced  
2 stalks of celery, diced  
2 (14.5 oz) cans tomatoes, diced  
2 (14.5 oz) cans beef broth  
1 (10 3/4 oz) can tomato soup  
1 T sugar  
2 t Italian seasoning  
1 t parsley flakes

Place the olive oil in a skillet over medium heat and allow it to heat to hot but not smoking.  
Place the steak cubes and onion into the hot oil.  
Brown the steak 8 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the meat is no longer rare in the middle.  
Drain the steak and onions well.  
Transfer to the slow cooker.  
Add the carrots, cabbage, potatoes and celery to the slow cooker.  
Stir the tomatoes along with juice into the slow cooker.  
Pour the beef broth and the tomato soup into the slow cooker.  
Sprinkle in the sugar, Italian seasoning and parsley flakes.  
Stir until all the ingredients are combined together well.  
Cover and cook on the low setting for 8 to 9 hours, making sure the meat and vegetables are tender before serving.

Serving Size: 8

Any steak can work in this wonderful soup. Leftover roast beef will also work well. Canned or frozen vegetables can be used in place of fresh vegetables if you prefer.

## **BEEF AND BOWTIE SOUP**

1 lb beef chuck, boneless and cut into cubes  
2 (14.5 oz) cans diced tomatoes with Italian seasoning  
Or, 2 cans of plain into which you have added some basil, garlic and oregano to taste  
2 (14 oz) can beef broth  
1 (15 oz) can cannellini beans (white kidney beans), rinsed and drained  
1 (15 oz) can red kidney beans, rinsed and drained  
1 C carrots, sliced thinly  
1 small onion chopped  
1/4 t salt  
1/4 t pepper  
1 C bow tie pasta, uncooked

Place the cubed beef into the slow cooker.

Add the tomatoes, with the juice, to the slow cooker.

Pour both cans of broth into the slow cooker.

Stir in both types of beans.

Add in the sliced carrots and chopped onions.

Sprinkle in the salt and pepper and stir to incorporate the ingredients together.

Cover and cook on the low temperature setting 8 hours.

Stir in the uncooked pasta.

Cover the pot again, set the heat to high, and continue cooking 40 minutes, or until the pasta is tender according to your preference.

Serving Size: 8

In a hurry? You can cook this soup on the high setting for 4 hours. Remember the additional time for the pasta to cook. When ready to serve, sprinkle the top of each bowl with a little grated Parmesan cheese and serve with a slice of Italian bread.

## **BEEF, BACON AND CABBAGE STEW**

4 slices of cooked bacon, crumbled  
1 lb cooked ground beef, crumbled  
1 onion, chopped  
3 white potatoes, cubed  
4 C cabbage shredded  
1 C vegetable broth  
1 (28 oz) can diced tomatoes  
1 t salt  
1/2 t pepper

Place the cooked bacon and ground beef into the slow cooker and stir slightly to incorporate the ingredients together.

Add the onion, potatoes and cabbage.

Stir in the vegetable broth until all the ingredients are completely combined.

Gently stir in the diced tomatoes.

Sprinkle in the salt and pepper and stir to incorporate.

Cover and cook on the low temperature setting 6 to 7 hours, or until desired consistency.

Serving Size: 8

Beef or chicken broth can be used in place of the vegetable broth. Adjust the amount of salt to 1/2 t if you use a meat based broth. These types of broth can sometimes be rather salty, so try to use low sodium broth whenever possible.

## **THICK PORK AND VEGETABLE STEW**

1 T canola oil  
1 (1 1/2 lb) pork shoulder roast, boneless and cut into 1 inch cubes  
1/8 t salt  
1/8 t and 1/4 t pepper, divided  
8 small red potatoes, unpeeled and quartered  
2 C baby carrots cut in half  
1 (12 oz) jar pork gravy  
2 T ketchup  
1/2 t dried rosemary  
1/8 t ground sage  
1 1/2 C frozen cut green beans, thawed

Place the oil in a skillet over high heat.

Heat the oil until hot but not smoking.

Sprinkle the pork pieces with the salt and 1/8 t of pepper and place them in the hot oil.

Cook 7 minutes or until brown on both side and no longer pink in the middle, being sure to stir them often to ensure even browning.

Place the pork into a slow cooker.

Add the quartered potatoes and the carrots.

Pour in the gravy mix and the ketchup.

