

COOK'S CORNER by Catherine Hannon

CROCKTOBER!

We're renaming October. Why? Because it's the perfect time to take out your slow cooker and feed your family these delicious meals.

Balsamic-Cherry Braised Pork

Ingredients

1 lb frozen cherries, thawed and drained of juice
2 Tbs balsamic vinegar
2 crushed garlic cloves
4 lbs Pork shoulder roast
1 1/3 C instant polenta
1/2 tsp ground black pepper
1 C sliced onion
1/4 C basil leaves
2 tsp kosher salt
1/4 C grated Pecorino Romano cheese

Directions

1. Combine cherries, balsamic vinegar, onion, garlic, and basil leaves in a slow cooker. Trim excess fat from the pork shoulder, season with salt, and add to slow cooker. Cover and cook on high until pork is very tender, 4 hr.

2. Before serving, prepare instant polenta according to package instructions; stir in Pecorino and pepper. Serve slices of the pork and cherry sauce over polenta with extra basil and Pecorino. Serves 6

3. Per Serving: 560 cal, 12.5g fat (5g sat), 945mg sodium, 60g carb, 128mg chol, 47g protein, 8g fiber

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Sausage-Fennel Minestrone

Ingredients

1 qt low-sodium chicken broth
2 tablespoons tomato paste
1 cup diced fennel
1 14-oz can drained cannelloni beans
1 28-oz can diced tomatoes
1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
2 cups cooked orecchietta
2 cups water
1 chopped onion
1/2 cup chopped celery
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
1 bay leaf
1 lb Italian sausage (casing removed)
2 cups chopped kale or swiss chard

Directions

1 In a slow cooker combine chicken broth, water, tomato paste, onion, fennel, celery, cannelloni beans, salt, tomatoes, bay leaf and thyme.

2 In a nonstick skillet, sauté' sausage, breaking into pieces, until brown. Drain on a paper towel-lined plate, and then add to the slow cooker. Cover and cook on high for 4 hours. Stir in the orecchiette, and kale or swiss chard.

3 Makes 12 cups

Ladies Home Journal

Trick or Treat

"Trick" friends with these chocolate cookies – they'll love the peanut butter "treat" inside.

Ingredients

3/4 C (1 1/2 sticks) butter, softened
1 1/3 C firmly packed lt brown sugar
1 1/2 C all purpose flour
24 mini chocolate peanut butter cups
1 tube (4.25 oz) orange decorating icing
1 1/2 tsp vanilla extract
1/8 tsp cinnamon
1 oz unsweetened chocolate, melted
1 C prepared chocolate frosting

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