



# 10

## TASTIEST SLOW COOKER RECIPES

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## Barbecue Pulled Chicken

**Makes:** 8 servings

**Active time:** 25 minutes **Total:** 5½ hours

**To make ahead:** Cover and refrigerate for up to 3 days or freeze for up to 1 month.

Heart Health  Diabetes  Weight Loss  Gluten Free

This fanciful reinterpretation of pulled pork uses chicken and lots of tomato sauce. Have sliced jalapeños, sliced red onions and some sour cream on hand for toppings.

- 1 8-ounce can reduced-sodium tomato sauce
- 1 4-ounce can chopped green chiles, drained
- 3 tablespoons cider vinegar
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 1 tablespoon sweet or smoked paprika
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 2 teaspoons dry mustard
- 1 teaspoon ground chipotle chile (see Tip)
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 2½ pounds boneless, skinless chicken thighs, trimmed of fat
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced

1. Stir tomato sauce, chiles, vinegar, honey, paprika, tomato paste, Worcestershire sauce, mustard, ground chipotle and salt in a 6-quart slow cooker until smooth. Add chicken, onion and garlic; stir to combine.

2. Put the lid on and cook on low until the chicken can be pulled apart, about 5 hours.

3. Transfer the chicken to a cutting board and shred with a fork. Return the chicken to the sauce, stir well and serve.

**Per serving:** 249 calories; 11 g fat (3 g sat, 4 g mono); 93 mg cholesterol; 10 g carbohydrate; 4 g added sugars; 26 g protein; 1 g fiber; 304 mg sodium; 430 mg potassium.

**Nutrition bonus:** Zinc (18% daily value), Vitamin A (16% dv).

**Carbohydrate Servings:** ½

**Exchanges:** ½ other carbohydrates, 2½ lean meat

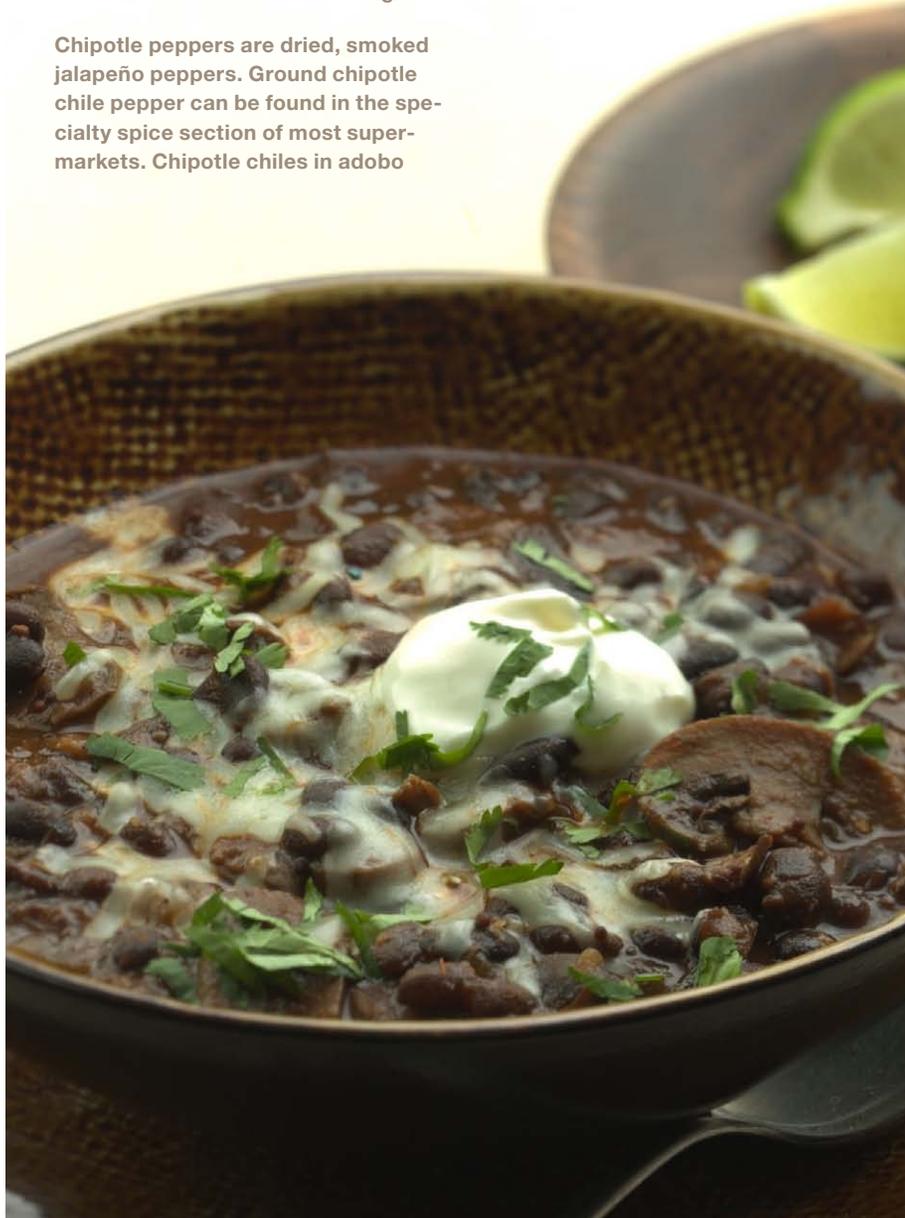
**Tip:** Chipotle chiles are dried, smoked jalapeños. Ground chipotle can be found in the spice section of most supermarkets or online at [penzeys.com](http://penzeys.com).