Sprinkle in the rosemary, sage and the remaining pepper.

Stir until all the ingredients are incorporated together well.

Cover and cook on low for 7 hours.

Add the green beans to the soup and stir to combine.

Cover and increase the heat to high.

Continue cooking 20 to 30 minutes, or until the green beans are fork tender.

Serving Size: 6

The ketchup in this soup gives it not only a rich color but a slightly sweet taste. If you are in a hurry and don't have time to brown the pork, you don't have too. Just put it in the slow cooker as is and allow it to brown on its own. It will give you a little less flavor and color but will save you time in terms of both cooking and clean up.

## SAUSAGE SOUP WITH PARMESAN TOPPING

1/2 lb Italian pork sausage, or regular sausage or cubes pork roast with a teaspoon of dried fennel seeds  
1 C fresh carrots, sliced  
1 large baking potato, peeled and cubed  
1 garlic clove, minced  
2 (14 oz) cans beef broth  
1 (15 oz) can chickpeas, drained  
1 (14.5 oz) can tomatoes  
1 1/2 C water  
1/2 t Italian seasoning  
1 bay leaf  
1 C zucchini, cut julienne style  
1/2 C Parmesan cheese, grated

Place the sausage or meat in a skillet over medium heat.

Brown the sausage about 7 minutes or until no longer pink, stirring often for even browning. Drain the sausage well in a colander lined with a paper towel, and pat away the excess grease with a paper towel.

Place the drained sausage into the bottom of the slow cooker. <http://EternalSpiralBooks.com>

Add in the carrots, potatoes and garlic.

Pour the beef broth into the slow cooker and stir to mix with the meat and vegetables.

Add in the chickpeas, tomatoes with the juice, and the water.

Sprinkle in the Italian seasoning and add the bay leaf. If you do not have Italian sausage, then add the dried fennel at this point.

Stir again to be sure all the ingredients are combined together well.

Cover and cook on low heat for 8 1/2 hours.

Remove the bay leaf and stir in the zucchini.

Cover and continue cooking 25 minutes or until the zucchini is tender.

Sprinkle the top with the Parmesan cheese just before serving.

Serving Size: 6

Baking potatoes have a low moisture and high starch content. Due to this they work well when cooking for longer periods of time. You can serve this with homemade garlic bread. You can also substitute two large peppers for the chickpeas for a sausage and pepper treat.

You can also use Romano cheese for an even stronger flavor.

## **SMOKY BEAN SOUP**

3 C cooked ham, cut into 1 inch cubes  
2 C water  
1 C dried navy beans  
1 C celery, sliced  
1 small onion, chopped  
2 carrots, sliced  
1/4 t dried thyme  
1/4 t liquid smoke or hickory seasoning  
1/4 C parsley, chopped

Place the ham into the slow cooker and pour the water over the top.  
Add in the beans, celery, onion and carrots.  
Sprinkle the thyme into the slow cooker.  
Pour in the liquid smoke and stir the ingredients to combine well.  
Cover and cook on the low temperature setting for 10 hours.  
Sprinkle the parsley over the top just before serving.

Serving Size: 4

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Any type of dry bean will work with this recipe. Liquid smoke gives foods a great hickory-smoked taste. It can be found in the condiment section of your local grocery store. Or, try hickory salt, but use sparingly due to the salt content.

## **PIZZA SOUP WITH ITALIAN SAUSAGE**

1 lb Italian sausage (or regular sausage with a teaspoon of dried fennel)  
1/2 C onion, chopped  
2 garlic cloves, minced  
1 (4 oz) pkg. pepperoni slices  
1 (16 oz) can dark red kidney beans, rinsed and drained  
1 (16 oz) can light red kidney beans, rinsed and drained  
1 (14.5 oz) can diced tomatoes  
1 (4 oz) can green pepper, chopped  
4 t oregano  
1/2 t salt  
1/8 t pepper  
1 (15 oz) can pizza sauce

Place the sausage, onion and garlic into a skillet over medium heat.

Brown the sausage, stirring often, until no longer pink, about 8 minutes.

Drain well in a colander lined with paper towel, and pat off the excess grease with paper towel.

Place into the slow cooker.

Add the pepperoni into the mixture.

Place both cans of kidney beans into the slow cooker.

Add in the tomatoes and the green pepper.

Sprinkle in the oregano, salt and pepper.

