Stirring the Pot

Slow cooker recipes for all seasons with the world’s favourite pork
Pull out your trusty slow cooker and savour these easy, convenient, and tasty budget-friendly meals! A slow cooker is affordable, easy to operate, and a versatile, must-have kitchen appliance for time-strapped cooks. With little effort, anyone can create master chef meals in no time. From comfort classics steeped in tradition, to globally-inspired entrées infused with aromatic herbs and spices, this slow cooker guide is loaded with tips, tricks and crockpot know-how. Switch on the savings, join the simmering soul-food train, and enjoy the wonderful aroma wafting through the air inviting you to dinner.

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Watch for the Pork Proven Recipe symbol. Recipes with this icon have been tried, tasted, and proven perfect.

Letting dinner “perk”-olate brings more to the table than just a tasty meal. Slow cookers, or crockpots as they’re also known, are:

- **Budget Friendly**: Slow cooking is economical; it brings out the delicious flavour in lesser cuts of meat. As well, slow cookers use little electricity.

- **Convenient**: Cooking with a slow cooker offers the flexibility of deciding when to prep and when to eat. Cooking large batches guarantees delectable leftovers.

- **Easy**: Recipes are easy to prepare. Just layer your food, set it and forget it!

- **Healthy**: Recipes rarely call for added fats and oils; liquid and time cook the food.

- **Time Saving**: There’s no need to watch over a slow cooker because there’s little risk of food boiling over or burning.
**Slow Cooking Tips**

Using a slow cooker is very simple. After reviewing the operating manual, keep these tips and tricks in mind:

- **Time It Right:** Cooking times may vary with different makes and models of slow cookers, as well as shape and size. For best results, follow the cooking times provided in our recipes. They’re proven perfect!

- **Layer:** Unless instructed otherwise, layer food in this order (starting with bottom): root vegetables (eg. onions, carrots, potatoes), meat, seasonings, and non-root vegetables (eg. beans, peas, corn).

- **Fill It:** For maximum efficiency, fill between two-thirds to three-quarters full.

- **Turn It On:** Once plugged in and set, be sure to turn it on!

- **Keep a Lid On It:** Moisture and heat escape when the lid is raised, adding 15-30 minutes of cooking time with each lift. Check progress without lifting the lid by carefully spinning or shaking it until the condensation falls off and you can see inside.

- **Taste:** At the end of the cooking process, taste the dish and adjust seasonings. The intensity of spices and herbs tends to fade over long cooking times.

- **Thicken:** To help thicken stews and soups, remove the lid and cook on HIGH for the last 15-30 minutes of cooking time.

- **Test the Temperature:** When cooking is complete, ensure food is at the safe temperature of 165°F (74°C) before serving.

- **Just Before Serving:** Consider stirring in a splash of lemon or lime juice at the end of the cooking time to balance and refresh flavours.

- **Preserve Your Pot:** Avoid scratching the pot by using a wooden spoon or a plastic or rubber utensil. Never pour cold water into a hot slow cooker; it may crack.
**Browning**

A slow cooker can’t brown or sear meat; it doesn’t get hot enough. Although browning isn’t essential prior to cooking, it does create a more appealing dish. Browning adds a rich mahogany colour and more intense flavour, while the crunchy bark that envelopes the meat adds texture.

**Follow these browning basics:**
- Start with meat at room temperature.
- Pat meat dry with paper towels.
- Season meat or dust with flour.
- Heat a small amount of vegetable oil in skillet.
- Brown meat on all sides. If necessary, brown cubes in batches. Overcrowding the pan causes cubes to boil, not brown.

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**Cuts of Meat**

A slow cooker’s temperature, even on HIGH, is still cool enough to slowly tenderize even the toughest cuts. Well-marbled meat is ideal when cooked low and slow as the fat between the strong muscle fibres will melt away, leaving fork-tender meat.

**Ideal slow cooker cuts to use:**
- Lean Ground Pork
- Pork Chops (various cuts)
- Pork Ribs (various cuts)
- Pork Rib Roast, bone-in or boneless
- Pork Shoulder Blade Roast
- Pork Shoulder Blade Steaks
- Pork Stewing or Braising Cubes
Converting Recipes

With a few modifications, you can easily convert a favourite conventional recipe into a slow cooker delicacy.

