

Simple, No-Dragon-Feed Recipes

Some staple recipes and ideas for clean, delicious, but no-food-thrills, lowcarb eating

SALMON TO DIE FOR

A large salmon fillet (I use an entire half-salmon, so I'll have lots of leftovers.) First line a broiler pan with foil to help with clean-up (actually I do that with any meat I cook in the oven). Generously coat fillet with olive oil, then sprinkle liberally with sea salt and fresh ground pepper. Put under broiler on SECOND rack down from top, not the "normal" broiling height. Broil salmon (no need to turn) depending on thickness, about 15-25 minutes. (Follow your oven's instructions...some ovens require you to leave the oven door ajar when broiling). Salmon should be golden brown on top and done all the way through. (If you broil it too close to the heat it gets burned on the top way before it's cooked all the way through.) This is heavenly hot, and delicious cold too. One of my most often requested summer pot-luck contributions is a slab of this, surrounded by big stems of fresh dill and chilled at least several hours, preferably overnight.

MEATBALLS OR MEATLOAF

2 pounds ground turkey, beef or a combo of beef & pork
1/2 finely chopped green pepper
1 whole chopped jalapeno pepper with seeds & pith (optional)
1 small finely chopped onion
2 cloves finely minced garlic
1 beaten raw egg

Mix all ingredients together well. Shape into meatballs or meatloaf. Bake meatballs on a foil-lined jelly-roll pan at 400 for about 20 minutes or until brown and done. Or place into a large loaf pan and bake at 350 for about 75 minutes.

BEEF (OR TURKEY)-CABBAGE "CASSEROLE" aka "ABC" for Adele's Beef & Cabbage

In large Dutch oven brown 1 pound ground beef or turkey, season generously w/salt & pepper
Add 1 medium head of cabbage chopped into 1-2 inch dice
Cook until cabbage is warmed and wilted, but not totally stewed.
Makes 2-3 servings. I often double this and freeze some for emergencies (or failure to plan). No reason why you couldn't add onions, garlic, tomatoes and fresh herbs to taste here...I just prefer it plain. It's comfort food for me.

CHICKEN & PEPPER STIR-FRY

3-5 raw boneless chicken thighs or breasts cut up into bite size pieces
2 green peppers, in 2" slices
1 red pepper, in 2" slices
1 yellow pepper, in 2" slices
1 orange pepper, in 2" slices
1 jalapeno pepper chopped with seeds & pith (optional)

Stir fry chicken in olive oil or rendered meat fat until no longer pink. Add peppers and stir-fry for just a few minutes--peppers should still be crisp.

BEEF ROAST

Any kind of beef roast

1 onion, thinly sliced

1 carrot, peeled and thinly sliced

1 whole clove of garlic, peeled

1 slice of celery, halved

1/4 cup water

Put veggies in bottom of crock-pot, put roast on top, sprinkle liberally with sea salt and fresh ground pepper. Pour water over all and cook on low all day. If desired, puree veggies with broth in blender for "gravy".

ROAST GARLIC/ROSEMARY CHICKEN

Lay chicken pieces (skin up) out in roasting pan

Finely chop 4-5 large cloves of garlic and sprinkle over chicken along with salt & pepper

Place sprigs of fresh rosemary over chicken pieces.

Roast in oven at 350 about 1 hour.

(especially good with thighs) Good and different just with the rosemary or just the garlic too.

CHICKEN OR TURKEY SALAD

Cooked boneless chicken pieces

Green peppers cut up in 1-2" chunks

Baby carrots, parboiled 6-7 minutes and chilled in ice water

Broccoli tops, lightly parboiled then chilled, or not

Dress with olive oil, salt and pepper

TOSSED CHICKEN SALAD

Chopped romaine lettuce (or spinach)

A cooked boneless skinless chicken breast, hot or cold, whole or cut into pieces

Sliced hard boiled eggs

Dress with...yup...olive oil, salt and pepper

SPINACH SALAD

Same as above except no chicken (grin)

SALMON SALAD

Same as above except substitute salmon for chicken

COLE SLAW

Shredded cabbage/carrot combination (you can buy this pre-shredded or shred it yourself). Dress with--you know what!--olive oil, salt and fresh ground pepper

"HOT" SLAW

Shredded cabbage/carrot combination *at room temperature* (otherwise the dressing will harden like butter (grin))
Salt & fresh ground pepper
Crumbled cooked crisp pork side (optional)
Toss with hot pork side drippings, salt and fresh ground pepper.

