

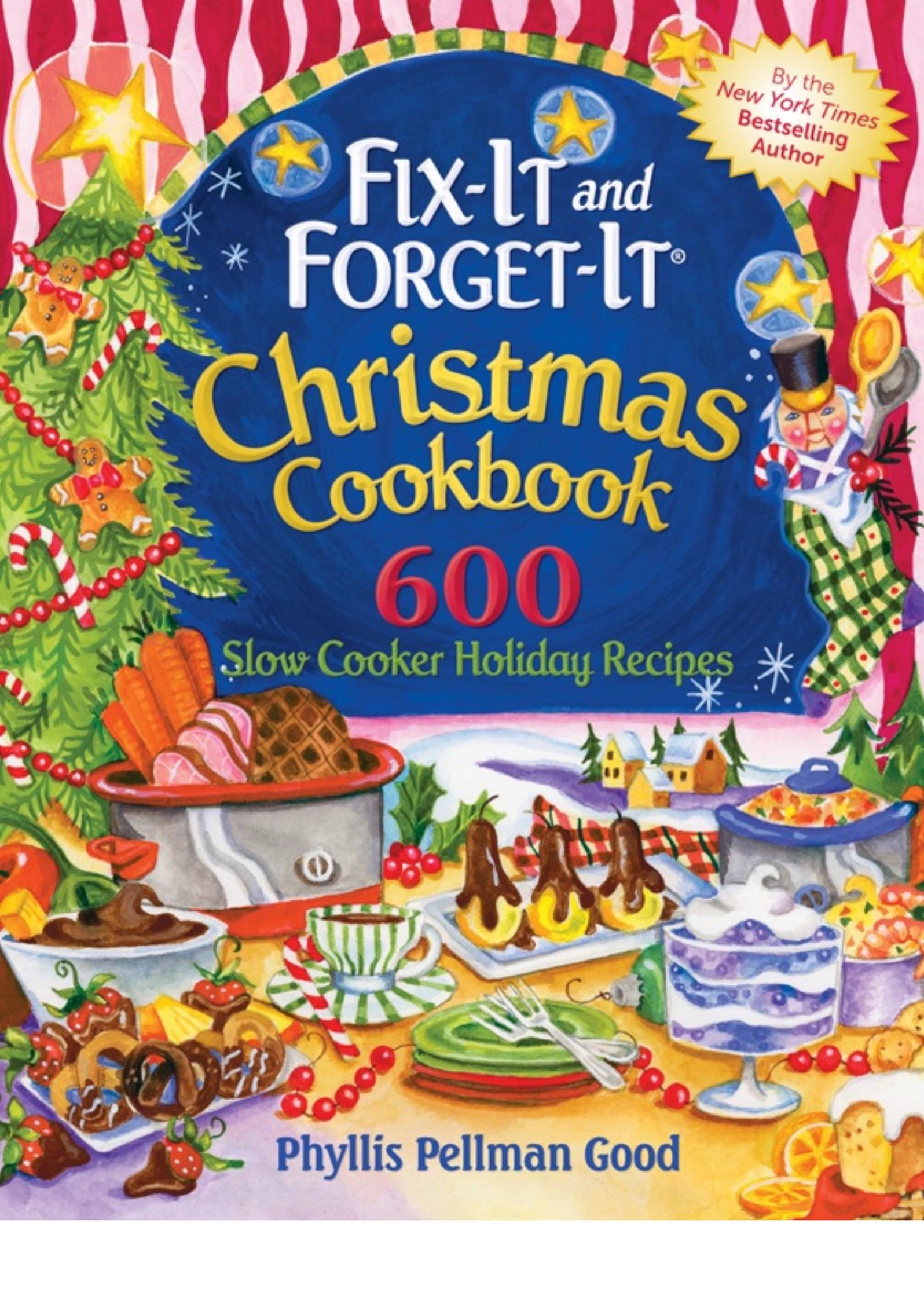
By the
New York Times
Bestselling
Author

FIX-IT and FORGET-IT[®] Christmas Cookbook

600

Slow Cooker Holiday Recipes

Phyllis Pellman Good



“The *Fix-It and Forget-It* series is the country’s bestselling crockpot cookbook series.

“The six books in the series compile edited versions of recipes contributed by everyday cooks and have sold more than nine million copies.”

— *Publishers Weekly*

“The author who came in second to Rachael Ray in total foodie sales was Phyllis Pellman Good, who does not have a TV show.”

— *Summary of Bestsellers Publishers Weekly*

“One reason why the books are so popular is that they aren’t intended for folks who dabble in cooking as a hobby or a whim.

““The audience that I have in mind is those who have to cook every day of the week,’ says Good.”

