

Food for Thought

Winter's chill calls for soups and casseroles. If your schedule is hectic, slow cooking is the way to go because most recipes can be prepared at night, then put in the slow cooker the next morning. Because most soups and stews taste better the second day, you can actually make many of them a day in advance.

SLOW-COOKED VEGETABLE BEEF SOUP

1 lb. bottom round steak, cut into 1/2" cubes
 1 14.5-oz. can diced tomatoes, undrained
 3 cups water
 2 med. potatoes, peeled, cubed
 2 med. onions, diced
 3 celery ribs, sliced
 2 carrots, sliced
 3 beef bouillon cubes
 1/2 tsp dried basil
 1/2 tsp dried oregano
 1/2 tsp salt
 1/4 tsp pepper
 1-1/2 cups frozen mixed vegetables

In a slow cooker, combine all ingredients except frozen vegetables. Cover and cook on high for 6 hours. Add vegetables; cover and cook on high 2 hours longer or until the meat and vegetables are tender.

EASY CORN CHOWDER

2 cups peeled, diced potatoes
 1/2 cup celery, diced
 1/2 cup red onion, chopped
 1 11-oz. can creamed corn
 1 15-oz. can whole kernel corn
 1 12-oz. can evaporated milk
 1/8 tsp cayenne pepper
 1/4 tsp salt

Place potatoes, celery and onion, with water to cover, in a large pot over medium heat. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer 20 minutes, until potatoes are tender. Drain.

Return vegetables to pot and add creamed corn, corn, evaporated milk, cayenne and salt. Simmer 20 minutes over low heat.

SLOW-COOKED CHILI

2 lbs. ground beef
 2 16-oz cans kidney beans, rinsed and drained
 2 14.5-oz. cans diced tomatoes, undrained
 1 8-oz. can tomato sauce
 2 med. onions, chopped
 1 green pepper, chopped
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 2 tbs chili powder
 2 tsp salt
 1 tsp pepper
 Shredded cheddar cheese

In a skillet, cook beef over medium heat until no longer pink; drain. Transfer to a slow cooker. Add the next nine ingredients. Cover and cook on low for 8-10 hours or on high for 4 hours. Garnish individual servings with cheese if desired.

SLOW-COOKED NO-FUSS CHICKEN

2/3 cup all-purpose flour
 1 tsp dried sage
 1 tsp dried basil
 1 tsp seasoned salt
 1 (2-3 pound) chicken cut up
 1/4 cup butter or margarine
 2 cups chicken broth

In a shallow bowl, combine flour, sage, basil and seasoned salt; coat chicken. Reserve remaining flour mixture. In a large skillet, melt butter; brown chicken on all sides. Transfer to a slow cooker. Add 1/4 cup reserved flour mixture to the skillet (discarding the rest); stir until smooth. When mixture begins to bubble, stir in chicken broth and bring to a boil; boil for 1 minute. Pour over chicken. Cover and cook on high for 2 to 2-1/2 hours or until chicken juices run clear.

SCALLOPED CORN AND BROCCOLI

This isn't a slow cooker recipe, but it's easy to prepare and makes a great side dish.

1 15-oz. can creamed corn
 2 eggs, beaten

2 tbs white sugar
 1 tsp salt
 1/2 10-oz. package frozen chopped broccoli
 2 tbs all-purpose flour
 1/2 cup shredded mild Cheddar cheese

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.

Mix together the corn, eggs, sugar, flour and salt. Add cheese and broccoli, mix well and pour into a 2 quart casserole dish. Bake for 1 hour.

SLOW COOKED BLACK BEAN SOUP

2 15-oz. cans black beans, drained and rinsed
 2 4.5-oz. cans chopped green chiles
 1 14.5-oz. can Mexican Stewed tomatoes, undrained
 1 14.5-oz. can diced tomatoes, undrained
 1 11-oz. can whole kernel corn, drained
 4 green onions, sliced
 2 to 3 tbs chili powder
 1 tsp. ground cumin
 1/2 tsp. dried minced garlic

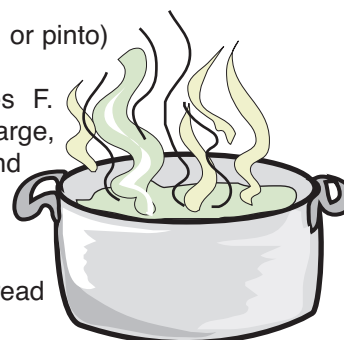
Combine all ingredients in a slow cooker. Cover and cook on high 5 to 6 hours.