**Tips:** Tomatillos are tart, plum-size green fruits that look like small, husk-covered green tomatoes. Find them in the produce section near the tomatoes. Remove the outer husk and rinse them well before using.

Chipotle peppers are dried, smoked jalapeño peppers. Ground chipotle chile pepper can be found in the specialty spice section of most supermarkets. Chipotle chiles in adobo

sauce are smoked jalapeños packed in a flavorful sauce. Look for the small cans with the Mexican foods in large supermarkets. Once opened, they'll keep up to 2 weeks in the refrigerator or 6 months in the freezer.



## Black Bean-Mushroom Chili

**Makes:** 10 servings, generous 1 cup each

**Active time:** 25 minutes

**Slow-cooker time:** 5-8 hours

**To make ahead:** Cover and refrigerate for up to 2 days or freeze for up to 3 months.

**Equipment:** 5- to 6-quart slow cooker

Heart Health  Diabetes  Weight Loss  Gluten Free

Black beans, earthy mushrooms and tangy tomatillos combine with a variety of spices and smoky chipotles to create a fantastic full-flavored chili. It can simmer in the slow cooker all day, which makes it perfect for a healthy supper when the end of your day is rushed.

- 1 pound dried black beans (2½ cups), rinsed
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- ¼ cup mustard seeds
- 2 tablespoons chili powder
- 1½ teaspoons cumin seeds or ground cumin
- ½ teaspoon cardamom seeds or ground cardamom
- 2 medium onions, coarsely chopped
- 1 pound mushrooms, sliced
- 8 ounces tomatillos (see *Tips, left*), husked, rinsed and coarsely chopped
- ¼ cup water
- 5½ cups mushroom broth or vegetable broth
- 1 6-ounce can tomato paste
- 1-2 tablespoons minced canned chipotle peppers in adobo sauce (see *Tips, left*)
- 1¼ cups grated Monterey Jack or pepper Jack cheese
- ½ cup reduced-fat sour cream
- ½ cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 2 limes, cut into wedges

1. Soak beans overnight in 2 quarts water. (Alternatively, place beans and 2 quarts water in a large pot. Bring to a boil. Boil for 2 minutes. Remove from heat and let stand for 1 hour.) Drain the beans, discarding soaking liquid.

2. Combine oil, mustard seeds, chili powder, cumin and cardamom in a 5- to 6-quart Dutch oven. Place over high heat and stir until the spices sizzle, about 30 seconds. Add onions, mushrooms, tomatillos and water. Cover and cook, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables are juicy, 5 to 7 minutes. Uncover and stir often until the juices evaporate and the vegetables are lightly browned, 10 to 15 minutes. Add broth, tomato paste and chipotles; mix well.

3. Place the beans in a 5- to 6-quart slow cooker. Pour the hot vegetable mixture over the beans. Turn heat to High. Put the lid on and cook until the beans are creamy, 5 to 8 hours.

4. Garnish each serving with cheese, a dollop of sour cream and a sprinkling of cilantro. Serve with lime wedges.

**Per serving:** 306 calories; 10 g fat (4 g sat, 2 g mono); 20 mg cholesterol; 40 g carbohydrate; 0 g added sugars; 18 g protein; 13 g fiber; 415 mg sodium; 735 mg potassium.

**Nutrition bonus:** Fiber (52% daily value), Folate (47% dv), Iron (22% dv), Potassium (21% dv).

**Carbohydrate Servings:** 2

**Exchanges:** 2 starch, 2½ vegetable, 1 medium-fat protein, 1 fat

### Stovetop Variation

**Total:** 4½ hours

In Step 2, increase broth to 8½ cups. Omit Step 3. Add the beans to the Dutch oven; cover and simmer the chili gently over low heat, stirring occasionally, until the beans are creamy to bite, about 3 hours.