**Conversion Chart**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conventional Recipe Cook Time</th>
<th>Slow Cooker Cooking Time</th>
<th>High Heat 300°F (149°C)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15-30 minutes</td>
<td>4-6 hours</td>
<td>1 ½-2 ½ hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>30-40 minutes</td>
<td>6-8 hours</td>
<td>3-4 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>50 minutes-3 hours</td>
<td>8-12 hours</td>
<td>4-6 hours</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**To convert a recipe, be sure to:**

- Cut liquid in recipe by one-third to one-half the amount called for.
- Add about one-half cup of liquid to recipes that don’t include a liquid (eg. water, broth).
- Add additional herbs and spices to enhance flavour.
- When using dried herbs, add them in the last hour of cooking.

**Food Safety**

When cooking with a slow cooker, certain considerations must be kept in mind:

- Begin with a clean cooker, utensils and work area. Wash hands before and often during preparation.
- Keep perishable foods refrigerated until required.
- Store vegetables and meat separately in the refrigerator if prepping in advance.
- Thaw meat before placing into slow cooker.
- Store leftovers in covered, shallow containers and refrigerate within two hours of cooking.
- Reheat leftovers to 165°F (74°C) using an oven, microwave or the stovetop.
- If a power failure occurs and you’re unable to immediately restore power, discard food even if it appears cooked.
- When in doubt, throw it out!
The smoke-kissed essence of a rosy-hued ham adds a comforting aroma to this simple classic. A light, yet filling soup that’s sure to delight!
In slow cooker, combine broth, water, onion, celery, carrots, garlic, lentils and ham. Add thyme and bay leaves. Cover and cook on LOW until vegetables and lentils are tender and soup has thickened, 6-8 hours. Discard thyme sprigs and bay leaves.

Season soup with salt and pepper according to taste. Ladle soup into bowls. Garnish with chopped parsley. Serve with rustic bread.

Serves 8-10

For thicker soup, remove a portion of cooked vegetables and lentils from slow cooker, purée in blender, and return to soup mixture.
Forget ground meat! Combine tender, succulent pulled pork with pantry staples like canned pulses and tomatoes to create a soul-satisfying, protein-packed chili.
In large skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add roast; brown on all sides. Meanwhile, in slow cooker, combine remaining ingredients, except sour cream, cheese and green onion. Transfer roast to slow cooker. Cover and cook on LOW, 8-10 hours. Remove roast from slow cooker onto a clean plate. Shred meat with two forks; return to slow cooker. Mix well. Turn heat to HIGH and cook, uncovered, 15 minutes more; stir once or twice. Spoon chili into bowls; top with sour cream, cheese and green onion. Serve with garlic bread or tortilla chips. **Serves 8-10**

Pierce roast with a fork and give it a little twist. If meat starts to easily fall apart, you know it’s done.

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1 **Canadian pork rib roast**, boneless, about 2 - 2 ½ lbs / 1 - 1.25 kg
1 Tbsp / 15 mL canola oil
2 cups / 500 mL sodium-reduced chicken broth
1-28 oz / 796 mL can **diced tomatoes**, drained
1 packet **chili seasoning mix**, hot or mild, like Club House brand
1 cup / 250 mL **sour cream**
1 cup / 250 mL **shredded Tex-Mex cheese**
¼ cup / 50 mL thinly sliced **green onion**

3 Tbsp / 45 mL tomato paste
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 cup / 250 mL chopped **onion**
Seasoned with a hint of allspice and nutmeg, these tasty, traditional pork meatballs bubble away in a velvety gravy spiked with sour cream.
Place ground pork in large bowl. Mix in egg, milk, onion, Worcestershire sauce, mustard, half the salt and pepper, allspice, nutmeg and bread crumbs. Roll mixture into 1” (2.5 cm) balls; refrigerate until firm, about 10 minutes. Meanwhile, in slow cooker, combine broth, thyme and remaining salt and pepper. Arrange meatballs in slow cooker. Cover and cook on LOW, 6-8 hours or until digital instant-read thermometer inserted into the centre of a few meatballs reads 160°F (71°C). Remove meatballs from slow cooker; set aside. Mix sour cream with flour until smooth; whisk into slow cooker. Return meatballs to slow cooker. Cook, uncovered, on HIGH until sauce is slightly thickened, 15-20 minutes. Stir in lemon juice. Serve meatballs over egg noodles. Garnish with chopped chives.  

Serves 4

Speed up prep time by shaping meatballs the night before and refrigerating until ready to add to the slow cooker.