— *Los Angeles Times*

“Good’s books have sold more in the United States than the *combined* works of popular Food Network hosts Ina Garten, Giada De Laurentiis, and Jamie Oliver.”

— *The New York Times Front-page feature*

“One of the losses in our lives is that it’s so hard to sit down at the dinner table, night after night, and have parents and children eating together,” says Phyllis Pellman Good.

“With the slow cooker, you can prepare food early and bring everyone together at the table,” she says. “It helps immensely.”

— *The Associated Press*

**FIX-IT *and*
FORGET-IT®**

**Christmas
Cookbook**

600
Slow Cooker Holiday Recipes



Phyllis
Pellman
Good

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Table of Contents

Welcome to *Fix-It and Forget-It Christmas Cookbook*

Tips for Using Your Slow Cooker

Appetizers, Snacks and Spreads

Breakfast and Brunch Dishes

Soups, Stews, and Chilis

Main Dishes

Beef Main Dishes

Pork and Ham Main Dishes

Chicken Main Dishes

Turkey Main Dishes

Meat and Bean Main Dishes

Other Main Dish Favorites

Vegetables

Beverages

Desserts and Sweets

Equivalent Measurements

Assumptions about Ingredients

Three Hints

Substitute Ingredients

Kitchens Tools and Equipment You Really Ought to Have

Index

About the Author

Welcome to Fix-It and Forget-It Christmas Cookbook

It seemed like a good idea . . .

If you've invited your family or your special friends or neighbors to your home for a holiday meal, you might be caught somewhere between anticipation and dread right now.

Who doesn't like to have loved ones around the table, murmuring with delight about the food they've been eating? But which of us hasn't had panic nearly paralyze us on the way to that lovely moment?

Running out . . .

Or maybe your energy and your cooking ideas left you before your holiday guests did? How do you prepare without running out of time—or graciousness?

Never fear. You absolutely can make holiday meals with ease and with pleasure!

Beat the panic

Most of us prepare dozens of meals during the 60 days between early November and early January. Well, here are 600 *manageable* slow-cooker recipes—all from cooks who want to feast with their loved ones without being exhausted and frazzled.



Phyllis Pellman Good

A bonus

Don't miss the "Ideas for Meaningful Holidays" and "Happy Hosting Tips," spread among the recipes. One more reason that this cookbook can quickly become your kitchen companion.

Thank you, all you wonderful cooks and hosts who so generously shared your holiday recipes and tips for happiness at this special time of year. And thank you, too, testers, for your care and comments. Each of you has demonstrated the wonder of hospitality.



Christmas Smells

Mary Kathryn Yoder
Harrisonville, MO

Prep. Time: 10 minutes

Ideal slow cooker size: 2-quart

4 cups water
rind of 1 lemon
rind of 1 orange
1-oz. box whole cloves
1-oz. box cinnamon sticks
2 bay leaves

1. Pour water into 2-qt. slow cooker so it's half to $\frac{2}{3}$ full.
2. Add all other ingredients. Stir well.
3. Cover. Turn cooker to High until mixture boils.
4. Remove lid. Reduce heat to Low. Let mixture simmer and fill your home with good smells. Add water as needed.

Note:

Do not leave your house with Christmas Smells cooking. This needs continual checking so it doesn't boil dry.

Make this cookbook your own

Most of the recipes in this collection are flexible and forgiving. You'll notice that most of them offer a range of cooking times; many of the recipes suggest optional ingredients.

Make this book your own. Write in it. Note the cooking time that worked for you. Star the recipe you liked. If you added or subtracted ingredients, write them in the neighboring column. Flip to the Index and put a big dot next to a recipe you especially liked. Then you can spot it at a glance when you're looking for cooking inspiration.

One more thing

These recipes work at any time of the year! Don't restrict them to your holiday table.

Thyler Freeman Good

Tips for Using Your Slow Cooker: A Friendly Holiday Appliance

1. What to buy

- A good standard size for a household of four is a 4-quart slow cooker.

But holiday-time may be the perfect opportunity to add to your slow-cooker collection. Because these babies are so absolutely useful and relieve so much hosting tension, I recommend:



- *one large cooker (6- or 7-quart)*

Then you're set for preparing sizable roasts, turkey breasts, chicken legs and thighs, or a big pot of soup.

- *one or two medium cookers (4- or 5-quart)*

Do your vegetables in these. Or if you're cooking for a smaller group, you can do your main dish in one or both of them. Don't forget that you can prepare brunch dishes or desserts in these, too.

- *one or two small cookers (1½- 3-quart)*

These are ideal for dips, breakfast fruit, dessert toppings, and more.