## Braised Pork with Salsa

**Makes:** About 8 servings, generous ¾ cup each

**Active time:** 45 minutes

**Slow-cooker time:** 6-7 hours

**To make ahead:** Cover and refrigerate for up to 2 days or freeze for up to 3 months. Reheat on the stovetop, in a microwave or in the oven.

Heart Health  Diabetes  Weight Loss  Gluten Free

With just a few ingredients, you can produce a full-flavored, meltingly tender pork stew in your slow cooker. Serve over quinoa or rice.

- 3 pounds boneless pork shoulder or butt**
- 1½ cups prepared tomatillo salsa (see Tip)**
- 1¾ cups reduced-sodium chicken broth**
- 1 medium onion, thinly sliced**
- 1 teaspoon cumin seeds or ground cumin**
- 3 plum tomatoes (½ pound), thinly sliced**
- ½ cup chopped fresh cilantro, divided**
- ½ cup reduced-fat sour cream**

**1.** Trim and discard pork surface fat. Cut meat apart following layers of fat around muscles; trim and discard fat. Cut into 2-inch chunks and rinse with cold water. Place in a 5- or 6-quart slow cooker. Turn heat to High.

**2.** Combine salsa, broth, onion and cumin seeds in a saucepan and bring to a boil over high heat. Pour over the meat. Add tomatoes and mix gently. Put the lid on and cook until the meat is pull-apart tender, 6 to 7 hours.

**3.** With a slotted spoon, transfer the pork to a large bowl; cover and keep warm. Pour the sauce and vegetables into a large skillet; skim fat. Bring to a boil over high heat. Boil, skimming froth from time to time, for about 20 minutes, to intensify flavors and thicken slightly. Add the pork and ¼ cup cilantro; heat through.

**4.** To serve, ladle into bowls and garnish each serving with a dollop of sour cream and a sprinkling of the remaining ¼ cup cilantro.

**Per serving:** 252 calories; 12 g fat (5 g sat, 5 g mono); 84 mg cholesterol; 7 g carbohydrate; 0 g added sugars; 28 g protein; 1 g fiber; 253 mg sodium; 854 mg potassium.

**Nutrition bonus:** Zinc (27% daily value), Potassium (24% dv).

**Carbohydrate Serving:** 1

**Exchanges:** 1 vegetable, 3 medium-fat protein

### Oven Variation

Total: 3 hours

Preheat oven to 350°F. Combine pork, salsa, ½ cup chicken broth, onion, cumin seeds and tomatoes in a 9-by-13-inch baking dish; cover snugly with foil. Bake until the pork is pull-apart tender, about 2¼ hours. Skim fat. Uncover and bake until the meat begins to brown, about 15 minutes more. Stir in ¼ cup cilantro. Ladle into bowls, garnish with sour cream and remaining cilantro.

**Tip:** Tomatillo salsa (sometimes labeled salsa verde or green salsa) is a blend of green chiles, onions and tomatillos.





## Fragrant Shredded Beef Stew

**Makes:** 10 servings

**Active time:** 25 minutes **Total:** 8½ hours

**To make ahead:** Cover and refrigerate for up to 3 days or freeze for up to 1 month.

Heart Health  Diabetes  Weight Loss  Gluten Free

This stew has a simple list of ingredients, but plenty of great flavor thanks to flank steak, a cut that's known for its excellent meaty flavor. The flank is also known for its long grainy, and sometimes tough texture. In this stew the texture is a great asset—the meat shreds apart into tasty strips after it's cooked in the slow cooker.

- 1½ cups reduced-sodium chicken broth
- ¼ cup sherry vinegar
- 2 stalks celery, thinly sliced
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 large red bell pepper, seeded and chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 3 pounds flank steak, trimmed of fat, each steak cut into thirds
- ½ cup packed fresh cilantro leaves, chopped
- ½ cup chopped pickled jalapeños
- 10 corn tortillas, heated (see Tip)

1. Combine broth, vinegar, celery, onion, bell pepper, garlic, cumin, salt and pepper in a 6-quart slow cooker. Add beef, submerging it by tucking the vegetables under, over and between the pieces.

2. Put the lid on and cook on Low until the meat is fork-tender, about 8 hours.

3. Transfer the meat to a cutting board; let stand for 10 minutes. Shred the meat with 2 forks and return it to the slow cooker. Stir in cilantro. Garnish with jalapeño and serve warm tortillas on the side.

