

# From Freezer to **CROCK- POT**

What's better than coming home to a slow-cooked dinner? A meal that went from freezer to crock-pot that morning from the stockpile of clean eats you prepped entirely in advance.

RECIPES BY LISA TURNER, PHOTOGRAPHY BY RONALD TSANG





SMOKY & SPICY BRISKET SLIDERS  
with Pickled Onions  
(SEE RECIPE, P. 64)



## CREOLE SHRIMP & SAUSAGE JAMBALAYA

SERVES **6**. HANDS-ON TIME: **30 MINUTES**. TOTAL TIME: **4 HOURS, 30 MINUTES**.\*

\*PLUS THAWING TIME.

This easy-cooking take on a New Orleans classic is brimming with bold ingredients like turkey sausage, cayenne pepper and okra – the okra isn't traditional, but it adds a definitive Cajun touch.

- 1 28-oz** BPA-free can unsalted diced tomatoes, with juices
- 12 oz** all-natural spicy turkey sausage, cut into 1-inch-thick slices
- 2 large** stalks celery, chopped
  - 1** yellow onion, chopped
  - 1** each large green and red bell pepper, chopped
- 6 cloves** garlic, minced
- 4 tsp** dried oregano
- 2 tsp** dried thyme
- ¾ tsp** cayenne pepper, or to taste
- 2** bay leaves
- 12 oz** frozen raw deveined peeled medium shrimp
- 1 cup** frozen long-grain brown rice
- 1 12-oz** bag frozen sliced okra, optional
- ⅛ tsp** sea salt
- ¼ tsp** ground black pepper
- 6 tbsp** chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
- hot sauce, optional

**1.** Make jambalaya mixture: In a large zip-top freezer bag or freezer-safe glass container, combine tomatoes, sausage, celery, onion, bell peppers, garlic, oregano, thyme, cayenne and bay leaves. Press out as much air as possible, seal and freeze for up to 2 months.

**2.** To cook, remove jambalaya mixture, shrimp, rice and okra (if using) from freezer and let stand in the refrigerator for 24 hours, or until fully thawed. Transfer jambalaya mixture to a slow cooker and cook on high for 4 to 6 hours, or on low for 8 hours.


**3.** During the last 10 minutes of cooking, add thawed shrimp, rice and okra (if using); cook until shrimp is pink and opaque, 7 to 10 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.

**4.** To serve, divide jambalaya among bowls; sprinkle with parsley. Serve with hot sauce (if using).

**PER SERVING** (⅙ of recipe): Calories: 212, Total Fat: 6 g, Sat. Fat: 2 g, Monounsaturated Fat: 1.5 g, Polyunsaturated Fat: 1 g, Carbs: 20 g, Fiber: 6 g, Sugars: 9 g, Protein: 19 g, Sodium: 914 mg, Cholesterol: 102 mg







**Thawing Is a Must** When cooking a dish in a slow cooker, it needs to reach a safe cooking temperature as quickly as possible to keep bacteria from multiplying, so it's crucial that meats are fully thawed before they are added to the pot. Cut meat and poultry into ½-inch-thick chunks or slices so they'll thaw faster, and let the mixture stand in the refrigerator for the full 24 hours, checking to ensure they are completely thawed.



# YELLOW SPLIT PEA SOUP

with Crème Fraîche & Torn Croutons

SERVES 6. HANDS-ON TIME: 20 MINUTES. TOTAL TIME: 6 HOURS, 20 MINUTES.\*

\*PLUS THAWING TIME.

This hearty vegetarian soup is loaded with fiber and plant-based protein. For a bigger nutrient boost, stir in one 10-oz bag of baby spinach, kale or arugula during the last 20 minutes of cooking. Thawed frozen broccoli, cauliflower or winter squash are other good last-minute add-ins. The torn croutons add panache; if you don't have the time or energy to make them, skip this step and serve the stew with chunks of rustic whole-grain bread instead.

## SPLIT PEA SOUP

<b>1 lb</b>	dried yellow split peas (about 2¼ cups)	<b>2 tbsp</b>	organic unsalted butter, melted, or olive oil
<b>6</b>	carrots, chopped	<b>5 large</b>	cloves garlic, minced
<b>1 large</b>	leek (white and light green parts only), trimmed and sliced crosswise	<b>½ tsp</b>	ground black pepper + additional to taste
<b>1 large</b>	stalk celery, chopped	<b>2</b>	bay leaves
		<b>6 large</b>	sprigs fresh thyme, divided
		<b>8 cups</b>	low-sodium vegetable broth
		<b>½ tsp</b>	sea salt
		<b>½ cup</b>	crème fraîche

## CROUTONS

**½ small** (12-oz) whole-grain boule or whole-grain sourdough

**3 tbsp** olive oil

**1.** In a large zip-top freezer bag or freezer-safe glass container, combine split peas, carrots, leek, celery, butter, garlic, pepper, bay leaves and 5 thyme sprigs. Press out as much air as possible, seal and freeze for up to 2 months.

**2.** To cook, remove bag from freezer and let stand in the refrigerator overnight. Transfer to a slow cooker along with broth and cook on low for 6 hours. Season with salt and additional pepper.