- Cookers which allow you to program "On," the length of the cooking time, and "Off," are convenient. If your model doesn't include that feature, you might want to get a digital appliance timer, which gives you that option. Make sure the timer is adequate for the electrical flow that your cooker demands.

- A baking insert, a cooking rack, a temperature probe, and an insulated carrying tote are all useful additions offered with some models. Or you can buy some of them separately by going to the manufacturers' websites.

2. Learn to know your slow cooker

- Some newer slow cookers cook at a very high temperature. You can check the temperature of your slow cooker this way:

1. Place 2 quarts of water in your slow cooker.
2. Cover. Heat on Low 8 hours.
3. Lift the lid. Immediately check the water temp with an accurate thermometer.
4. The temperature of the water should be 185°F. If the temperature is higher, foods may overcook.

and you should reduce the overall cooking time. If the temperature is lower, your foods will probably not reach a safe temperature quickly enough, and the cooker should be discarded.

3. Maximizing what a slow cooker does best

- Slow cookers tend to work best when they're $\frac{2}{3}$ full. You may need to increase the cooking time if you've exceeded that amount, or reduce it if you've put in less than that.
- Cut the hard veggies going into your cooker into chunks of about equal size. In other words, make your potato and carrot pieces about the same size. Then they'll be done cooking at nearly the same time. Softer veggies, like bell peppers and zucchini, cook faster, so they don't need to be cut as small. But again, keep them similar in size to each other so they finish together.
- Because raw vegetables are notoriously tough customers in a slow cooker, layer them over the bottom and around the sides of the cooker, as much as possible. That puts them in more direct contact with the heat.
- There are consequences to lifting the lid on your slow cooker while it's cooking. To compensate for the lost heat, you should plan to add 15-20 minutes of cooking time for each time the lid was lifted off.

On the other hand, moisture gathers in a slow cooker as it works. To allow that to cook off, or to thicken the cooking juices, take the lid off during the last half hour of cooking time.

- Use only the amount of liquid called for in a recipe. In contrast to an oven or a stovetop, a slow cooker tends to draw juices out of food and then harbor it.

Of course, if you sense that the food in your cooker is drying out, or browning excessively before it finishes cooking, you may want to add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of *warm* liquid to the cooker.

- Important variables to remember that don't show up in recipes:
 - *The fuller your slow cooker, the longer it will take its contents to cook.*
 - *The more densely packed the cooker's contents are, the longer they will take to cook.*
 - *The larger the chunks of meat or vegetables, the more time they will need to cook.*



4. Debunking the myths

- You certainly can cook holiday-worthy dishes in a slow cooker! These appliances can put out a meal at any level—elegant or comfortable.

One hard-won piece of advice. You'll notice that many of the recipes in this cookbook give a range of cooking times (for example, "Chicken ala Orange" on [page 168](#) tells you to cook the dish 6-7 hours). Every slow cooker is different, so learn to know your cooker before you ask it to make your

holiday turkey.

~~Do a test-run of a sample recipe, note the length of time it took to cook the dish to perfection, and then write that next to the recipe in this book. Make that experiment your baseline for judging the appropriate length of cooking time in your cooker for similar recipes. Now you can relax as you wait for your guests to arrive.~~

Two more reasons to put your cooker(s) to work during the holidays:

1. If your oven is full, use your slow cooker to relieve the space crunch.
 2. When you want to avoid lots of last-minute work and enjoy your guests instead, make whatever you can in your slow cooker.
- Slow cookers are also a *handy year-round appliance*. They don't heat up a kitchen in warm weather. They allow you to escape to the pool or lake or lawn or gardens – so why not let them work for you when it's hot outdoors. A slow cooker fixes your dinner while you're at your child's soccer game, too.
 - You can overdo food in a slow cooker. If you're tempted to stretch a recipe's 6-hour stated cooking time to 8 or 10 hours, you may be disappointed in your dinner. Yes, these cookers work their magic using slow, moist heat. Yes, many dishes cook a long time. But these outfits have their limits.

For example, chicken can overcook in a slow cooker. Especially boneless, skinless breasts. But legs and thighs aren't immune either. Once they go past the falling-off-the-bone stage, they are prone to move on to deeply dry.

Cooked pasta and sour cream do best if added late in the cooking process, ideally 10 minutes before the end of the cooking time if the cooker is on high; 30 minutes before the end of the cooking time if it's on low.