Pour the pizza sauce over the top and stir to make sure all the ingredients are combined together.

Cover and cook on low for 6 hours.

Serving Size: 8

This recipe is great for teenage parties. The kids go crazy over the pizza taste in the stew. Chop the pepperoni into small pieces if you prefer. Serve with mozzarella cheese on top, or some Parmesan or Romano cheese.

## **SHORT RIB AND BEAN STEW**

1 lb Great North Beans, soaked overnight, then rinsed and drained  
3/4 C onion, chopped  
1/8 t pepper  
1 1/2 lb beef or pork short ribs  
6 C water  
1 t salt  
1 C barbecue sauce

Place the soaked beans into the slow cooker.

Add the onion and pepper.

Place the short ribs into the slow cooker.

Pour the water over the top and stir gently.

Cover and cook on low heat setting for 10 hours.

Remove the short ribs from the slow cooker and use to forks to shred the meat off the bones.

Return the meat to the slow cooker and discard the bones.

Pour in the barbecue sauce.

Recover, turn the heat setting to high and continue cooking 30 minutes.

Serving Size: 8 Eternal Spiral Books, <http://EternalSpiralBooks.com>

If you want a little more of a beef taste reduce the water to 4 C and add 1 can of beef broth to the slow cooker. Always be sure to soak the beans. This will ensure a soft bean when the soup is done. If you want to use the pork short ribs, it will vary the taste and you can serve the shredded meat on bun like it was pulled pork, with the beans on the side.

## SEAFOOD STEW

2 C onions, chopped  
2 celery stalks, chopped fine  
5 cloves of garlic, mined  
1 (28 oz) can diced tomatoes, with or without liquid depending on how thick you want your stew  
1 (8 oz) bottle clam juice  
1 T red wine vinegar  
1 T olive oil  
2 1/2 t dried Italian seasoning  
1/4 t sugar  
1/4 t red pepper flakes, crushed  
1 bay leaf  
1 lb. white fish, cut into 1 in pieces  
3/4 lb uncooked medium shrimp, shelled, de-veined and tails removed  
1 (6 1/2 oz) can chopped clams with juice  
1 (6 oz) can crabmeat, drained  
1/4 C fresh parsley, chopped

Place the onion, celery, garlic and tomatoes into the slow cooker.

Pour in the clam juice, vinegar and oil. <http://EternalSpiralBooks.com>

Sprinkle in the Italian seasoning, sugar and pepper flakes.

Stir the mixture to combine all the ingredients together well.

Add the bay leaf and stir again.

Cover the slow cooker and cook on high 4 hours.

Add the fish, shrimp, clams with the juice and crabmeat to the slow cooker.

Lower the heat to the low setting, cover, and continue cooking about 45 minutes, or until the fish flakes easily with a fork.

Remove the bay leaf before serving, and sprinkle the top with the parsley.

Serving Size: 8

A dry white wine can be used in place of the clam juice if you like. If you use a wine, choose a dry white wine such as Sauvignon Blanc or Chardonnay. Serve with fingerling potatoes or potato wedges, or over a bed of rice.

## **BEER AND CHEESE SOUP**

6 medium potatoes, peeled and chopped  
1 medium onion, chopped  
1 medium stalk celery, chopped  
1 medium carrot, chopped small  
1 clove garlic minced  
1/4 t pepper  
1 (14 oz) can chicken broth  
1 (12 oz) can non alcoholic beer  
1 (8 oz) pkg. Cheddar American cheese blend, shredded  
1/2 C whipping cream

Place the potatoes, onions, celery and carrots into the slow cooker.

Add in the garlic and pepper and stir to coat the vegetables.

Pour the broth and beer into the mixture and stir to incorporate.

Cover the cook on the low setting 6 hours.

15 minutes before you are ready to serve the soup, mash the vegetables with a potato masher.

Sprinkle the cheese into the slow cooker.

Pour the whipping cream into the slow cooker and stir until all the cheese has completely melted.

Recover and cook an additional 5 to 10 minutes or until heated through completely.

Serving Size: 6

Cut some rye bread into cubes and toast in a single layer on a cookie sheet in a 350 degree oven for about 18 minutes or until crispy, turning them occasionally for even browning. Add the toasted bread cubes to each bowl of soup just before serving. Or, serve in a bread bowl made from a small bakery loaf that you have hollowed out with a spoon. Regular beer can be used if you prefer. A dash of Worcestershire sauce will add a bit of zing to this dish.

