

# Lazy Sunday Slow Cooker Roast

As the autumn chill sets in it's time to turn toward comfort food. There's nothing more comforting than the smell of a roast cooking in the slow cooker when you come home from a busy day. Plus, you can use the leftovers for meals later in the week.

## Ingredients

- 1 package onion soup mix, divided
- 1 package au jus gravy mix, divided
- 1 tablespoon oil
- 4-6 pound beef roast
- 4-5 white potatoes, unpeeled and cut into chunks
- 3 stalks celery, cut into large pieces
- 4-6 large carrots, cut into large chunks
- 1 large onion, cut into large chunks
- 2 cups beef stock

## Directions

Sprinkle half of the onion soup mix and half of the au jus mix in the bottom of the slow cooker. Heat the oil in a large skillet or frying pan until hot. Add the roast and brown on all sides. Add to the slow cooker. Add the vegetables. Sprinkle the remaining onion soup mix and au jus mix over the vegetables. Pour the beef stock over the roast and vegetables. Cook on low 8-10 hours.

## Serving Suggestions

- Thicken the stock with cornstarch to make gravy. Pour over slices of roast and vegetables.
- Slice for hot roast beef sandwiches.
- Shred for beef tacos.
- Shred and add barbeque sauce for sandwiches.
- Slice and use in salads.

### Recommended Tools

**Vegetable Knife** - for cutting potatoes, celery, carrots and onion

**Carver** - for slicing the roast into portions

**Table Knife** - use in the place setting for easy cutting

# Low-Fat Blue Cheese Dressing

Makes 1 cup

## Ingredients

1/2 cup crumbled blue cheese  
6 ounces fat-free Greek yogurt  
1 tablespoon light mayonnaise  
1 tablespoon lemon juice  
1 tablespoon white wine vinegar  
1/8 teaspoon garlic powder  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

## Directions

In a small bowl, mash blue cheese and yogurt together with a fork. Stir in mayonnaise, lemon juice, vinegar and garlic powder until well blended. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

# Creamy Greek Dressing

Makes approx. 2 cups

## Ingredients

1/2 cup olive oil  
2 tablespoons red wine vinegar  
1-2 garlic cloves, minced fine  
1 teaspoon dried oregano  
1 tablespoon chopped fresh dill  
1 teaspoon salt  
1 teaspoon freshly ground pepper  
3/4 cup feta cheese, crumbled  
3/4 cup buttermilk  
(or milk, but buttermilk is best)

## Directions

In a blender or food processor, blend all ingredients except the buttermilk for one minute. With the blender or food processor running, slowly pour in the buttermilk and blend until thick and creamy (turn off the blender/food processor as soon as the dressing thickens or it may curdle). Chill at least 1 hour. Refrigerate tightly covered. The dressing will stay fresh for 3-4 days. If the dressing separates just give it a whirl in the blender again.

**Tip:** Replace half the buttermilk with fat-free yogurt.

# "Too Easy" Tomatoes

From Alison Russell, culinary instructor

This is my favorite way of serving firm tomatoes especially in the winter. The tomatoes caramelize and become wonderfully sweet. This makes a great side dish for any roast.

Cut as many tomatoes as you need in half (I generally figure on one tomato per person). Lightly oil a baking dish big enough to hold the tomatoes rather snugly. Place them cut side up. Mix minced garlic (about one clove for every whole tomato) with a little salt, pepper and enough olive oil to make a liquid paste. Add a bit of bread crumbs and or parsley if desired.

Spoon over cut side of tomatoes.

Bake at 375 degrees for about 40 minutes for round salad tomatoes. The tomatoes will hold their shape, but be very soft. Serve with some of the juices.

Chop up any leftovers and serve over pasta.

# Mason Jar Salads (3 Ways)

Using three, one-quart mason jars, layer ingredients equally and in order to create a portable, healthy lunch.

## Buffalo Chicken

### Ingredients

- 8 tablespoons low-fat blue cheese dressing  
(recipe on page 4)
- 8 tablespoons hot sauce
- 1 quart cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 red onion, chopped
- 4 large carrots, chopped
- 4 large celery stalks, chopped
- 4 cups shredded chicken
- 4 cups romaine lettuce

**Tip:** To save time, use rotisserie chicken.

## Greek Salad

### Ingredients

- 8 tablespoons or more Creamy Greek Dressing  
(recipe on page 4)
- 1 cup **each** chopped carrots, cucumbers,  
celery and red onion
- 30 Kalamata olives, pitted
- 1 cup feta cheese, crumbled
- 4 tablespoons pine nuts
- 8 cups romaine lettuce

## Cobb Salad

### Ingredients

- 8 tablespoons low-fat blue cheese dressing  
(recipe on page 4)
- 1 quart cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 cucumber, sliced
- 1 small red onion, chopped
- 4 hard-boiled eggs, chopped
- 2 avocados, chopped
- 4 slices thinly sliced turkey, cut in pieces
- 4 slices thinly sliced ham, cut in pieces
- 4 cups chopped romaine lettuce

### Tips for Creating Salads in a Jar

Use glass jars. Salads will stay fresher longer.  
Use 1 quart jars.