WINTER STEW DELIGHT

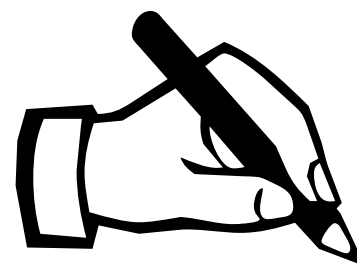
1 sm. head cabbage, chopped
 4 med. potatoes, diced
 1 lb. carrots, peeled and sliced
 4 cups beef or chicken broth
 1 cup tomato juice
 1 15-oz. can beans (kidney, black, or pinto)
 salt to taste
 4 med. onions, diced
 1 28-oz. can diced tomatoes
 2 lbs. Italian sausage, fried and drained

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Combine all ingredients in a large, oven-proof stew pot. Cover and bake 1-1/2 to 2 hours until tender, stirring occasionally. If necessary, add more broth or tomato juice.

This is great with homemade bread or biscuits.



Workshop helps improve your handwriting



Want to improve your handwriting? Learn how at a free handwriting improvement workshop on Saturday, January 20, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Portland State University, Smith Memorial Student Union, 1825 SW Broadway, Ballroom, Room 355.

Handwriting experts and authors, Barbara Getty and Inga Dubai, are celebrating National Handwriting Day this year by hosting this workshop. RSVP is requested to assess seating requirements. Workshop materials will be provided. Children accompanied by parents are welcome. Books will be available at discounted rates. If unable to attend, call for a free brochure of handwriting materials and a desk strip.

To sign up or get more information, call 503-725-4891 or email press@pdx.edu.

Church Directory

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINTS

Jeff Cheney, Branch President
 1350 E. Knott Street, Vernonia
 503 429-7151
 Sacrament Meeting, Sunday 10 a.m.
 Sunday School & Primary 11:20 a.m.
 Relief Society, Priesthood and Young Women, Sunday 12:10 p.m.

SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST

John Aitken II, Pastor, 396-1856
 2nd Ave. and Nehalem St., Vernonia
 503 429-8301
 Morning Worship, 9:15 a.m.
 Bible Study 10:30 a.m.

VERNONIA COMMUNITY CHURCH

Grant Williams, Pastor
 957 State Avenue, Vernonia
 503 429-6790
 Sunday Breakfast 9:00 a.m.
 Morning Worship 9:45 a.m.
 *B.L.A.S.T. w/Nursery 10:00 a.m.
 *Bible Learning and Scripture Training
 Wednesday Prayer Meeting 7:00 p.m.

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

Rev. Luan Tran, Administrator
 960 Missouri Avenue, Vernonia
 503 429-8841
 Mass Schedule
 Sunday 12:00 Noon
 Religious Education
 Sunday 10:30 a.m.

VERNONIA FOURSQUARE CHURCH

Carl Pense, Pastor
 850 Madison Avenue, Vernonia
 503 429-1103
 Sunday Worship Service: 10:30 a.m.
 Children's Sunday School

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

359 "A" Street, Vernonia
 503 429-5190
 Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
 Sunday Worship Service 11:00 a.m.
 Wednesday Prayer Meeting 7:00 p.m.

ST. AUGUSTINE (CANTERBURY) EPISCOPAL CHURCH

375 North St. (Vernonia Grange Hall)
 Vernonia, 503 705-2173
 Please call for service schedule.

ASSEMBLY OF GOD

Wayne and Maureen Marr
 662 Jefferson Ave., Vernonia,
 503 429-0373
 Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
 Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.

NEHALEM VALLEY BIBLE CHURCH

Gary Taylor, Pastor
 Grant & North Streets, Vernonia
 503 429-5378
 Sunday School 10:00 a.m.
 Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.
 Nursery available
 Wednesday Service 7:00 p.m.

VERNONIA CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Sam Hough, Evangelist
 410 North Street, Vernonia
 503 429-6522
 Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
 Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.
 Every Wednesday:
 Ladies' Bible Study 9:30 a.m.
 Ladies' Worship 10:00 a.m.
 Children's Choir 3:00 p.m.
 Family Bible Study 7:00 p.m.