**Per serving:** 265 calories; 11 g fat (4 g sat, 4 g mono); 53 mg cholesterol; 18 g carbohydrate; 0 g added sugars; 24 g protein; 3 g fiber; 376 mg sodium; 474 mg potassium.

**Nutrition bonus:** Vitamin C (100% daily value), Zinc (33% dv), Iron & Vitamin A (20% dv).

**Carbohydrate Servings:** 1

**Exchanges:** 1 starch, 1 vegetable, 3 lean meat

**Tip:** Wrap corn tortillas in foil and bake at 300°F until steaming, about 10 minutes.

## Greek Chicken & Vegetable Ragout

**Makes:** 6 servings, about 1½ cups each

**Active time:** 40 minutes

**Slow-cooker time:** 2½-3 hours on High or 4-4 ½ hours on Low

**To make ahead:** Cover and refrigerate for up to 2 days. Freezing is not recommended.

**To prep ahead:** Peel and cut potatoes; cover with water. Trim chicken thighs. Combine broth, wine and minced garlic. Refrigerate in separate covered containers for up to 1 day.

Heart Health  Diabetes  Weight Loss  Gluten Free

Chicken thighs stay moist and succulent during slow cooking, infusing the accompanying vegetables with superb flavor. This easy braise has a luxurious finish of avgolemono, a versatile Greek sauce made with egg, lemon and fresh dill.

- 1 pound carrots, cut into 1¼-inch pieces, or 3 cups baby carrots
- 1 pound (3-4 medium) yellow-fleshed potatoes, such as Yukon Gold, peeled and cut lengthwise into 1¼-inch-wide wedges
- 2 pounds boneless, skinless chicken thighs, trimmed
- 1 14-ounce can reduced-sodium chicken broth
- ⅓ cup dry white wine
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- 1 15-ounce can artichoke hearts, rinsed and quartered if large
- 1 large egg
- 2 large egg yolks
- ⅓ cup lemon juice
- ⅓ cup chopped fresh dill
- Freshly ground pepper to taste

1. Spread carrots and potatoes over the bottom and up the sides of a 4-quart or larger slow cooker. Arrange chicken on top of the vegetables. Bring broth, wine, garlic and salt to a simmer in a medium saucepan over medium-high heat. Pour over the chicken and vegetables. Cover and cook until the chicken is cooked through and vegetables are tender, 2½ to 3 hours on High or 4 to 4½ hours on Low.

2. Add artichokes to the slow cooker, cover and cook on high for 5 minutes. Meanwhile, whisk egg, egg yolks and lemon juice in a medium bowl.

3. Transfer the chicken and vegetables to a serving bowl using a slotted spoon. Cover and keep warm. Ladle about ½ cup of the cooking liquid into the egg mixture. Whisk until smooth. Whisk the egg mixture into the remaining cooking liquid in the slow cooker. Cover and cook, whisking 2 or 3 times, until slightly thickened and sauce reaches 160°F on an instant-read thermometer, 15 to 20 minutes. Stir in dill and pepper. Pour the sauce over the chicken and vegetables and serve.

**Per serving:** 355 calories; 11 g fat (3 g sat, 4 g mono); 199 mg cholesterol; 27 g carbohydrate; 0 g added sugars; 34 g protein; 4 g fiber; 629 mg sodium; 531 mg potassium.

**Nutrition bonus:** Vitamin A (174% daily value), Vitamin C (36% dv), Potassium (15% dv).

**Carbohydrate Servings:** 1½

**Exchanges:** 1 starch, 1 vegetable, 3½ lean meat



**Tip:** To make your own fresh breadcrumbs, trim crusts from whole-wheat bread. Tear bread into pieces and process in a food processor until coarse crumbs form. To make fine breadcrumbs, process until very fine. To make dry breadcrumbs, spread coarse or fine breadcrumbs on a baking sheet and bake at 250°F

until dry, about 10 to 15 minutes. One slice of bread makes about ½ cup fresh breadcrumbs or about ⅓ cup dry breadcrumbs. For store-bought coarse dry breadcrumbs we like Ian's brand, labeled "Panko breadcrumbs." Find them at well-stocked supermarkets.



## Nonna's Spaghetti & Meatballs

**Makes:** 8 servings, 1 cup pasta, ¾ cup sauce & 2 meatballs each

**Active time:** 45 minutes

**Slow-cooker time:** 4-8 hours

**To prep ahead:** Make meatballs and sauce (Steps 1 & 2); cover and refrigerate separately for up to 1 day. Reheat sauce to a simmer before adding to slow cooker.