**3.** Make croutons: About 20 minutes before serving, preheat oven to 400°F. Tear bread roughly into large pieces (each about 1½ inches); arrange on a rimmed baking sheet and drizzle with oil. Bake until golden and crispy, 10 to 12 minutes. Let cool for 5 minutes.

**4.** To serve, remove and discard bay leaves and thyme sprigs. Divide among bowls. Pull leaves off remaining thyme sprig and sprinkle over servings. Drizzle with crème fraîche and top with croutons.

**PER SERVING** (½ of recipe): Calories: 567, Total Fat: 20 g, Sat. Fat: 9 g, Monounsaturated Fat: 8 g, Polyunsaturated Fat: 1 g, Carbs: 77 g, Fiber: 24 g, Sugars: 9.5 g, Protein: 21 g, Sodium: 561 mg, Cholesterol: 32 mg







## GOT COCONUT MILK?

Don't fear the fat content of this tikka masala as it's mainly comprised of medium chain triglycerides (MCTs), the healthy fatty acids found in coconut milk. Studies have shown that MCTs actually help your body burn fat and keep you feeling satisfied. Coconut milk also contains electrolytes such as potassium and magnesium, which play a role in muscle tissue repair during post-workout recovery.

## CHICKEN TIKKA MASALA (SEE RECIPE, P. 65)





## GINGER APRICOT CHICKEN

with Garlicky Greens

SERVES **6**. HANDS-ON TIME: **20 MINUTES**. TOTAL TIME: **5 HOURS, 20 MINUTES**.\*

\*PLUS THAWING TIME.

This Asian-inspired recipe uses boneless chicken breasts, but boneless chicken thighs work just as well. If you want to give the dish a spicy spin, add one serrano hot pepper to the mixture before freezing; cook the pepper in the sauce then remove and discard it before serving.

### CHICKEN

- 1 cup** no-sugar-added apricot preserves
- 1 small** red onion, chopped
- ¼ cup** peeled and roughly chopped ginger
- ¼ cup** extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 tbsp** reduced-sodium tamari or soy sauce
- 4 large** cloves garlic
- 2 lb** boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into ½-inch-thick slices
- sea salt and ground black pepper, optional
- 1 bunch** green onions (white and light green parts only), thinly sliced

### GREENS

- 2 tbsp** extra-virgin olive oil
- 4 cloves** garlic, chopped
- 1 16-oz** bag baby spinach, kale or other greens
- 2 tbsp** toasted sesame seeds

**1. Make chicken:** In a blender or food processor, combine preserves, onion, ginger, oil, tamari and garlic. Purée until combined but not completely smooth; mixture should still have some small chunks. Pour into a large zip-top freezer bag or freezer-safe glass container. Add chicken, seal and shake to combine. Open bag, press out as much air as possible, seal and freeze for up to 2 months.

**2. To cook chicken,** remove bag from freezer and let stand in the refrigerator for 24 hours, or until fully thawed. Transfer to a slow cooker and cook on high for 5 to 6 hours or on low for 8 hours. Season with salt and pepper (if using).

**3. Make greens:** About 5 minutes before serving, in a large skillet, heat oil on medium. Add garlic and greens; cook, stirring, until garlic is fragrant and greens are wilted, 2 to 3 minutes. Sprinkle with sesame seeds.

**4. To serve,** divide greens among plates; divide chicken and sauce over top. Garnish with green onions.

**PER SERVING** (½ of recipe): Calories: 297, Total Fat: 15 g, Sat. Fat: 2 g, Monounsaturated Fat: 9 g, Polyunsaturated Fat: 2 g, Carbs: 16.5 g, Fiber: 6 g, Sugars: 1 g, Protein: 28 g, Sodium: 260 mg, Cholesterol: 83 mg









## SMOKY & SPICY BRISKET SLIDERS

with Pickled Onions

SERVES **8 TO 10**. HANDS-ON TIME: **25 MINUTES**.

TOTAL TIME: **4 HOURS, 25 MINUTES**.\*

\*PLUS THAWING TIME.

Brisket makes a hearty, easy meal that pleases both kids and grown-ups.

It's also a terrific dish for last-minute entertaining. This recipe calls for canned chipotle peppers; you can adjust the amount to your heat tolerance, or, for easier prep, substitute chipotle powder. Quick-pickled onions add a fresh, tangy zip to the rich, smoky meat – make them the night before the brisket goes into the slow cooker.