TOSSED SALAD WITH THE WORKS

Chopped/torn lettuce of any (or mixed) varieties (or a bag of field greens)
Speed/convenience hint: Buy romaine hearts and chop with a knife
Sliced Radishes
Sliced scallions and/or red onion
Sliced cucumbers
Chopped or shredded carrot
Green, red, and/or orange pepper slices
Chopped red cabbage
Chopped raw cauliflower/broccoli
Sliced hard boiled egg

ROASTED VEGGIES

Preheat oven to 400-425
Clean/chop/trim into bite sizes the vegetables. Good choices: onions, carrots, Brussels sprouts, broccoli, green beans, including any combination of those
Toss veggies in olive oil with some sea salt & freshly ground pepper
Arrange in single layer on a shallow roasting pan, jelly roll pan, or in a cast iron skillet.
Bake uncovered 20-30 minutes, depending on veggies, turning/tossing occasionally until done as you like.

HOMEMADE SAUSAGE RECIPES & IDEAS:

While not great for serious anti-yeasting if you need to avoid dried spices, you can sometimes use fresh herbs in at least some of these recipe-ideas. Fresh sage is pretty easy to come by, and sometimes just sage and either ground pork or turkey is great! Sausage is fun, and I sort of count on it never coming out exactly the same each time. It's fun to experiment.

Add the following spices/herbs to ground meat. It's best if you can then let the mixture sit in the refrigerator for a day to help blend the flavors, but most of the time I just add the spices to the ground meat as it is cooking in the pan.

EASY BREAKFAST SAUSAGE

1 lb ground pork, beef, or turkey
1/4 to 1 tsp. sage
1/4 to 1/2 tsp. marjoram (optional)
1/4 to 1/2 tsp. thyme (optional)
1/4 to 1/2 tsp. coriander (optional)
1 tsp. salt
1/8 tsp. pepper

ITALIAN SAUSAGE

1 lb. medium ground pork or turkey, or 1/2 lb. pork and 1/2 lb. beef
1 medium onion, minced
1 1/2 tsp. salt
1 clove garlic, minced
1 bay leaf, finely crumbled
1/2 tsp. pepper
1/2 tsp. fennel seed, crushed
1/4 tsp. paprika
1/8 tsp. thyme
1/8 tsp. cayenne pepper

POLISH KIELBASA

2 lb coarsely ground pork butt
3/4 lb. finely ground beef
1 1/2 tsp. coarse salt
1 1/2 tsp. crushed peppercorns
1 1/2 tsp. marjoram
1 TBLS paprika
2 cloves garlic, minced
1/2 tsp. ground nutmeg

BRATWURST (This one is really best if it is made a day ahead and "cured")

1 lb. ground pork or turkey
1 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. ground mace
1/4 tsp. ground marjoram
1/2 tsp. white pepper

SOUP RECIPES/IDEAS

Basic Chicken Stock:

6-8 large chicken thighs with bones
2-3 quarts water
2 onions, peeled and quartered
2 large carrots, peeled quartered
2 stalks celery, in large chunks
2 large cloves of garlic, peeled
1 TBLS salt
12-15 whole black peppercorns

Bring all to a boil then simmer gently together in a kettle for about 1 hour, remove chicken and cool. If stock is not concentrated enough, you can take the meat off the bones, return the bones to the stock and simmer for another hour, leaving it at least partially uncovered. This makes a delicious, rich chicken broth from which you can

make several different kinds of soup. If there is a lot of fat on the top, skim some off and refrigerate and save to season other foods, instead of butter or oil

PLAIN OLD CHICKEN SOUP: Strain the cooked vegetables out of the stock (they will be limp and have given up their life for the good of the soup!) Put at least some of the chicken back in the broth (you can save some of it for other chicken dishes) add some chopped fresh carrots, celery and onion, and simmer until the vegetables are just tender.