1 lb / 500 g
lean ground Canadian pork

1 egg, fork-beaten

¼ cup / 50 mL
milk

½ cup / 125 mL
finely chopped white onion

1 tsp / 5 mL
Worcestershire sauce

1 tsp / 5 mL
Dijon mustard

½ tsp / 2 mL
EACH salt and pepper, divided

¼ tsp / 1 mL
EACH ground allspice and nutmeg

1/3 cup / 75 mL
dry bread crumbs

1 ½ cups / 375 mL
sodium-reduced beef broth

1 Tbsp / 15 mL
chopped fresh thyme

½ cup / 125 mL
sour cream

¼ cup / 50 mL
all-purpose flour

1 Tbsp / 15 mL
lemon juice

4 cups / 1 L
hot cooked egg noodles

1 Tbsp / 15 mL
chopped fresh chives
The lingering aroma of fresh garlic and ginger will leave you with memories of the Orient long after these saucy Asian-style pork ribs have been cooked to perfection.
Remove membrane from back of ribs. Cut ribs into single rib portions. Broil on foil-lined baking sheet until lightly browned, 8-10 minutes per side. Place ribs in slow cooker. In large measuring cup, combine orange juice, soy sauce, vinegar, oil, garlic, chili pepper flakes and ginger. Stir in brown sugar until dissolved. Pour mixture over ribs. Cover and cook on LOW, 4-5 hours or until meat easily pulls away from bone without falling off. Stir half way during cooking time to ensure that exposed ribs are as tender as those immersed in sauce. Remove ribs from slow cooker. Turn heat to HIGH. Mix cornstarch with 2 Tbsp (25 mL) cold water until smooth; add to slow cooker, stirring continuously. Cook, uncovered, until sauce is thickened; about 15 minutes. To serve, arrange ribs on a platter; pour desired amount of sauce over top. Garnish with toasted sesame seeds and green onion. **Serves 6**

For a complete meal, add 1 ½ cups (375 mL) shredded carrot to sauce prior to thickening with cornstarch mixture. Serve ribs over white rice with sauce.
Island flavours come alive when traditional Jamaican spices are paired with a sweet tropical coleslaw.

**Jamaican Jerk Sliders**
with Mango Slaw
Pork:
2 Canadian pork tenderloins, well-trimmed, about 12 oz / 0.375 kg EACH
1 cup / 250 mL store-bought Jerk marinade
1 cup / 250 mL brewed coffee
¼ cup / 50 mL molasses
3 Tbsp / 45 mL fresh lime juice
3 cloves garlic, minced
½ jalapeno pepper, seeded and minced
12 mini buns, sliced

Coleslaw:
1 bag (400 g) packaged coleslaw
2 cups / 500 mL frozen mango, thawed, drained and diced
¼ cup / 50 mL fresh cilantro, chopped
½ cup / 125 mL EACH light sour cream and light mayonnaise
3 Tbsp / 45 mL fresh lime juice
2 tsp / 10 mL lime zest, minced
2 cloves garlic, minced
½ tsp / 2 mL EACH salt and freshly ground black pepper

For the pork:
Pierce tenderloins several times with fork. Place in a resealable bag. Add Jerk marinade. Marinate in refrigerator 12-24 hours; discard marinade. Place pork in slow cooker. In a small bowl, stir together coffee, molasses, lime juice, garlic and jalapeno pepper. Add to slow cooker. Cook on LOW until meat is tender, about 8 hours. Remove meat to a clean plate. Drain liquid from pot into a large measuring cup. Shred meat with two forks; return to slow cooker. Add just enough liquid to moisten meat. Cover and cook on HIGH, about 15 minutes more.

For the coleslaw:
Combine coleslaw mix, mango, and cilantro in a bowl. Whisk together sour cream, mayonnaise, lime juice, lime zest, garlic, salt and pepper. Add to coleslaw mixture and stir. Pile pork onto bottom half of bun, top with Mango Slaw and top of bun.

Serves 12

Make a meal of it!
This delicious recipe can also be served as a full-size sandwich or served over rice with coleslaw on the side.

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Black-eyed peas and chunky peanut butter add texture to this silky African-inspired pork stew infused with exotic old-world spices.
In slow cooker, combine pork cubes, onion, garlic and tomatoes. Add seasonings and spices. Stir in chicken broth and tomato paste; mix well. Cover and cook on LOW until pork is tender, 6-8 hours. Stir in peanut butter and black-eyed peas.

Cover and cook on HIGH, about 15 minutes more. Blend in lemon juice to refresh flavours. Ladle stew into individual bowls. Garnish with chopped peanuts and cilantro leaves.

