

PREFACE

WHILE MANY FOLKS COLLECT STAMPS, OR COINS, OR EVEN MATCHBOOK COVERS, I collect pressure cookers. You might chuckle when I tell you about my hobby. You might say, “How whimsical!” or look confused and ask, “Why?” I’ll tell you the truth: cooking under pressure fascinates me. This weird obsession has been my primal path to fast nutritious meals and resourceful fun. I cannot live a day without its use. And I’m filled with the hope that you can learn to love the pressure cooker too.

My pressure cooking affair began when I was just a school girl. The relationship blossomed through college and graduate school, then flourished during 55 years of marriage, a teaching career, and the raising of five children. Finally, I yearned to preserve my passion as a legacy for my grandkids. With an eye on posterity, I started writing down my recipes. A huge collection developed!

As a pressure cooking fanatic, I have prepared more than 15,000 dishes in various pressure cookers, everything from old fashioned clamp-downs to modern digital Instant Pots. I have fed a large family and entertained thousands of guests with ease. I’ve cooked carrots in seconds and gourmet soups in just 15 minutes. I’ve made corned beef and tender pulled-pork in less than an hour. These are recipes that would normally hold you slave to the stove for hours! So many quickly prepared meals have passed through my kitchen that I felt compelled to assemble my life-long culinary affair into a book celebrating the joys of pressure cooking. I invite you to join in the fun.



Why Fall in Love with Pressure Cooking?

A one-word answer to this quirky question is simple: “economy.” Pressure cooking means economy of time, energy and money. My goal is to get you to think about your food prep options. I want to convince you that you can overcome the jitters and manage the pressure cooker safely. By doing so, you will save hours, watts and lots of dollars.

The pressure cooker cuts cooking time by 75%. Beef stew is ready in 20 minutes, while the same meal prepared in a Dutch oven at 350°F will take around 100 minutes. In a crock-pot, you will wait 10 to 12 hours! Soups are a wonder in five minutes, and fruits and vegetables steam in seconds. It's a no-brainer. To save time, use the pressure cooker for daily cooking.

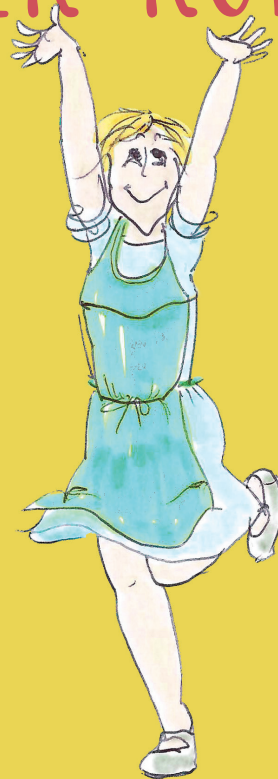
The pressure cooker is the greenest piece of cooking equipment in your kitchen. In comparison to other pots and pans, it's the clear winner. It uses less gas or electric energy, it's constructed of non-reactive stainless steel, and fresh, all-natural ingredients are fundamental to the recipes. It reduces waste when you recycle leftovers into stews, soups and sauces. The more you use the pressure cooker, the better it is for your budget. You will reduce any dependence on junk food and pre-packed meals as you turn to fast, wholesome entrées and soups.

Waste Not, Want Not . . . The Motto of the Pressure Cooking Chef

We are excessive consumers! Americans throw out one-third of the foods that we lug home from the grocers. We are at a loss for what to do with all that we buy. Pears and peaches and peppers and chicken legs that pass from beauty to beast in short order are tossed out. Without an easy fix, we chuck everything into the garbage pail soon after purchase. We toss out uneaten scraps and bones from steak and take-out chicken with the leftover pasta from last evening. We pitch the bread that's too crispy to slice. We empty the garbage can and rush out to do more shopping. The whole pattern lacks reason.

We must learn to transform those about-to-spoil foods and the gnarly leftovers into appetizing meals. The PC can be one small vehicle that will change our grocery bills, our eating habits and the food waste problems of the modern world.

THE PRESSURE COOKER ROMANCE



OUTRAGEOUS 01: CARROT COINS OR SHAVINGS

Commence your love affair simply with earthy organic carrots. Sliced as coins, carrots are intoxicating in their wholesome unadorned beauty! They're perfect with two minutes of steam, a dash of curry, brown sugar and a dab of butter. If you prefer a first date with an exotic twist, shave red and yellow carrots very thinly with a grater or food processor, then steam in your PC. Serve heaped up on a platter, garnished with tiny snips of curly parsley.

INGREDIENTS

8 very fresh stiff, never limp carrots (old, wilted carrots are not sweet)
1 cup water
1 Tbsp. butter
1 tsp. sugar
Parsley snips (optional)
1 tsp. curry (optional)

Scan the "Quick Release" QR code to see the video "How-To Carrot Coins in Two Minutes."



HOW-TO

1. Peel and slice carrots; place in steamer basket (or on a metal trivet on bottom of PC)
2. Add 1 cup water; cook under pressure: Stovetop 2 min. / Instant Pot 3 min.
3. QPR: Cool quickly; remove steamer basket
4. Coat carrots with butter and sugar
5. Optional: sprinkle curry on top
6. Serve heaped on a platter with a garnish of parsley snips

COMMENTS: Spend the extra change and purchase fresh carrots—like farm-stand varieties, the ones with their leafy tops intact. Their green leaves allow photosynthesis to continue longer, preserving natural sugars and sweetness. Cheaper carrots piled high in grocery bins, imprisoned in plastic bags, turn starchy and tasteless as they ogle their beautiful unblemished cousins in the organic section flaunting their bushy green tops and bright carotene glow.