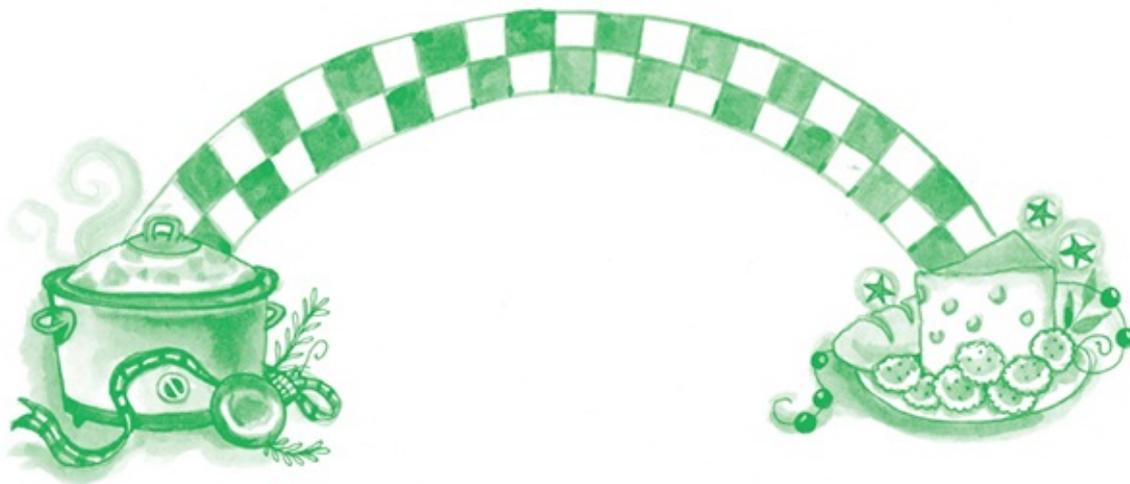
5. Safety

- A working slow cooker gets hot on the outside – and I mean the outer electrical unit as well as the inner vessel. Make sure that curious and unsuspecting children or adults don't grab hold of either part. Use oven mitts when lifting any part of a hot cooker.
- To prevent a slow cooker from bubbling over, either when it's sitting still on a counter, or when it's traveling to a carry-in dinner, fill the cooker only $\frac{2}{3}$ full.

If you're going to exceed that limit, pull out your second slow cooker (what—you have only one?!), and divide the contents between them.

6. Adapting stove-top or oven recipes for a slow cooker

- Many stove-top and oven recipes can be adapted for a slow cooker. If you want to experiment, use these conversion factors:
 - *Low (in a slow cooker) = 200°F approximately (in an oven).*
 - *High (in a slow cooker) = 300°F approximately (in an oven).*
 - *In a slow cooker, 2 hours on Low = 1 hour, approximately, on High.*



Appetizers, Snacks, and Spreads



Creamy Artichoke Dip

Jessica Stoner
West Liberty, OH

Makes 7-8 cups

Prep. Time: 15-20 minutes
Cooking Time: 1-1½ hours
Ideal slow cooker size: 3-qt.

2 14-oz. cans water-packed artichoke hearts, coarsely chopped (drain one can; stir juice from other can into Dip)

2 cups (8 oz.) shredded, part-skim mozzarella cheese

8-oz. pkg. cream cheese, softened

1 cup grated Parmesan cheese

½ cup mayonnaise

½ cup shredded Swiss cheese

2 Tbsp. lemon juice

2 Tbsp. plain yogurt

1 Tbsp. seasoned salt

1 Tbsp. chopped, seeded jalapeño pepper

1 tsp. garlic powder

Dippers: tortilla chips

1. In slow cooker, combine artichoke hearts, cheeses, mayonnaise, lemon juice, yogurt, salt, jalapeño pepper, and garlic powder.
2. Cover. Cook on Low 1 hour, or until cheeses are melted and Dip is heated through.
3. Serve with tortilla chips.

Variation:

Add 2 10-oz. pkgs. frozen chopped spinach, thawed and squeezed dry, to Step 1.



Red Pepper-Cheese Dip

Ann Bender
Ft. Defiance, VA

Makes 4-5 cups

Prep. Time: 10 minutes

Cooking Time: 2 hours

Ideal slow cooker size: 3-qt.

2 Tbsp. olive oil

4-6 large red peppers, cut into 1" squares

crackers and/or pita bread

½ lb. feta cheese, crumbled

1. Pour oil into slow cooker. Stir in peppers.
2. Cover. Cook on Low 2 hours.
3. Serve on crackers or pita bread, topped with feta cheese.



Ratatouille

Barb Yoder
Angola, IN

Makes about 3½ cups

Prep. Time: 20-30 minutes

Cooking Time: 7-8 hours

Ideal slow cooker size: 4-qt.

1½ cups chopped onion

6-oz. can tomato paste

1 Tbsp. olive oil

2 minced cloves garlic (1 tsp.)