Serves 6-8

Keep meat refrigerated before slicing into cubes. Cold meat is firmer and easier to slice, resulting in more uniform pieces.

1 Canadian pork shoulder blade roast, well-trimmed, 2 lb / 1 kg, cut into 1" / 2.5 cm cubes
1 cup / 250 mL chopped onion
2 cloves minced garlic
3 large plum tomatoes, peeled, seeded and chopped
1 tsp / 5 mL EACH ground cumin and salt
½ tsp / 2 mL EACH curry powder, coriander, cayenne pepper, ground ginger and cinnamon
1 cup / 250 mL sodium-reduced chicken broth
2 Tbsp / 25 mL tomato paste
½ cup / 125 mL chunky peanut butter
1-14 oz can / 398 mL black-eyed peas, drained and rinsed
1 Tbsp / 15 mL lemon juice
½ cup / 50 mL chopped blanched peanuts
Cilantro leaves for garnish
A decadent, sweet sauce infused with subtle notes of licorice marries perfectly with rosemary-scented pork loin...a taste of heaven.
For the sauce:
In medium saucepan, combine all sauce ingredients, except butter, salt and pepper. Boil over medium-high heat until reduced by half, about 30 minutes. Discard rosemary sprigs and star anise. Transfer mixture to a blender; purée until smooth. Blend in the butter. Season with salt and pepper according to taste. Sauce can be prepared in advance. Reheat prior to serving.

For the roast:
In non-stick skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Season roast with salt and pepper. Brown roast on all sides; transfer to slow cooker. Pour in chicken broth and sprinkle with rosemary and garlic. Cover and cook on LOW, 6-8 hours. Remove roast from slow cooker onto a cutting board. Carve roast into ¼” (0.75 cm) slices. Serve with sauce.

Serves 8-10

To ensure your slow cooked roast stays intact when carving, check doneness with meat thermometer at the least amount of cooking time indicated in recipe; meat thermometer should read 160°F (71°C).
This aromatic, coconut-infused curry combines melt-in-your-mouth pork with an abundance of veggies and a medley of authentic Thai flavours.
In slow cooker, combine pork strips, potatoes, onion, bell pepper and garlic. Blend in coconut milk, beef broth, curry paste, ginger and fish sauce. Cover and cook on LOW until pork is tender, about 6 hours. Whisk flour with 2 Tbsp (25 mL) cold water until smooth; add to slow cooker, stirring continuously. Cover and cook on HIGH until slightly thickened, 15-20 minutes. Blend in lime zest and lime juice. Season with salt and pepper according to taste. If desired, garnish with chili pepper slices and chopped basil.

Serves 8-10

Vegetables cook evenly when they’re the same size. Cut uniform pieces for best cooking results.
Olé to endless options! This versatile Mexican pulled pork dish can also be used for tacos, burritos, fajitas, wraps, pizza topping and more.

Mexican Pork Tostadas
In large skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add roast; brown on all sides. Meanwhile, place onion slices on bottom of slow cooker. Sprinkle garlic over onion. Place roast on top. Drizzle vinegar over roast; season with oregano, cumin, salt and pepper. Add bay leaves. Cover and cook on LOW until meat is tender, about 8 hours. Remove roast from slow cooker onto a clean plate. Remove and discard onion and bay leaves. Skim fat from braising liquid if required. Shred meat with two forks; return to slow cooker. Cover and cook on HIGH, about 15 minutes more. For tostadas, serve pork on tostada shells, topped with your favourite fresh condiments.

Topping suggestions: diced tomato, chopped avocado, shredded lettuce, thinly sliced red onion, finely chopped cilantro.

Serves 10-12

The well-marbled meat called for in this recipe adds flavour and richness to the dish, while the pan juices help keep the meat succulent.
Fork-tender pork chops bathe in the earthy undertones and subtle sweetness of a hunter-style gravy peppered with mushrooms and leeks.
Layer pork chops in slow cooker. Add mushrooms and leek. In a large 4-cup (1 L) measuring cup, combine wine, water, soup, gravy mix and oregano. Pour over chops.

Cover and cook on LOW, about 6 hours. Season with salt and pepper according to taste.

Serves 6

If the size or shape of your slow cooker doesn’t allow for all pork chops to be in one layer, add an additional layer of chops, vegetables and sauce until all of the chops are used.
"We take pride in practicing sustainable and responsible farming while producing outstanding pork for all Manitoba families to enjoy."

The Dueck Family
Arborg, MB
– Manitoba Pork Producers