**Clam Linguine**

1 cup Extra virgin olive oil

3 Tbs Minced garlic

2 Tbs Italian seasoning

2 cans minced clams (drained)

1 lb Package linguine

Grated Parmesan Cheese (to taste)

Prepare noodles according to package directions. While noodles are boiling: In a large deep skillet or sauce pan warm the olive oil over medium high heat. Add the garlic and Italian seasoning and bring to a simmer. After the garlic browns (it will burn quickly after turning brown, so be ready!) Add the clams and allow them to warm through. (1-2 min max. Too long will make them tough.) Toss the noodles in the sauce and serve with grated parmesan cheese if desired.

**Tip:** Sometimes I start my noodles first and then begin gathering ingredients, opening and draining the clams, setting the table etc. Then I drain them and use the same pot to make the sauce and dump them back into the pot at the end to toss. Fewer dishes and no wasted time wandering around the kitchen while nothing is getting done.

**Macaroni and Cheese Casserole**

1 lb ground beef

2 boxes Macaroni and Cheese Dinner \*

Milk (enough to prepare the mac and cheese – usually ¼ cup)

Margarine (enough to prepare the mac and cheese – usually 4 tbs)

1 can cream of Chicken Soup

Garlic powder or Garlic salt (optional and to taste)

Season and brown the ground beef. (Use salt and pepper at the very least!) While beef is browning, prepare boxes of Mac and Cheese. When beef is drained, add it and the cream of chicken soup and stir well. Add garlic powder/salt to taste if desired.

Tip: Buy bulk burger and brown a lot at once. Then portion it out in freezer bags and it thaws pretty quick to add to dishes, cutting out the mess and time needed to brown burger at mealtime.

\* You can make this with just one box if you don’t need so much. It will just be creamier and meatier. ☺

**Shell Macaroni Casserole**

1 lb ground beef

1 lb box of small sea shell pasta

1 can tomato sauce

1 can spaghetti sauce

1 can cream of chicken soup

2 cups shredded cheddar

Season and brown the ground beef. (Use salt and pepper at the very least!) While beef is browning, prepare pasta according to package directions. Drain beef and combine with noodles, tomato sauce, spaghetti sauce, and cream of chicken soup. Sprinkle cheese over top in pot or on plates as your serve. It should melt and be yummy!

Optional: Preheat oven to 350 o F before starting preparation. When mixed (no cheese added yet) pour in a greased 9x13 pan, cover with the cheese and bake for 25-30 minutes. It’s great, and a hit at potlucks!

Tip: Buy bulk burger and brown a lot at once. Then portion it out in freezer bags and it thaws pretty quick to add to dishes, cutting out the mess and time needed to brown burger at mealtime.

**Crockpot Stroganoff**

1. 2 cans condensed Golden cream of mushroom soup (10 and 3/4 oz. each)
2. 2 Tablespoons Worcestershire
3. 1/2 cup of water
4. 1/4 teaspoon Garlic Salt
5. a dash of Paprika
6. 1 yellow onion, chopped (~ 1 cup)
7. 2 pounds cubed stew meat
8. 8 oz. 1/3 less fat "Cream" Cheese, also labeled as Neufchatel Cheese (Regular cream cheese can be substituted)
9. ~Optional~ 8 oz. fresh mushrooms (two 4oz cans of drained sliced mushrooms are a good substitute)
10. 12 oz. bag of Egg Noodles

The last 3 ingredients are not needed until the 20 minutes before serving. In your cold crock pot, stir the first 7 ingredients. Cook on low for 8-10 hours.

Twenty minutes before serving: Stir the sauce well. Rinse the mushrooms and chop them into uniform slices. Stir them into the crock pot and cover. Cube the block of Neufchatel Cheese and stir it in well.  Let the cheese melt and the mushrooms cook to tender in your crock pot while you boil a pot of water and cook, following the directions on the package of egg noodles. It should take less than 10 minutes to boil the whole bag. Drain the noodles and mix them into the crockpot.

Tips: Mushrooms can, of course, be canned or omitted completely. Beef can be frozen or fresh. No need to alter cook times. Onions can be frozen or onion powder can be substituted. Cream cheese can be frozen and then thawed.

**Chicken Quesadillas**

1 Tbs vegetable oil

2 Boneless skinless chicken breasts

1 package Taco seasoning

1 package flour tortillas (any size)

1 jar Queso dip

2 cups shredded cheese

Butter or margarine (softened)

Heat oil in skillet. Cube chicken breast and add to skillet. When cooked through add taco seasoning. You may need to add a little water to help it coat evenly. Warm a clean skillet over medium heat. Butter one side of the tortilla and place it in the pan butter side down. Spread desired amount of queso dip on side of tortilla facing up. Sprinkle cheese and chicken over queso. When cheese is melted and tortilla is brown, fold it in half and remove from heat. Repeat with remaining ingredients until gone or desired number of quesadillas are made.

Tip: Chicken breasts (fresh or frozen) can be cooked in a crockpot with a little water, salt, and pepper all day and easily shredded for meals like this. Cook extra, portion it out into freezer bags, and throw it in the freezer. Then you’re ready for the next several weeks.

**Ice Cream Sandwich Cake**

1 box ice cream sandwiches

1 tub whipped topping

Chocolate syrup (optional)

Unwrap and layer ice cream sandwiches in the bottom of a 9x13 pan and cover with whipped topping. Drizzle chocolate syrup over top before serving if desired. Keep frozen.

**Cheese Ball**

2 (8 oz) packages cream cheese, softened

1 (1 oz) package ranch dressing mix (dip mix will be too salty!)

2 cups shredded sharp cheddar cheese

1 ½ cups chopped pecans

Mix cream cheese, dressing mix, and cheddar well. Grease your hands and form mixture into a ball. Roll it in the chopped nuts and refrigerate until ready to serve. Serve with your favorite crackers.

Tips: The cream cheese, shredded cheese, and pecans can all be frozen. Making it easy to keep these ingredients on hand for short notice and emergency situations.