1½ tsp. crushed dried basil

½ tsp. dried thyme

15-oz. can chopped tomatoes, with juice drained but reserved

1 large zucchini, halved lengthwise and sliced thin

salt and pepper to taste

slices of French bread *or* baguette

1. Mix all ingredients except bread in slow cooker.
2. Cover. Cook on Low 7-8 hours.
3. If mixture is stiffer than you wish, stir in some of reserved tomato juice.
4. Serve hot or cold on top of French bread or baguette slices.



Hot Cheddar Mushroom Spread

Amber Swarey
Honea Path, SC

Makes 3¼-½ cups

Prep. Time: 10 minutes

Cooking Time: 1-1½ hours

Ideal slow cooker size: 2-qt.

1 cup mayonnaise
1 cup (4 oz.) shredded cheddar cheese
½ cup grated Parmesan cheese
2 4½-oz. cans sliced mushrooms, drained
half an envelope Ranch salad dressing mix
minced fresh parsley
assorted crackers

1. Combine mayonnaise, cheeses, mushrooms, and dressing mix in slow cooker.
2. Cover. Cook on Low 1 hour, or until cheeses are melted and Dip is heated through.
3. Sprinkle with parsley and serve with crackers.



Nacho Dip

Rose Hankins
Stevensville, MD

Makes 3-4 cups

Prep. Time: 5 minutes

Cooking Time: 3-4 hours

Ideal slow cooker size: 4-qt.

4 cups (16 oz.) shredded cheddar cheese
14-oz. can diced tomatoes, drained, with juice reserved
7-oz. can chopped green chilies, drained
1 cup chopped onions

1 Tbsp. cumin
1 tsp. chili powder
1 tsp. hot pepper sauce
tortilla chips

1. Mix all ingredients except chips in slow cooker.
2. Cover. Cook on Low 3-4 hours.
3. Stir before serving. If Dip is stiffer than you like, stir in some of reserved tomato juice
4. Serve with tortilla chips for dipping.

I like to keep a basket full of small gifts by the door to give to guests as they leave. These are simple gifts like home-made dip mixes in jars or freshly baked cookies, wrapped in colorful papers or gift bags. Sending friends home with a little something extra is a fun way to end a get-together.

Mary Rogers, Waseca, MN



Hot Chili Dip

Lavina Hochstedler
Grand Blanc, MI
Anna Stoltzfus
Honey Brook, PA
Kathi Rogge
Alexandria, IN

Makes 5-6 cups

Prep. Time: 5-10 minutes
Cooking Time: 1-2 hours
Ideal slow cooker size: 3-qt.

24-oz. jar hot salsa
15-oz. can chili with beans
2 2¼-oz. cans sliced ripe olives, drained
12 ozs. mild cheese, cubed
tortilla chips

1. Combine all ingredients except tortilla chips in slow cooker.
2. Cover. Cook on Low 1-2 hours, or until cheese is melted, stirring halfway through.
3. Serve with tortilla chips.



Hot Hamburger Dip

Kristi See
Weskan, KS

Makes 7-8 cups

Prep. Time: 20 minutes

Cooking Time: 1-2 hours

Ideal slow cooker size: 2-qt.

1 lb. ground beef
1 small onion, chopped
1 lb. Velveeta cheese, cubed
8-oz. can tomatoes and green chilies, undrained
2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
½ tsp. chili powder
1 tsp. garlic powder
½ tsp. pepper
10¾-oz. can tomato soup
10¾-oz. can cream of mushroom soup
corn chips
little barbecued smokies

1. Brown ground beef and onions in skillet. Drain off drippings. Place beef and onions in slow cooker.
2. Add remaining ingredients, except corn chips and smokies, and stir well.
3. Cover. Simmer until cheese is melted.
4. Serve with corn chips and little barbecued smokies.



Cheesy Hot Bean Dip

John D. Allen, Rye, CO

Makes 4-5 cups

Prep. Time: 10 minutes • Cooking Time: 2 hours

Ideal slow cooker size: 2-qt.

16-oz. can refried beans
1 cup salsa
2 cups (8 oz.) shredded Jack and cheddar cheeses, mixed
1 cup sour cream
3-oz. pkg. cream cheese, cubed
1 Tbsp. chili powder
¼ tsp. ground cumin
tortilla chips

1. Combine all ingredients except chips in slow cooker.
2. Cover. Cook on High 2 hours. Stir 2-3 times during cooking time.
3. Serve warm from cooker with chips.

Note:

This bean dip is a favorite of ours. Once you start on it, it's hard to leave it alone. We have been known to dip into it even when it's cold.