## ITALIAN ZUCCHINI AND PEPPER SOUP

1 onion, chopped  
2 cloves of garlic, minced  
1 small sliced eggplant, with each slice cut into 4 wedges  
1 (14.5 oz) can low sodium chicken broth or vegetable broth  
1/4 t salt  
1 large zucchini, sliced  
1 small red bell pepper cut into strips  
1 small yellow bell pepper cut into strips  
1 t Italian seasoning  
1 (14.5 oz) can diced tomatoes with Italian herbs

Place the onion, garlic and mushrooms into the slow cooker.

Pour in the chicken broth and add the salt.

Stir to incorporate the ingredients together.

Cover and cook on the low setting for 10 hours.

Stir in the zucchini and bell pepper strips.

Sprinkle the Italian seasoning into the mixture.

Pour the diced tomatoes, including the juice, into the slow cooker.

Stir to incorporate the ingredients together well.

Adjust the temperature to the high setting, cover, and continue cooking 30 minutes, or until the zucchini is fork tender.

Serving Size: 6

If you want to make this soup vegetarian, then use the vegetable broth in place of the chicken broth. Dried chick peas (garbanzo beans) may also be added to this recipe. They must be soaked in water for 8 hours to soften them enough for slow cooker cooking, though, so you will need to either leave them to soak overnight, or buy them canned.

## CAULIFLOWER STEW

1 large head of cauliflower broken into florets  
2 C chicken broth  
2 T chicken bouillon granules  
2 C half and half  
2 C milk  
1 carrot, shredded  
1 bay leaf  
1/4 t garlic powder  
1/2 C instant mashed potato flakes  
1 (8 oz) pkg. cheddar cheese, shredded

Place the cauliflower, broth and bouillon granules into a large soup pot over high heat.

Bring the mixture to a brisk boil.

Place the heat on low, cover and simmer for 25 minutes or until the cauliflower is fork tender.

Remove half of the cauliflower from the pot and mash with a potato masher.

Pour the broth mixture into the slow cooker and then add the mashed cauliflower.

Pour the cream and milk into the slow cooker.

Add the shredded carrots, bay leaf and garlic powder.

Stir to combine the ingredients together well.

Cover the slow cooker and cook on low for 3 hours.

Stir the potato flakes into the slow cooker, cover and continue cooking on low for 40 minutes or until the stew is as thick as you like.

Remove the bay leaf.

Place half of the soup, in batches, into the blender and blend until very smooth.

Return the blended soup to the slow cooker.

Sprinkle in the cheese and stir to incorporate the cheese, blended soup, and chunks of veggies still in the pot.

Recover and continue cooking 15 to 20 minutes or until the cheese has completely melted into the soup.

Serving Size: 8

This is a hearty stew you can serve throughout the winter, and very inexpensive as well. To make it completely vegetarian, substitute vegetable broth for the chicken.

## **CHUNKY TURKEY CHILI**

1 lb turkey breast cut in cubes  
1 (28 oz) can diced tomatoes, with juice  
1 (15 oz) can black beans, rinsed and drained  
1 (8 oz) can tomato sauce  
1 C raw pumpkin, peeled, seeded and cubed  
1 onion, chopped  
1 clove of garlic, minced  
1/2 C frozen corn  
1/2 C chicken broth  
1 T chili powder  
1 (4 oz) pkg. Monterey Jack cheese, shredded

Place the turkey into the slow cooker.

Pour the tomatoes and juice on top of the turkey.

Add in the black beans.

Pour the tomato sauce into the mixture and stir to combine.

Add the pumpkin, onion, garlic and corn.

Stir in the chicken broth.

Sprinkle in the chili powder and mix the ingredients together well.

Cover and cook on the low temperature setting for 10 hours.

Sprinkle the cheese over the top just before serving.

Serving Size: 6

The individual flavors stand out in this chili. You can also experiment with adding kidney beans and green pepper instead of the black beans and the pumpkin. Add a 1/2 C of dried cranberries to the mix for a slightly different taste. If your chili is too thick, add more chicken broth during the cooking time.

If you want to try a vegetarian version, use extra firm tofu and vegetable broth. Top with cheese and sour cream for a real taste treat.

