

slow-cooker simplicity

A humble and beloved kitchen standby, slow cookers have been in American kitchens for decades. A device called the “Naxon Beanery” was the predecessor to the countertop appliance, and was patented by Irving Naxon in 1940. Inspired by his grandmother’s stories of slowly cooking stews in the low heat of bakery ovens after they were turned off, Naxon’s device consisted of a crock surrounded by a heated case. In 1972, his Beanery was purchased by a large appliance manufacturer and became wildly popular with the convenience of all-day, low-maintenance cooking. Our three recipes showcase the ease and versatility of slow-cooker cooking for any meal.



Lemon Pepper Whole Chicken

Active Time: 20 minutes

Total Time: 3 hours 30 minutes • Serves: 6

- 3 tablespoons Schnucks unsalted butter, softened
- 1 tablespoon Schnucks lemon pepper seasoning, divided
- 1 (4- to 5½-pound) fresh whole chicken, giblets removed, if necessary
- ½ pound carrots, cut into 2-inch pieces, divided
- 1 small onion, cut into ½-inch wedges, divided
- 1 lemon, cut into wedges, divided
- 4 garlic cloves, coarsely chopped, divided
- 2 teaspoons Schnucks dried thyme, divided

1. In cup, with fork, stir butter and 2 teaspoons lemon pepper seasoning. Pat chicken dry with paper towels. Slide 2 fingers under skin on each side of the chicken breast to make 2 pockets, being careful not to tear skin. Place 1 tablespoon butter mixture under skin in each pocket. Press skin down to spread and flatten butter mixture under skin. Spread remaining butter mixture over top of chicken.

2. In bottom of 6-quart slow cooker, place about three-fourths of the carrots, onion, lemon wedges and garlic cloves. Stuff remaining one-fourth vegetables inside chicken cavity. Sprinkle 1 teaspoon thyme inside chicken cavity and remaining 1 teaspoon each thyme and lemon pepper over top of chicken.

3. With small piece of kitchen twine, tie legs of chicken together; place whole chicken over vegetables in slow cooker. Cover and cook on high 3 to 4 hours or until juices run clear and internal temperature in the thickest part of thigh reaches 165°F. Transfer chicken to cutting board or serving platter for carving and serve with vegetables.

Each serving: about 630 calories, 26 g total fat (9 g saturated), 280 mg cholesterol, 510 mg sodium, 4 g carbohydrate, 1 g fiber, 2 g sugars, 88 g protein

> Cook's Wisdom

Whole chickens can vary by almost 2 pounds in weight. Use longer cooking time for chickens that are larger.

If desired, to brown the chicken after cooking in slow cooker, transfer to rimmed baking pan and roast at 350°F for 8 to 10 minutes.

Italian Sausage Bean Soup

Active Time: 10 minutes

Total Time: 3 hours • Serves: 8

- 1 pound Schnucks Signature sweet Italian sausage, casings removed, if necessary
- 1 large yellow onion, finely chopped (about 1 cup)
- 6 garlic cloves, minced (about 2 tablespoons)
- 2 cans (15 ounces each) Schnucks great Northern beans or cannellini beans
- 1 can (15 ounces) Schnucks dark red kidney beans
- 1 can (14.5 ounces) Schnucks Italian style diced tomatoes
- 1 bottle (12 ounces) dark beer
- ¼ cup packed Schnucks brown sugar
- ¼ cup balsamic vinegar
- 1 teaspoon Schnucks ground mustard
- 1 teaspoon Schnucks crushed red pepper flakes
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 2 Schnucks whole bay leaves
- ¼ cup coarsely chopped fresh parsley leaves

1. In bottom of 5- to 6-quart slow cooker, in the following order, add sausage (separated into small chunks), onion, garlic, undrained beans, diced tomatoes with their juice, beer, brown sugar, vinegar, ground mustard, crushed red pepper, black pepper and bay leaves.

2. Cover and cook on high 3 hours or low 6 hours, stirring once during cooking, if desired. Remove bay leaves; serve sprinkled with parsley. Makes about 10 cups.

Each serving: about 290 calories, 5 g total fat (2 g saturated), 15 mg cholesterol, 780 mg sodium, 39 g carbohydrate, 10 g fiber, 11 g sugars, 17 g protein

> Cook's Wisdom

For additional heat, use Schnucks Signature hot Italian sausage.

Walnut & Currant Stuffed Apples

Active Time: 15 minutes

Total Time: 2 hours • Serves: 6

- 1 cup plus ⅓ cup packed Schnucks light brown sugar, divided
- 1 cup apple cider
- ⅓ cup chopped walnuts
- ⅓ cup dried currants
- 1½ teaspoons Schnucks ground cinnamon, divided
- 6 Pink Lady, Honey Crisp, Granny Smith or Golden Delicious apples (about 6 to 8 ounces each)
- vanilla ice cream (optional)

1. In bottom of 5- to 6-quart slow cooker, mix 1 cup brown sugar with apple cider until sugar is dissolved. In small bowl, combine walnuts, currants, 1 teaspoon cinnamon and remaining ⅓ cup brown sugar.

2. With apple corer, core apples reserving about a ½-inch piece of core. If necessary, trim bottom of each apple so they stand upright. Using reserved core piece, plug apple bottom to ensure filling remains in apple. Slice about ¼ inch off top of apple to make top level and to remove some peel from top surface.

3. Evenly stuff apples with currant mixture, mounding on top. Carefully place apples in slow cooker with cider syrup, leaving space between apples. Sprinkle remaining ½ teaspoon cinnamon over tops of apples. Cover and cook on high 1½ to 2 hours or until apples are firm but tender when pierced with wooden pick.

4. Using 2 large spoons, transfer apples to individual dessert bowls and spoon about 3 tablespoons apple cider syrup over top of each apple. Cool 10 minutes before serving with a scoop of ice cream, if desired.

Each serving: about 370 calories, 5 g total fat (0 g saturated), 0 mg cholesterol, 20 mg sodium, 85 g carbohydrate, 6 g fiber, 76 g sugars, 2 g protein

> Cook's Wisdom

Different sugar content in some apples will cause them to cook slower or faster than others. If the same type of apple is used, the cooking time will be easier to judge. Larger apples (about 8 ounces each) will take about 20 to 30 minutes longer to cook than smaller apples (about 6 ounces each).



Visit schnuckscooks.com to watch our how-to videos! Scan this Tag with your smart phone to view our How to Carve a Chicken video.