Creamy Taco Dip

Nanci Keatley
Salem, OR

Makes 7-8 cups

Prep. Time: 15 minutes

Cooking Time: 1-2 hours

Ideal slow cooker size: 4-qt.

8-oz. pkg. cream cheese, softened

1 cup sour cream

¾ cup mayonnaise

1 lb. ground beef

1 envelope taco seasoning

12-oz. jar salsa

2 cups (8 oz.) shredded cheddar cheese

garnishes: 4 cups lettuce, shredded; 2 medium tomatoes, chopped; 1 small onion, chopped

tortilla chips

1. In good-sized mixing bowl, mix together cream cheese, sour cream, and mayonnaise. Spread in bottom of lightly greased slow cooker.
2. Brown ground beef in skillet, breaking up clumps of meat with a wooden spoon as it browns. Drain off drippings.
3. Mix taco seasoning and salsa into browned meat. Spoon mixture over cream cheese mixture in slow cooker.
4. Sprinkle shredded cheddar over top.
5. Cover. Cook on Low 1-2 hours, or until cheese is melted.
6. Serve with lettuce, tomatoes, onions, and tortilla chips.



TNT Dip

Sheila Plock
Boalsburg, PA

Makes 8 cups

Prep. Time: 15 minutes

Cooking Time: 1-1¼ hours

Ideal slow cooker size: 3-qt.

1½ lbs. ground beef

10¾-oz. can cream of mushroom soup

half a stick (4 Tbsp.) butter, melted

1 lb. Velveeta, cubed

1 cup salsa

2 Tbsp. chili powder

tortilla chips and/or corn chips

party rye bread

1. Brown ground beef in skillet. Drain off drippings. Place browned beef in slow cooker.
2. Add all remaining ingredients, except chips and bread, to slow cooker. Mix well.
3. Cover. Cook on High 1-1¼ hours, or until cheese is melted. If you're at home, stir occasionally during cooking.
4. Serve with tortilla chips, corn chips, and/or party rye bread.

Variation:

To change the balance of flavors, use only 1 lb. browned ground beef and add 1½ cups salsa.

Note:

My son has hosted a Super Bowl party for his college friends at our house the past two years. He served this Dip the first year, and the second year it was requested.

His friends claim it's the best Dip they've ever eaten. With a bunch of college kids it disappears quickly.



Hot Beef Dip

Paula Showalter

Weyers Cave, VA

Makes about 3 cups

Prep. Time: 15 minutes

Cooking Time: 2-3 hours

Ideal slow cooker size: 2-qt.

2 8-oz. pkgs. cream cheese, softened

2 cups (8 oz.) mild cheddar cheese, grated

1 green bell pepper, chopped fine

1 small onion, chopped fine

¼ lb. chipped dried beef, shredded

assortment of crackers

1. Combine cheeses in slow cooker.
2. Fold in pepper, onions, and beef.
3. Cover. Cook on Low 2-3 hours.
4. Serve hot with crackers.

Variation:

For more kick, add a few finely diced chili peppers to Step 2.



Taco Appetizer

Annie C. Boshart
Lebanon, PA

Makes 8 cups

Prep. Time: 15-30 minutes

Cooking Time: 30-60 minutes

Ideal slow cooker size: 3-qt.

½ lb. lean ground beef

½ lb. hot Italian sausage

1 large onion, finely chopped

salt to taste

2 tsp. hot pepper sauce, or more or less to taste

2 16-oz. cans refried beans

4-oz. can chopped green chilies, drained

2-3 cups (8-12 oz.) grated Monterey Jack cheese

¾ cup hot, or mild, taco sauce

tortilla chips or corn chips

garnishes: chopped tomatoes, chopped green onions, chopped ripe olives, smashed ripe avocado, sour cream

1. In skillet, sauté meats with onion until browned. Drain off drippings. Season meat with salt and hot pepper sauce to taste.
2. Meanwhile, spread refried beans in lightly greased slow cooker.
3. Spoon browned meat over refried beans.
4. Top with chopped chilies.
5. Sprinkle with grated cheese.
6. Pour taco sauce on top of cheese. (Do not stir.)
7. Heat in slow cooker for 30-60 minutes on Medium High, or until Dip is heated through.
8. Serve with chips and garnishes.



Cheesy Sausage Dip

Marissa Pinon
Rio Rancho, NM
Cynthia Morris
Grottoes, VA

Makes 4-5 cups

Prep. Time: 15-25 minutes

Cooking Time: 30-60 minutes

Ideal slow cooker size: 3- to 4-qt.