## **CREAMY BROCCOLI SOUP**

2 1/2 lbs fresh broccoli, chopped

1 T unsalted margarine

Water

2 C fat free milk

1/2 C light processed cheese, cubed

Remove any tough stalks from the broccoli and discard.

Place the chopped broccoli into the slow cooker.

Dot the margarine over the broccoli.

Fill the slow cooker with just enough water to cover the broccoli pieces.

Cover and cook on the high temperature setting for 2 hours.

Pour in the milk, cover again, and continue cooking 30 minutes.

Stir in the cheese, put the cover back on, and continue cooking 20 minutes or until the cheese has completely melted into the soup.

Serving Size: 6

There's very little fat in this soup. If you want a little meat in this soup, chop some cooked ham and add it to slow cooker at the same time you add the broccoli.

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## **VEGETARIAN SOUP MEDLEY**

2 (14.5 oz) cans diced tomatoes with green chili peppers  
1 (15 oz) can kidney beans, rinsed and drained  
1 (15 oz) can chickpeas, rinsed and drained  
1 (10 oz) pkg. frozen corn  
1 C onion, diced  
2 (8 oz) can tomato sauce  
1 (1 1/4 oz) envelope chili seasoning mix  
1 C water

Pour the cans of tomatoes with the juice into the slow cooker.  
Add the kidney beans and chickpeas into the pot.  
Place the frozen corn and onions in.  
Stir in both cans of tomato sauce until well combined.  
Sprinkle in the envelope of seasoning mix.  
Pour in the water and stir to incorporate all the ingredients together well.  
Cover and cook on the low temperature setting 6 hours.

Serving Size: 6

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This vegetable soup has a great chili taste due to the green chilies and seasoning mix.  
Experiment with different vegetables until you find just the right ones for your family. Try different beans instead of the chickpeas, such as black beans, cannellini, or pintos.

## **MEXICAN MINESTRONE**

1 T canola oil  
1 lb ground beef  
1 onion, chopped  
1 (19 oz) can minestrone soup  
1 (15 oz) can pinto beans, rinsed and drained well  
1 (14.5 oz) can stewed tomatoes  
1 (11 oz) can whole kernel corn  
1 (4 oz) can green chilies, chopped  
1 t salt  
1/2 t garlic powder  
1/2 t onion powder

Place the oil in a skillet over medium heat.

Break up the ground beef into the skillet and add the onions.

Cook 12 minutes or until the meat is completely browned.

Drain well and pat the excess grease off with a paper towel.

Place the meat and onions into the slow cooker.

Pour in the minestrone soup, pinto beans, tomatoes, corn and the chilies.

Sprinkle in the salt, garlic and onion powder.

Stir from the bottom up to incorporate all the ingredients together.

Cover and cook on the low heat setting 6 hours.

Serving Size: 8

This great soup is made up of things everyone has in their pantry and refrigerator. Try adding a few of your own ideas such as canned green beans, peas or carrots to see if you can come up with your very own unique recipes. It is also a great way to use up any leftovers.

## CONCLUSION

Cooking with a slow cooker is a great way to feed the whole family nutritiously yet inexpensively, using a great number of ingredients you probably already have on hand at home in your pantry or freezer. There is nothing quite like a hearty soup or stew on a cold winter's day, or any time you want filling fare for your family.

In this guide, we have given you 25 handy soup and stew recipes that will have even the fussiest eaters in your family asking for more. From meaty meals to meatless recipes, you can start discovering the joys of easy and delicious one-pot meals slow-cooked to perfection in your slow cooker.

Start out each day with a new recipe to try, following the instructions to the letter at first. Then see how it cooks in your slow cooker. Vary the recipe according to your taste and desired texture and consistency, and then start adding or substituting ingredients to create even more variations.

Begin by assembling your ingredients, put them in the slow cooker, set it, and come home to terrific home-cooked meals that will tantalize your tastebuds for pennies on the dollar compared with eating out or takeaway.

You will save time, money, energy, and stretch your food budget even further than you could have imagined.

We hope you find inspiration rather than perspiration as you try these terrific and tasty soups and stews.

Happy eating to you and your family,

MM  
CS

## **FURTHER READING**

Also by the authors:

Easy Slow Cooker Methods

### **Resources:**

[#1 Cockpot at Amazon](#) as of May 2, 2015.

Eternal Spiral Books, <http://EternalSpiralBooks.com>

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