

FOOD & DINING

Family-friendly meals need not take a lot of time

Parents faced with the nightly task of preparing meals for their families often feel as if there's just not enough time to cook a hearty, homecooked meal the whole family can enjoy. Long hours at the office can make some parents feel like they need to be magicians to serve up a delicious meal in the time between arriving

home from work and going to bed.

But family-friendly meals can still find their way to your dinner table even if you are pressed for time. The following recipe for "Sliced Steak With Crispy Polenta" from "Weightwatchers: Cook It Fast" (St. Martin's Press) can be whipped up in roughly 30 minutes, meaning it's entirely

possible for families to sit down to a fresh and delicious meal any night of the week.

SLICED STEAK WITH CRISPY POLENTA

Serves 4

- 1 1-pound lean flank steak, trimmed
- 1/2 teaspoon ancho or regular chili powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 16-ounce tube fat-free polenta, cut into 12 slices
- 1 1/2 cups fresh or thawed frozen corn kernels
- 1 red bell pepper, chopped
- 1/2 red onion, chopped
- 1 jalapeño pepper, seeded and minced
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro

1. Spray ridged grill pan with nonstick spray and set over medium-high heat. Sprinkle steak with chili powder and salt. Place steak in pan and cook until an instant-read thermometer inserted into side of steak registers 145 F for medium, about 5 minutes on each side. Transfer steak to cutting board and let stand 5 minutes. Cut on a diagonal into 16 slices.

2. Meanwhile, spray boiler rack with nonstick spray and preheat boiler. Arrange slices of polenta on rack and broil 5 inches from heat until crispy and heated through, about 2 minutes on each side.

3. Spray medium skillet with nonstick spray and set over medium heat. Add corn, bell pepper, onion, and jalapeño pepper; cook, stirring, until softened, about 5 minutes. Remove skillet from heat and stir in cilantro.

4. Place 3 slices of polenta on each of 4 plates and top each serving with 4 slices of steak. Divide corn mixture evenly among plates.

Do it faster: To neatly and quickly remove the kernels from an ear of corn, place a bowl in the sink, stand the corn on end inside the bowl, and cut off the kernels with a knife. Any fly-away kernels will end up in the sink.



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