1 lb. loose sausage

14½-oz. can Rotel tomatoes—hot, medium, or mild

2 lbs. Velveeta, or 3 8-oz. blocks cream cheese, cut into 1” squares
chips and/or tortilla scoops

1. Brown sausage in skillet, breaking up clumps of meat as it browns. Drain off drippings.
2. Transfer sausage to slow cooker. Stir in tomatoes and cheese cubes.
3. Cover. Cook on Low until melted, stirring occasionally.
4. Once cheese melts, turn slow cooker to “Keep Warm” or Low setting. Serve with chips or tortilla scoops.



Bacon Cheese Dip

Genelle Taylor
Perrysburg, OH

Makes 6 cups

Prep. Time: 10-20 minutes

Cooking Time: 2 hours or less

Ideal slow cooker size: 3-qt.

2 8-oz. pkgs. cream cheese, cubed
4 cups shredded sharp cheddar cheese
1 cup half-and-half
2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
1 tsp. dried minced onion
1 tsp. prepared mustard
16 bacon strips, cooked and crumbled
tortilla chips and/or French bread slices

1. Combine first six ingredients in slow cooker.
2. Cover. Cook on Low 2 hours, or until cheeses are melted. Stir occasionally if you're home and able to do so.
3. Just before serving, stir in bacon.
4. Serve warm with tortilla chips and/or French bread.



Cheesy Spinach and Bacon Dip

Amy Bauer
New Ulm, MN

Makes 3½ cups

Prep. Time: 15 minutes

Cooking Time: 1 hour

Ideal slow cooker size: 3-qt.

10-oz. pkg. frozen chopped spinach, thawed and squeezed dry
1 lb. Velveeta, or your choice of soft cheese, cut into ½” cubes
3-oz. pkg. cream cheese, softened
14½-oz. can Rotel diced tomatoes and green chilies, undrained
8 slices bacon, cooked crisp and crumbled
crackers and/or chips

1. Combine all ingredients except bacon, crackers and chips in slow cooker.
2. Cover. Heat on Low 1 hour, or until cheeses have melted and Dip is heated through. Stir occasionally if you're around to do so.
3. Just before serving, stir in crumbled bacon.
4. Serve warm with crackers and/or chips.

Variation:

This is also tasty with half a package of spinach.



Creamy Pizza Dip

Rosalie Buckwalter
Narvon, PA

Makes 4½ cups

Prep. Time: 15-20 minutes

Cooking Time: 2-4 hours

Ideal slow cooker size: 3-qt.

8-oz. pkg. cream cheese, cubed and softened
¾ cup salad dressing, or mayonnaise (regular or light)
1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
8 oz. sliced pepperoni, chopped
2 ripe plum tomatoes, chopped
10 large, black olives, chopped
4 crusty Italian rolls, toasted if you wish, and then cut into ½” cubes and/or crackers

1. Mix all ingredients, except rolls and crackers for dipping, in slow cooker.
2. Cover. Cook on High 2-4 hours, or until cheese is melted and Dip is heated through.
3. Turn on Low to keep warm while serving.
4. Remove cover. Allow to cool slightly before serving with rolls and/or crackers for dipping.



Cheese Pizza Fondue

Annie C. Boshart
Lebanon, PA

Makes 6-7 cups

Prep. Time: 30 minutes

Cooking Time: 1¼ hours

Ideal slow cooker size: 2-qt.

1 lb. ground beef
½ cup chopped onions
3 8-oz. cans pizza sauce with cheese
1 Tbsp. cornstarch
¾ tsp. oregano
¼ tsp. garlic powder
1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
2 cups shredded cheddar cheese
cubed French bread, tortilla chips, crackers

1. Brown ground beef and onion in skillet. Stir frequently with wooden spoon, breaking up clumps of meat. When brown, drain off drippings. Spoon meat and onion into slow cooker.
2. Add pizza sauce, cornstarch, oregano, and garlic powder to slow cooker. Stir into meat mixture.
3. Cover. Cook on Low 1 hour, or until mixture bubbles and thickens. Stir occasionally if you're able to.
4. Add cheese gradually, stirring well until it melts.
5. Serve hot with bread cubes, chips, and/or crackers for dipping.

Tester's Idea:

I served this to my family as a main dish for supper. I made angel-hair pasta and we put the fondue over it as a sauce. We loved it! I also offered breadsticks for dipping into the sauce.



I like to set up an appetizer table so that I don't feel as pressured if I'm running a little late with my meal. I try to make appetizers that can be prepared ahead and quickly set out.



Meatless Pizza Fondue

Virginia Graybill
Hershey, PA

Makes 4 cups

Prep. Time: 5 minutes

Cooking Time: 3 hours

Ideal slow cooker size: 3-qt.