CRAZY FOR SOUP



BROCCOLI CHEESE SOUP

Broccoli and mild cheese go well together. Here's a perfect way to reuse last night's wilted stalks, or choose fresh or frozen broccoli for this 10 minute homerun. HINT: Smash the florets to just barely recognizable when introducing broccoli soup to the squeamish.

INGREDIENTS

- ½ cup finely diced onions (frozen work well)
- 2 Tbsp. butter
- 1 peeled carrot cut up into small bits
- 2-3 cups broccoli florets broken into small pieces (frozen or fresh or leftover)
- 1 quart chicken or turkey stock
- 1 tsp. salt
- Grated pepper
- 8 ounces mild cheese (shredded American or Mexican style)
- ¼ cup whole milk (optional)

HOW-TO

1. Sauté onions in melted butter in PC for 4-5 minutes
2. Add broccoli, carrot, salt and stock
3. Cook under pressure: Stove top 5 Min. / Instant Pot 7 Min.
4. QPR: quickly release the steam
5. Stir in shredded cheese until melted and soup is smooth and silky
6. Lightly stir in milk (optional) and serve immediately
7. Add salt and grated pepper to taste

COMMENTS: *This soup screams “success” when made with homemade chicken or turkey broth. Whenever last night’s dinner features chicken parts, cook extra legs, thighs, and wings to make a quart or two of stock from the leftover poultry. (See broth/stock recipe). When choosing a commercial stock, select name brands with low salt content.*



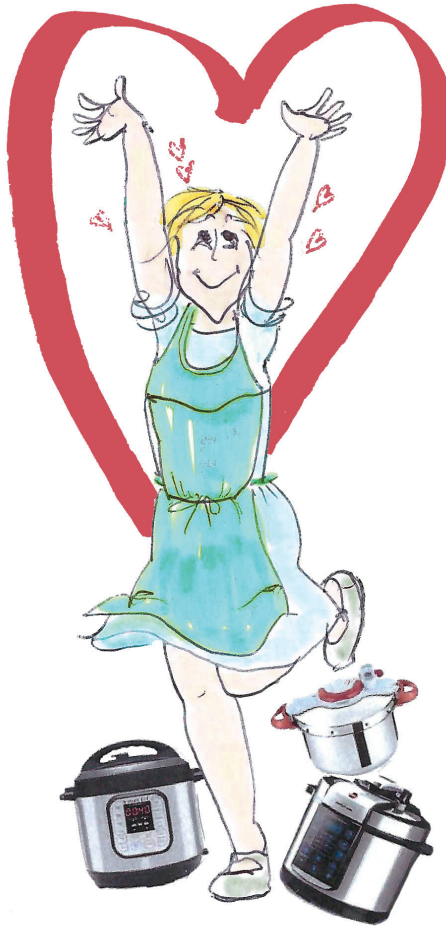
DESSERTS - EASY PC

THE PRESSURE COOKER WILL CHARM YOU WITH ITS MOIST DESSERTS. Steam enrobes the Ingredients as a high, even temperature surrounds the food. For this method of dessert making, the materials must be lifted above the direct heat at the bottom of the cooker. A trivet is set on the floor of the PC, and the food is placed in a heatproof tin or mold and then placed in a wire or silicon basket inside the cooker. A small aluminum bunt pan or silicon mold nestled inside a basket works well. A basket holding the pans or molds makes it easy to lift the cooked food out of the hot PC. In this process, steam bathes the containers, mimicking the French method called Bain-Marie, where custard cups are placed in a pan of water in the hot oven.

Given these parameters, turn to the PC for creating moist desserts like custards, puddings and cheesecakes. If you want to make a rich fruitcake for the holidays, there is no better way than steaming the fruity concoction in the PC.

Here's the checklist of essentials:

- ✓ Trivet for the bottom of the PC so food rests above the floor of the cooker
- ✓ Containers that fit easily inside the PC
- ✓ A device such as a collapsible basket for lifting filled containers out of the PC
- ✓ Aluminum foil to cover tins/molds/ramekins



**BY NOW YOU AND YOUR PC HAVE
MADE A STRONG CONNECTION AND
YOUR AFFAIR IS ON A ROLL!**

To keep your relationship exciting, use the PC at least once or twice a week. With continuity, your familiarity grows, your skills improve and your cooking becomes versatile. Great things can happen with experience! Practice a few standard repeatable meals. Your PC repertoire should include some meals that you can pull off rapidly. A standard fare might be vegetable beef soup with various interpretations, depending on the ingredients hanging around your freezer. This soup goes from pot to table in 15 minutes and can be a lunch, a supper or an in-between snack. Keep the makings of a simple chili on the shelf and in the freezer. The preparation is a quick 20 minutes and the result can feed a crowd. And don't neglect the glorious flan that requires the very basics: eggs, milk and sugar that you can pull together on the spur of the moment for a stunning dessert.

How's your affair going? It's time for a self-evaluation quiz. Give yourself points for rapid meal prep, improved efficiency and positive PC vibes.

Cheers to your steamy affair!