

Save money — eat out at home

Eating meals in a restaurant can be a form of family entertainment. It's enjoyable and easy. But it's getting to be an expensive way to feed the family.

If the battle of the budget is becoming more important at your house, look for some creative ways to eat at home, while having the fun and change of pace of eating out.

One of the things we like about eating out is atmosphere; create your own elegant dining room. Use your best dishes, a table cloth and even candles. It's always more fun to have a party atmosphere; it gives you a chance to help the kids practice their party manners.

When you do this kind of party planning, you might consider some of the more expensive foods. If you really are replacing an evening at a restaurant with an evening at home, you can have steak or expensive foods such as fancy seafood, and still save money.

We pass up steak in the grocery store at \$3 or \$4 per pound as "too expensive," but when eating out, we often pay \$9 or more for an 8-ounce serving.

Another fun way to create a party atmosphere is to have a menu where everyone fixes their own. That's one of the reasons tacos are such a hit. Just the chopping, frying and grating it takes to get everything ready for these "put together" meals gives a party atmosphere if everyone can help.

If you're chief cook, then have the jobs spaced around the kitchen, set out the foods and the proper utensils and give each person a job to do. Some other party foods you can fix together are fondues, tempuras, salad bars or ice cream sundaes.

One fun neighborhood party was an ice cream party where everyone brought their own bowl and spoon. We made vanilla ice cream in a hand-crank ice cream maker and then put on the toppings. Fun and not much fuss.

Entertainment can be simple and fun for the cook, too. Don't feel like you always have to have people over for an entire meal. What you're after is good company. Invite people for dessert or a snack, or a special beverage. It's as much fun as a whole meal.

Potluck suppers are popular with churches and other organizations because you can bring one or two food items and have an interesting and varied meal. It's fun to have a specialized potluck, like a salad bar or dessert potluck. It's a great way to get families, neighbors or friends together easily and inexpensively. Everyone feels like they're doing their share, too!

To take the dining out one step further, many people have formed gourmet food groups. Friends meet on a regular basis, plan a party menu, share the fixing of the food and then share the cost equally. They take turns hosting the event. It's a nice way to eat out with friends, but not pay restaurant prices.

Entertaining and sharing good times with family and friends can be very important to your feeling of well-being, but it doesn't have to add great expense to your family budget.

The Oregon State University Extension Service office near you has a variety of brochures with specific food buying information. They are a good source of ideas for getting more for your food dollar.

Your fondue pot can help you create a real party meal. You can use either hot oil or broth. Don't mix raw meats with cooked meats, however. Serve the raw meats on small individual plates. Then sauces can be on the dinner plate.

TERIYAKI MINIATURES

- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon water
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- ¼ teaspoon instant minced onion
- Dash garlic salt
- Dash monosodium glutamate
- Dash ginger
- ½ pound lean ground beef
- ½ cup fine soft bread crumbs

Combine soy sauce, water, sugar, onion, garlic salt, monosodium glutamate and ginger; let stand 10 minutes. Combine ground beef and bread crumbs; stir in soy sauce mixture. Shape into ¼-inch meatballs. Put the raw meatballs on small plates for each individual to cook. Spear meatballs on bamboo skewers or fondue forks and cook in deep hot fat (375°) in a fondue pot about 1½ minutes. Makes about 2½ dozen. Serve with 2 or 3 sauces.

PORK OR CHICKEN FONDUE

Brush the meat with soy sauce and allow to stand at room temperature for 1 hour. Slice thin and roll each slice to place on an individual dish. Measure chicken broth into fondue pot. Heat broth in pot to a rolling boil on high. Reduce to medium to maintain boil while cooking meat. Serve with two or three sauces.

HORSERADISH SAUCE

1 cup sour cream
Prepared horseradish to taste

(usually 1 to 3 teaspoons)
¼ teaspoon salt (a seasoned salt is especially good)
Dash of paprika

Mix and chill.

LEMON CHILI SAUCE

¼ cup chili sauce
3 tablespoons grated lemon rind (1 lemon)
1 tablespoon lemon juice

Blend together and serve at room temperature. Makes 1 cup.



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Crest Toothpaste Reg., Mint Or Gel, 6.4-Oz. **\$1.49**

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Bufferin Analgesic Tablets 100-Ct. Size **\$2.36**

Ban Roll-On Deodorant 1.5-Oz. Size **\$1.29**