FANCY ZUCCHINI-THICKENED CHICKEN SOUP. Before adding the vegetables and meat to the chicken stock, cook a whole bunch of sliced zucchini in the stock. When soft, puree either in a blender or with a stick blender (you can leave some of the cooked squash out of the pureeing if you want to and add it back. Then add the vegetables (optional) and chicken into the thickened soup.

CAULIFLOWER OR “MOCK POTATO” SOUP: Cook a very large head of fresh cauliflower, cored, in the chicken stock, just until fork tender. Then carefully puree the cauliflower into a small amount of the broth—adding broth as you go until it reaches the desired consistency. It's nice to add some sliced, cooked celery to this too. One important note: Don't try this with frozen cauliflower, it doesn't work, it's awful. For some reason frozen cooked cauliflower won't emulsify into the broth, it will come out a curdled mess.

CURRIED CARROT* SOUP: Saute a large chopped onion in olive oil in a large dutch oven for 5-10 minutes until limp and transparent. Add 1-2 TBLS of curry powder (optional) and brown a minute longer. Add 1-2 quarts of chicken stock and cook 10 or so large carrots until very tender in the stock. Blend all until creamy with a stick blender.

*Obviously, this one won't work for at all for Atkins induction, if that's what plan you're following, and using the curry might be problematic for hard-core anti-yeasters, but it is good without it too.

SOME OTHER IDEAS AND HINTS

Make a turkey and feed yourself for several days. It doesn't have to be Thanksgiving and you don't have to be having company. I find cooking them in the oven bags saves messy ovens and clean-up. Generally speaking, always make more meat than you'll eat at one meal. Planning to have leftovers is the secret the key to having fast easy food available.

Eat Steak! - pork steaks and beef steaks. It is usually a lot more affordable to eat pork steaks. They are a great fat source too. I broil them or grill them out or cook them on the George Foreman grill.

Pork chops are easy and great done on the grill or baked in the oven; but to change the texture/taste somewhat different brown in a skillet, then braise for 45-60 minutes or cook in a pressure cooker (with some water) for about 10 minutes. Pork loin roasts are usually fast and fairly often on sale. They provide lots of leftover meat. Fresh thyme is wonderful with pork (and turkey).

Ribs---country style or back ribs. No, they don't taste a whole lot different than plain pork, but they can be fun to eat off the bone. Makes me feel like a real cave girl anyway.

FAST-FUN and PRETTY DARNED EASY-CLEAN-UP RIBS:

Cut full pork back ribs into halves (to fit LARGE crock pot), into smaller portions to fit smaller crockpot. Lightly salt & pepper. Wrap each portion tightly in heavy duty aluminum foil and place in crockpot (Do NOT add water or anything else to crockpot!) Turn crockpot on low and cook all day.

And I seem to NEVER get tired of plain roasted chicken—thighs or breasts or wings—with the skin cooked crisp and brown. I either bake it in the oven at 350 for about an hour, or I sometimes do thighs on a George-Foreman Grill about 20 minutes total; boneless breasts take about 10 minutes. Wings, breasts and drumsticks with the bones don't seem to work well in GF grills because of their irregular shapes.

A frozen vegetable standby is a "California Mix" sold at my local Sam's Club. Sliced carrots with broccoli and cauliflower florets. I will often cook a big batch of this for dinner (oiled w/olive oil or meat fat), take the leftover veggies and divide them into two single serving sized plastic containers, plop some leftover meat into each container and refrigerate. I have my lunches decided and made for the next two days.

EATING IN RESTAURANTS

Order steak, hamburgers or broiled fresh fish. Most restaurant chicken, I find, has been marinated, beef is often a better choice for that reason. Ask for salads with no croutons, no cheese if you're anti-yeasting. If they don't offer oil and vinegar in the little cruets, ask them to go to the kitchen and fetch you a dressing container full of oil. Ask for your veggies steamed then drizzle the olive oil over them as well as your salad.

One last note...when it seems you're up against a wall, it's 7 or 8 pm and there's no dinner in sight, scrambled eggs have more than once saved the day. Eggs are cheap, they last a long time in the fridge, and they can be ready in 5 minutes or less. Microwave some frozen veggies while the eggs are cooking, and you're fueled enough to plan a better, smarter tomorrow.

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