29-oz. jar meatless spaghetti sauce
2 cups (8 oz.) shredded mozzarella cheese
¼ cup shredded Parmesan cheese
2 tsp. dried oregano
1 tsp. dried minced onion
¼ tsp. garlic powder
1 lb. unsliced loaf Italian bread, cut into cubes

1. Combine spaghetti sauce, cheeses, oregano, onion, and garlic powder in slow cooker.
2. Cover. Cook on Low 3 hours, or until cheese is melted and sauce is hot.
3. Serve with bread cubes.

Note:

Each Christmas season, we have an evening set aside for a fondue meal. This recipe is always a hit.

Note from Tester:

I had some leftover sauce that I served as a topping for steamed cauliflower. My family loved it!



Slow Cooker Reuben Dip

Allison Ingels
Maynard, IA

Makes 5 cups

Prep. Time: 10 minutes

Cooking Time: 3-4 hours

Ideal slow cooker size: 3-qt.

8 oz. sour cream
2 8-oz. pkgs. cream cheese, softened
8-oz. can sauerkraut, drained
3 2½-oz. pkgs. dried corned beef, finely chopped
6-oz. pkg. shredded Swiss cheese
rye crackers and/or rye party bread

1. Combine all ingredients except crackers and/or bread in slow cooker.
2. Cover. Heat on Low 3-4 hours, or until cheeses are melted.
3. Serve from cooker with rye crackers or rye party bread.



Cranberry Meatballs

Char Hagner
Montague, MI

Makes about 50-60 meatballs

Prep. Time: 30-45 minutes

Cooking Time: 2 hours

Ideal slow cooker size: 3- to 4-qt.

Meatballs:

- 2 lbs. ground beef**
- 1/3 cup parsley flakes**
- 2 Tbsp. soy sauce**
- 1/2 tsp. garlic powder**
- 2 Tbsp. minced onion**
- 1 cup cornflake crumbs**
- 2 eggs**
- 1/2 cup ketchup**

Sauce:

- 1 can jellied cranberry sauce**
- 12-oz. bottle chili sauce**
- 2 Tbsp. brown sugar**
- 1 Tbsp. lemon juice**

1. In a large mixing bowl, combine Meatball ingredients until well mixed.
2. Form into 50-60 Meatballs and put in lightly greased 9x13 baking pan.
3. Bake at 350 degrees for about 30 minutes, or until Meatballs are cooked through. (Cut one open to test.)
4. While meatballs are baking, combine Sauce ingredients in saucepan. Heat over low heat until jellied sauce and brown sugar melt. Stir frequently.
5. Place baked Meatballs in slow cooker. Pour Sauce over Meatballs, making sure that all are covered in Sauce if you've layered them into the cooker.
6. Cover. Cook on Low 2 hours, or until Sauce is bubbly.
7. Turn slow cooker to Warm and serve with toothpicks.

Variations:

1. Use 1 lb. ground beef and 1 lb. ground pork instead of 2 lbs. ground beef.
2. Use 10³/₄-oz. can condensed tomato soup, mixed with 1 tsp. prepared mustard, instead of chili sauce.

Jane Geigl

3. Here's an alternative meatball recipe:

- 2 egg whites**
- 2 lbs. ground turkey**
- 2 green onions with tops, sliced**
- 4 tsp. grated orange peel**
- 2 tsp. reduced-sodium soy sauce**
- ½ tsp. black pepper**
- ⅛ tsp. cayenne pepper, optional**

Follow Steps 1-3 above, and then continue with rest of recipe.

Mary Ann Bowma
East Earl, P



Buffalo Chicken Dip

Gail Skiff
Clifton Park, NY

Makes 3-4 cups

Prep. Time: 30-40 minutes

Cooking Time: 1 hour

Ideal slow cooker size: 2- to 3-qt.

- 8-oz. pkg. cream cheese, softened**
- ½-¾ cup bleu cheese dressing**
- ½ cup bleu cheese crumbles**
- ½ cup buffalo wing sauce (I use Anchor Bar Buffalo Wing Sauce)**
- 1 lb. boneless skinless chicken breasts, cooked and shredded**
- celery sticks and/or your favorite chips**

1. Mix cream cheese, dressing, blue cheese crumbles, and sauce in slow cooker.
2. Stir in chicken.
3. Cover. Heat on Low 1 hour, or until cheeses melt and Dip is heated through. Stir several times during the hour if you're home and able to do so.
4. Serve warm with celery sticks and/or your favorite chips.

Keep it simple. Too many different items, especially finger foods, are a lot of work. A few (3-4) very nice items will be remembered and enjoyed.

Carol Findling, Carol Stream, IL

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