**To make ahead:** Freeze cooked meatballs in sauce airtight for up to 3 months. Defrost before reheating.

**Equipment:** 6-quart slow cooker

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The meatballs and sauce are cooked in the slow cooker for this traditional Italian spaghetti and meatballs recipe. You could also serve the meatballs over creamy polenta or on a sandwich with melted provolone.

### Meatballs

- 2 large eggs
- ½ cup dry whole-wheat breadcrumbs (see Tip, left)
- ½ cup finely chopped onion
- ½ cup grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, plus more for serving
- ¼ cup minced fresh parsley
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 8 ounces lean (90% or leaner) ground beef
- 8 ounces ground pork or Italian pork sausage
- 8 ounces ground veal

### Sauce & Spaghetti

- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 cup finely chopped onion
- 3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 2 teaspoons Italian seasoning
- ¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper
- 1 cup dry red wine
- 1 28-ounce can crushed tomatoes
- 1 14-ounce can diced tomatoes
- 1 pound whole-wheat spaghetti
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh oregano

**1. To prepare meatballs:** Lightly beat eggs in a large bowl. Stir in breadcrumbs, ½ cup onion, cheese, parsley, garlic, salt and pepper. Add beef, pork (or sausage) and veal; gently mix until combined (do not overmix). Using ¼ cup for each, make 16 meatballs and place in a 6-quart slow cooker.

**2. To prepare sauce & spaghetti:** Heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add 1 cup onion and cook, stirring occasionally, until beginning to brown, 3 to 5 minutes. Add garlic, Italian seasoning and crushed red pepper; cook, stirring, for 30 seconds. Add wine and boil for 1 minute. Add crushed and diced tomatoes and bring to a simmer. Pour the sauce over the meatballs.

3. Put the lid on the slow cooker and cook on High for 4 hours or Low for 8 hours.

4. 30 minutes before you're ready to eat, bring a large pot of water to a boil. Cook the spaghetti until just tender, 8 to 10 minutes or according to package directions.

5. Spoon any fat off the sauce; add oregano. Serve the meatballs and sauce over the spaghetti with extra Parmesan, if desired.

**Per serving:** 475 calories; 11 g fat (4 g sat, 4 g mono); 108 mg cholesterol; 61 g carbohydrate; 0 g added sugars; 32 g protein; 11 g fiber; 704 mg sodium; 856 mg potassium.

**Nutrition bonus:** Vitamin C (35% daily value), Magnesium & Zinc (32% dv), Iron (29% dv), Potassium (25% dv), Vitamin A (24% dv).

**Carbohydrate Servings:** 3

**Exchanges:** 3½ starch, 1 vegetable, 3 lean meat

### Stovetop Variation

Make the sauce (Step 2) in a large Dutch oven instead of a skillet, then gently add the meatballs to the simmering sauce. Cover and gently simmer until the meatballs are cooked through, about 1 hour.

## Pulled Pork with Caramelized Onions

**Makes:** 8 servings, about 1 cup each

**Active time:** 1 hour

**Slow-cooker time:** 5-9 hours

**To make ahead:** Prepare through Step 1, cover and refrigerate for up to 2 days. To finish, bring the sauce to a simmer and continue with Steps 2 & 3. The cooked pork can be refrigerated for up to 3 days.

**Equipment:** 4-quart or larger slow cooker

Heart Health  Diabetes  Weight Loss  Gluten Free

Traditional pulled pork is barbecued, which gives it a smoky flavor. But the slow cooker happens to be the absolute easiest way to cook pulled pork—and you can get a hint of smoke by adding chipotle chile. Serve the pulled pork with potato salad, collard greens and grits. Or make it into a sandwich and serve it on a bun with coleslaw.

- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 3 large onions, thinly sliced
- 1/3 cup raw cane sugar, such as Demerara or turbinado (see *Tips, right*)
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/3 cup cider vinegar
- 1 cup chili sauce, such as Heinz
- 1 1/2-3 teaspoons minced chipotle chile in adobo sauce (see *Tips, right*)
- 3 pounds boneless pork shoulder or blade (butt) roast, trimmed

1. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add onions and cook, stirring occasionally, until they begin to soften, 3 to 6 minutes. Add sugar and continue to cook, stirring constantly, until the onions are golden brown, 6 to 8 minutes more. Add garlic, oregano, pepper and salt and cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Add vinegar and bring to a boil. Cook until mostly evaporated, 30 seconds to 1 minute. Remove from the heat and stir in chili sauce and chipotle to taste.

2. Place pork in a 4-quart (or larger) slow cooker and cover with the sauce. Cover and cook until the pork is almost falling apart, about 4 hours on High or 8 hours on Low.