### BRISKET SLIDERS

- 1 cup** ketchup (**TIP:** Look for all-natural options, such as Tessemae's, or get our homemade recipe at [cleaneating.com](http://cleaneating.com).)
- ½ cup** organic dark beer or low-sodium beef broth
- ¼ cup** white vinegar or red wine vinegar
- 2 tbsp** each coconut sugar and smoked paprika
- 1 or 2** BPA-free canned chipotle peppers, seeded and chopped + 1 tbsp adobo sauce from can, or to taste
- 6 cloves** garlic, chopped

- 3 lb** organic or grass-fed beef brisket, trimmed and cut crosswise into ½-inch-thick slices
- 1 small** yellow onion, chopped
- 8–10** whole-wheat slider buns, halved and warmed

### PICKLED ONIONS

- 1** red onion, halved and thinly sliced into half-moons
- 3 tbsp** raw honey
- ½ cup** apple cider vinegar (**TRY:** Bragg Organic Raw Apple Cider Vinegar)

**1. Make brisket:** In a large zip-top freezer bag or freezer-safe glass container, whisk together ketchup, beer, vinegar, coconut sugar, paprika, chipotle peppers with adobo and garlic. Seal bag; massage ingredients together to combine.

**2. Open bag;** add brisket and yellow onion. Seal and shake to combine. Open bag, press out as much air as possible, seal and freeze for up to 2 months. To cook brisket, remove bag from the freezer and let stand in the refrigerator for 24 hours.

**3. Make pickled onions:** The night before cooking brisket, fill a heat-proof 8-oz glass jar with red onion slices. In a small saucepan, bring ½ cup water to a boil. Stir in honey until dissolved. Stir in vinegar, then pour mixture over onions. Seal jar and refrigerate overnight.

**4. When brisket is fully thawed,** transfer mixture from bag or container to a slow cooker and cook on high for 4 to 5 hours or on low for 8 hours.

**5. Using a slotted spoon,** transfer brisket to a large shallow bowl. Using 2 forks, shred meat. Spoon some of the sauce mixture over meat. Pour remaining sauce into a small bowl.

**6. To serve,** layer meat on buns and top with pickled onions. Serve with remaining sauce on the side.

**PER SERVING** (⅓ of recipe): Calories: 380, Total Fat: 9 g, Sat. Fat: 3 g, Monounsaturated Fat: 4 g, Polyunsaturated Fat: 1 g, Carbs: 37 g, Fiber: 3 g, Sugars: 10 g, Protein: 38 g, Sodium: 669 mg, Cholesterol: 105 mg

**MAKE IT A MEAL:** These sliders are great served with sweet potato fries. They also go well with a simple slaw: Combine store-bought slaw mix, sliced green onions and a quick dressing of olive oil, apple cider vinegar and raw honey.



## CHICKEN TIKKA MASALA

SERVES **4 TO 6.**

HANDS-ON TIME: **30 MINUTES.**

TOTAL TIME: **5 HOURS, 30 MINUTES.\***

\*PLUS THAWING TIME.

This Indian favorite calls for a traditional mix of spices, but you can substitute 3 tbsp garam masala (a ready-made spice mixture) for them. If you have time, sauté the onion, garlic and spices in 2 tbsp coconut oil before combining them with all the other ingredients in the freezer bag – it will make the flavors deeper and more complex. Serve with brown basmati rice.

- 1** yellow onion, chopped
- 1** jalapeño pepper, seeded and chopped
- 2 tbsp** unsalted tomato paste
- 2 tbsp** peeled and minced ginger
- 4 cloves** garlic, minced
- 2½ tsp** each ground cinnamon, cumin, coriander and cardamom
- 1½ tsp** sea salt, or to taste
- 1 tsp** ground black pepper, or to taste
- ¾ tsp** each ground cloves and nutmeg
- 1 14-oz** BPA-free can puréed tomatoes (aka passata)
- 1½ lb** boneless, skinless chicken thighs, cut into ½-inch chunks
- 1–2** 13.5-oz BPA-free cans full-fat coconut milk
- ½ cup** chopped fresh cilantro
- ½ cup** full-fat plain yogurt, optional

**1.** In a large bowl, stir together onion, jalapeño, tomato paste, ginger, garlic, cinnamon, cumin, coriander, cardamom, salt, black pepper, cloves and nutmeg. Stir in tomatoes and pour into a large zip-top freezer bag or freezer-safe glass container. Add chicken; seal and shake to mix well. Open bag, press out as much air as possible, seal and freeze for up to 2 months.

**2.** To cook tikka masala, remove bag from freezer and let stand in the refrigerator for 24 hours, until fully

thawed. Transfer to a slow cooker and cook on high for 5 to 6 hours or on low for 8 hours.

**3.** About 10 minutes before cook time is done, stir enough coconut milk into slow cooker to thin sauce to desired consistency. Cover and cook until heated through, about 10 minutes. Season with additional salt and pepper, if desired.

**4.** Serve over brown basmati rice, and top with with cilantro and yogurt (if using). ©

**PER SERVING** (½ of recipe): Calories: 319, Total Fat: 19 g, Sat. Fat: 13 g, Monounsaturated Fat: 2 g, Polyunsaturated Fat: 1 g, Carbs: 14 g, Fiber: 4 g, Sugars: 5 g, Protein: 26 g, Sodium: 622 mg, Cholesterol: 107 mg



### Lisa Turner CHEF/NUTRITIONIST/FOOD WRITER, BOULDER, CO

Now living near the Rockies, recipe developer Lisa Turner grew up in the south, where she first learned to cook in her grandmother's farm kitchen. "I feel incredibly grateful that I get to create, photograph and write about food as a career," she says.