Layer the ingredients in the following order:

- Dressing (2-3 tablespoons)
- Hearty vegetables like carrots, cucumbers, broccoli, celery, peppers, tomatoes
- Softer vegetables like mushrooms, corn, avocado, green beans
- Pastas or grains like rice, quinoa, couscous
- Meats and cheeses
- Lettuce, nuts and seeds

Cap tightly and store in the refrigerator.

Most salads will last 5-7 days.

# Greek Yogurt Dips

Protein-packed Greek yogurt is a great replacement for sour cream, mayonnaise, cream cheese and even oil. Give it a try with these savory and sweet dip recipes.

## Greek Yogurt Ranch Dip

### Ingredients

- 1-1/2 cups plain Greek yogurt
- 1/2 teaspoon dried chives
- 3/4 teaspoon dried parsley
- 1/4 teaspoon dried dill weed
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/4 teaspoon onion powder
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper

### Directions

Combine all the ingredients in a large bowl and mix well. Cover the bowl and refrigerate for at least 2 hours but preferably overnight for the best results. Serve with fresh veggies or any other dippers that you'd like.

## Greek Yogurt Peanut Butter Dip

### Ingredients

- 1 5-6 ounce container of vanilla Greek yogurt, about half a cup
- 1-2 tablespoons of natural peanut butter
- 1 teaspoon honey

### Directions

Mix together and keep refrigerated.

**Tip:** This is a healthy dip that will jazz up a kid's or adult's lunch box. Pack along with bags of mini cookies, such as chocolate chip, shortbread, vanilla wafer or fresh fruit like apples slices and bananas.

# Organize a Bento Box

The end of summer calls for a more organized state of mind. As the lax attitude from warm summer days fades away, a little help to refresh our systems and plan ahead is great preparation for the upcoming autumn months.

The stress of planning meals that will sustain enough energy throughout the day can be exhausting. This season, limit that stress by using this guide for building a Bento box lunch.

Choose one item from all five categories, and you'll have yourself a meal that is sure to provide what you need to power you through your daily routine.

## 1 Protein

*Deli meat (turkey, ham, bologna...), raw nuts, hard-boiled eggs, cheese (cottage cheese, Swiss cheese...), Greek yogurt*

## 2 Grains

*Brown rice, pita bread, whole-wheat couscous, quinoa*

## 3 Vegetables

*Carrots, celery sticks, cut broccoli/cauliflower, cucumber, sliced red, green, yellow or orange bell peppers*

## 4 Fruit

*Sliced apple wedges  
Cut watermelon squares  
Sliced pineapple bites  
Grapes  
Assorted berries*

## 5 Snacks

Don't forget to allow yourself small treats!

*Pumpkin seeds  
Dried fruit  
Popcorn  
Dark chocolate  
Hummus & pretzels*

# Fall Pantry Essentials

No one likes to have a recipe in hand only to realize you're out of one ingredient. These pantry basics are hard to do without. Depending on your preference you may want to expand from the basics. For example, some may consider Cajun spice, dill weed or cardamom a staple for their personal taste.

- Salt
- Pepper
- Sugar
- Brown Sugar
- Flour
- Rice
- Pasta
- Canned beans
- Cooking oil
- Tomato paste
- Tomato sauce
- Diced canned tomatoes
- Chicken broth
- Cloves
- Ginger
- Nutmeg
- Cinnamon
- Baking powder
- Baking soda
- Vanilla extract
- Cocoa
- Shortening
- Parsley
- Sage
- Rosemary
- Thyme
- Granulated garlic
- Bay leaves

# Fall Cooking Essentials

**7-5/8" Petite Chef** - It's the I-can't-live-without-it knife for chopping, slicing and dicing all the fruits and veggies that the late summer harvest delivered.

**Vegetable Peeler** - It's not just for potatoes. Use it to peel carrots and apples, and shave cheese for your salad and chocolate curls for your dessert.

**Spatula Spreader** - For all the sandwich making you'll be doing for school lunches, use this knife to mix and spread sandwich filling and then cut the sandwich in half.