3. Transfer the pork to a cutting board and shred using two forks. Stir back into the sauce.

**Per serving (without bun):** 358 calories; 18 g fat (6 g sat, 9 g mono); 90 mg cholesterol; 21 g carbohydrate; 9 g added sugars; 25 g protein; 3 g fiber; 664 mg sodium; 510 mg potassium.

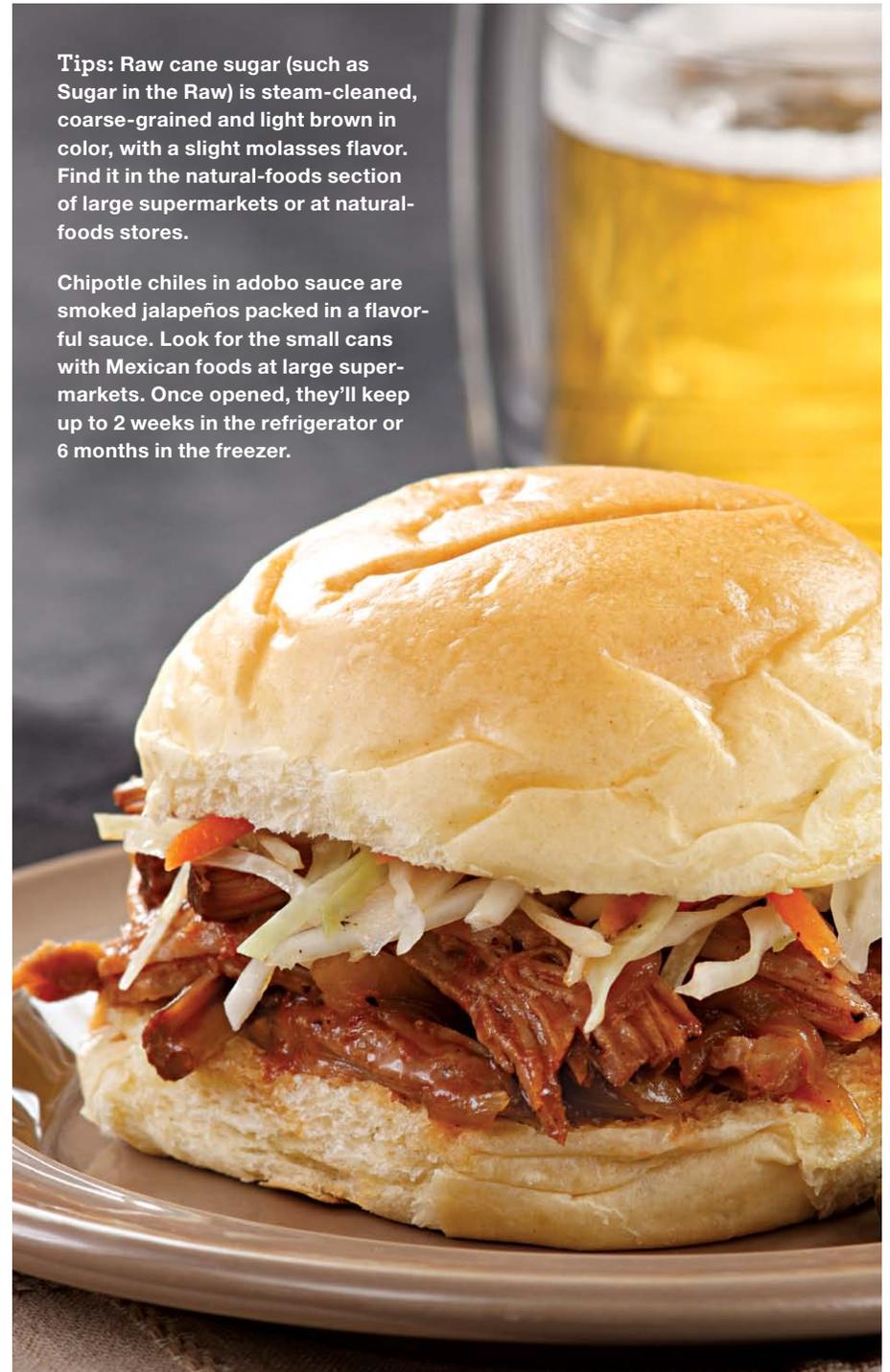
**Nutrition bonus:** Zinc (31% daily value), Vitamin C (17% dv).

**Carbohydrate Servings:** 1 1/2

**Exchanges:** 1 1/2 carbohydrate (other), 3 medium-fat meat

**Tips:** Raw cane sugar (such as Sugar in the Raw) is steam-cleaned, coarse-grained and light brown in color, with a slight molasses flavor. Find it in the natural-foods section of large supermarkets or at natural-foods stores.

