

The Crock Pot

It's September 15th and the temperature has dropped drastically in just one week! While it's still technically summer to the rest of the world, in Chicago September means you pull out your hoodies and your crock pot! Yes, it's time for comfort foods!

I must first make a confession; I just bought a slow cooker last week for the first time! I remember years ago, these were called Crock Pots, now they're referred to as "Programmable Slow Cookers"...at least that's what all the boxes said when I bought mine. Admittedly I walked into Target looking for a Crock Pot, which I later learned that the original "Crock Pot" was made by Rival and was a slow cooker, however Crock Pot became a household name due to its popularity. So yes, slow cookers and crock pots are one and the same!

An acquaintance, who shares my passion for cooking and entertaining, asked me (with a horrified look on her face) if I really bought a Crock Pot! I guess it's not a cool thing to do if you consider yourself a real "foodie". I felt the need to explain to her that I have a "Programmable Slow Cooker" and that my intentions were to make some pretty incredible dishes. I almost started getting a little defensive about my new purchase, then I realized why I bought it and I felt good about it again!

You see, my life is just a wee bit hectic, between a corporate hotel position, running Styled-It and my real job of taking care of my family, I don't always have the time to prepare meals during the week. Therefore my choices are to eat out, carry-out or pull the crock pot out! The idea of having a meal on the table before 8:30 in the evening sounds appealing to me, especially when it's something healthy and tasty that I've prepared myself. This evening in just 20 minutes, I've put together a Beef Bourguignon using a nice Cote Du Rhone that will be completely done by the time I get home from work tomorrow!

I'm sure they're the "Food Police" out there who cringe at the thought of using a slow cooker, (as I once did) however, If you can find a way to save time without compromising taste and quality when you prepare meals, I say why not?

What's next? I think I'll prepare my Chicken Coq Au Vin and may even bring out the bread machine and bake a nice crusty loaf to go with it!