Chipotle chiles in adobo sauce are smoked jalapeños packed in a flavorful sauce. Look for the small cans with Mexican foods at large supermarkets. Once opened, they'll keep up to 2 weeks in the refrigerator or 6 months in the freezer.





## Slow-Cooker Picadillo

**Makes:** 8 servings, generous 1 cup each

**Active time:** 40 minutes

**Slow-cooker time:** 4-8 hours

**To prep ahead:** Prepare through Step 3; cover and refrigerate the mixture in a large container. Transfer to the slow cooker to cook.

**Equipment:** 5- to 6-quart slow cooker

Heart Health  Diabetes  Weight Loss  Gluten Free

Picadillo, a Latin American-style hash, is usually made with ground beef. This one uses bison or lean beef and plenty of spices including chili powder, cumin, oregano and cinnamon.

- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 pounds ground bison or lean (90% lean or leaner) ground beef
- 4 ounces chorizo-style cooked chicken sausage, diced
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 2 teaspoons cumin seeds, crushed or coarsely chopped
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ cup water
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 2 tablespoons red-wine vinegar
- 2 cups diced onion
- 2 cups chopped seeded Cubanelle or Anaheim peppers
- 1 cup frozen corn kernels, thawed
- ½ cup pitted green olives, sliced
- 5 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 28-ounce can diced tomatoes
- ¼ teaspoon salt, or to taste
- Freshly ground pepper to taste

1. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add bison (or beef) and sausage and cook, breaking up the bison (or beef) with a wooden spoon, for 5 to 6 minutes. If necessary, transfer to a colander and drain any extra fat, then return to the skillet.

2. Add chili powder, cumin, oregano and cinnamon; cook over medium-high heat, stirring, until fragrant, 1 to 2 minutes. Stir in water, tomato paste and vinegar until combined.

3. Transfer the meat mixture to a 5- to 6-quart slow cooker. Stir in onion, peppers, corn, olives and garlic. Add tomatoes with their juice.

4. Cover and cook on High for 4 hours or Low for 7 to 8 hours. Stir the picadillo to combine and season with salt and pepper.

**Per serving:** 311 calories; 16 g fat (4 g sat, 3 g mono); 70 mg cholesterol; 17 g carbohydrate; 0 g added sugars; 28 g protein; 4 g fiber; 551 mg sodium; 455 mg potassium.

**Nutrition bonus:** Vitamin C (105% daily value), Zinc (37% dv), Vitamin A (34% dv), Iron (22% dv).

**Carbohydrate Servings:** 1

**Exchanges:** 2 vegetable, 3½ lean meat, 1 fat

## Slow-Cooker Stout & Chicken Stew

**Makes:** 8 servings, about 1½ cups each

**Active time:** 45 minutes

**Slow-cooker time:** 4-8 hours

**To prep ahead:** Trim chicken, chop bacon; prep onion and garlic; defrost peas. Refrigerate in separate containers.

**Equipment:** 5- to 6-quart slow cooker

Heart Health  Diabetes  Weight Loss  Gluten Free

Chicken thighs can take plenty of cooking without getting tough or drying out, which makes them perfect for the slow cooker. Here we braise them in Guinness stout along with hearty vegetables, with just the right amount of bacon for added savoriness.

- 6 tablespoons plus ½ cup all-purpose flour, divided
- 1 teaspoon salt, divided, plus more to taste
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground pepper, plus more to taste
- 2½ pounds boneless, skinless chicken thighs, trimmed
- 4 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 3 pieces bacon, chopped
- 1⅔ cups Guinness beer or other stout (14-ounce can)
- 1 pound whole baby carrots or large carrots cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 8-ounce package cremini or button mushrooms, halved if large
- 2 cups chopped onion
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1½ teaspoons dried thyme
- 1 cup reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 2 cups frozen baby peas, thawed

1. Combine 6 tablespoons flour with ½ teaspoon each salt and pepper in a shallow bowl. Dredge chicken thighs in the mixture to coat completely; transfer to a plate.

2. Heat 2 teaspoons oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add half the chicken and cook until well browned, 2 to 4 minutes per side; transfer to a 5- to 6-quart slow cooker. Reduce heat to medium and repeat with the remaining 2 teaspoons oil and chicken thighs. Arrange the chicken in an even layer in the slow cooker.

3. Add bacon to the pan and cook, stirring often, for 2 minutes. Sprinkle the remaining ½ cup flour over the bacon and cook, stirring constantly, for 2 minutes more. Add stout and use a wooden spoon to scrape up any browned bits from the bottom of the pan. Pour the mixture over the chicken. Add carrots, mushrooms, onion, garlic and thyme, spreading in an even layer over the chicken. Pour broth over the top.

4. Cover and cook until the chicken is falling-apart tender, 4 hours on High or 7 to 8 hours on Low.

5. Stir in peas, cover and cook until the peas are heated through, 5 to 10 minutes more. Season with the remaining ½ teaspoon salt and pepper.

**Per serving:** 365 calories; 13 g fat (3 g sat, 6 g mono); 88 mg cholesterol; 28 g carbohydrate; 0 g added sugars; 30 g protein; 4 g fiber; 570 mg sodium; 650 mg potassium.

**Nutrition bonus:** Vitamin A (200% daily value), Folate & Zinc (23% dv), Vitamin C (22% dv), Potassium (19% dv), Iron (17% dv).

**Carbohydrate Servings:** 1½

**Exchanges:** 1 starch, 2 vegetable, 3 lean meat, 1 fat





## Slow-Cooker Vegetarian Lasagna

**Makes:** 8 servings

**Active time:** 30 minutes

**Slow-cooker time:** 2 hours on High or 4 hours on Low

**Equipment:** 6-quart (or larger) slow cooker

Heart Health  Diabetes  Weight Loss  Gluten Free

Sure, the slow cooker's great for stews and soups, but it also happens to make a mean lasagna! In this ingenious slow-cooker recipe, all you have to do is chop your veggies, then layer the ingredients (raw) into the crockpot.

- 1 large egg
- 1 15- to 16-ounce container part-skim ricotta
- 1 5-ounce package baby spinach, coarsely chopped
- 3 large or 4 small portobello mushroom caps, gills removed (see Tip), halved and thinly sliced
- 1 small zucchini, quartered lengthwise and thinly sliced
- 1 28-ounce can crushed tomatoes
- 1 28-ounce can diced tomatoes
- 3 cloves garlic, minced  
Pinch of crushed red pepper (optional)
- 15 whole-wheat lasagna noodles (about 12 ounces), uncooked
- 3 cups shredded part-skim mozzarella, divided

1. Combine egg, ricotta, spinach, mushrooms and zucchini in a large bowl.

2. Combine crushed and diced tomatoes and their juice, garlic and crushed red pepper (if using) in a medium bowl.

3. Generously coat a 6-quart or larger slow cooker with cooking spray. Spread 1½ cups of the tomato mixture in the slow cooker. Arrange 5 noodles over the sauce, overlapping them slightly and breaking into pieces to cover as much of the sauce as possible. Spread half of the ricotta-vegetable mixture over the noodles and firmly pat down, then spoon on 1½ cups sauce and sprinkle with 1 cup mozzarella. Repeat the layering one more time, starting with noodles. Top with a third layer of noodles. Evenly spread the remaining tomato sauce over the noodles. Set aside the remaining 1 cup mozzarella in the refrigerator.

4. Put the lid on the slow cooker and cook on High for 2 hours or on Low for 4 hours. Turn off the slow cooker, sprinkle the reserved mozzarella on the lasagna, cover and let stand for 10 minutes to melt the cheese.

**Per serving:** 414 calories; 14 g fat (8 g sat, 4 g mono); 63 mg cholesterol; 48 g carbohydrate; 0 g added sugars; 28 g protein; 7 g fiber; 641 mg sodium; 829 mg potassium.

**Nutrition bonus:** Calcium & Vitamin A (56% daily value), Vitamin C (39% dv), Iron & Magnesium (26% dv), Zinc (25% dv), Potassium (24% dv), Folate (18% dv).

**Carbohydrate Servings:** 3

**Exchanges:** 2 starch, 2 vegetable, 2½ medium-fat meat

**Tip:** The dark gills found on the underside of a portobello mushroom cap are edible, but can turn a dish an unappealing gray color. If you like, gently scrape the gills off with a spoon.

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We hope you enjoy our recipes and feel informed and inspired to make healthy eating *your* way of life!

## About EatingWell health tags

A recipe checked...

 **Heart Health** has limited saturated fat.

 **Diabetes** is low in calories and meets limits for Carbohydrate Servings.

 **Weight Loss** has reduced calories (and limited saturated fat).

 **Gluten Free** does not contain wheat, rye, barley or oats.  
(Many processed foods, such as broths, soy sauce and other condiments, may contain hidden sources of gluten. If a recipe calls for a packaged [e.g., canned] ingredient, we recommend that you carefully read the label to make sure you pick a brand that does not contain a hidden source of gluten. Also, please note that while a recipe may be marked “Gluten Free,” the serving suggestions that accompany it may contain gluten.)