

Home Management: Plan And Organize Your Time

BY SHARON GUTHMILLER
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Managing time can be a challenge for us as individuals and for members of a busy active family. When planning and organizing time, you might consider staying on top of family and individual activities by keeping a master calendar in the kitchen or in a location that everyone passes each day. Be sure that everyone knows it is their responsibility to have all activities listed on the calendar so everyone knows each other's schedule. This way transportation plans can be made a week in advance without the last-minute hassle.

Consider "timing." If it takes two hours a day to do housework to meet your standards and you don't seem to get it accomplished in the evening after work, you might try changing the time you do the activity. For example, do one hour of housework, such as a load of laundry, before going to work and another hour of housework in the evening.

Allow only a certain amount of time per task. When that time is up, move to the next task. You may want to consider breaking down a major job into smaller parts. For example, washing the panes in one window per week may take only a couple of minutes. Cleaning several windows each week may make the task more manageable than washing all the windows in the house at one time.

Plan for difficult tasks during your peak energy time. If cleaning and waxing the kitchen floor gets put off until the end of the day, and then doesn't get done, try moving that task to the beginning of the day. Some people like to get up a half-hour before the rest of the family wakes up to give themselves more time to do things that are important to them.

Some other examples of changes in timing might be related to shopping. You might try grocery shopping at a time when there are shorter checkout lines. Incorporate other errands close by so one trip takes care of several items.

January through April can be a lower period of activities for some families. What activities can be shifted from later in the year to these months? Cleaning a freezer during this period instead of during the busier summer months would shift a household



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activity as well as be a better time to maintain cold temperatures of frozen foods. Other examples include cleaning closets, organizing kitchens, or clothing activities.

Think about resources that you might draw upon. It might be a potential that you weren't aware of, or haven't used to the fullest, such as the timer on a range or the programmable component on the microwave. VCRs and telephone answering machines are two examples of resources that allow us more time flexibility. If there are other family members in the household, you may be able to draw upon their abilities through delegation of responsibilities. When you are delegating responsibilities, consider the skills and abilities of each individual. It is not a good idea to ask a 5 year old child to take out the trash if she or he can barely lift the bag. If you ask a 7 year old to fold the laundry, the end result may not be the same as when you fold it. This isn't necessarily bad, but if you can't accept it, consider a task more acceptable to the age and abilities of the child. Think of creative ways to delegate tasks, especially with children. Drawing chores from a job jar based on individual skills works for some families.

You might choose to go beyond you and your family. Think of community resources that can be helpful. You might consider trading a task you are unable or unwilling to do. Someone can do that task for you in return for you doing a task they cannot perform.

Finding a different way to do something is less disruptive than changing your goals or standards. Starting with the least disruptive strategy, decide what sequence of activities can be reordered to improve your productivity and reduce the time spent or reduce the "hassle." (Source: Ohio State Extension bulletin)

Thought: Keep your words sweet—you may have to eat them.

Sharon Guthmiller is a Yankton County Extension educator specializing in family and consumer sciences.

Portobello Add A Hearty Flavor To Pasta

BY LINDA GASSENHEIMER
McClatchy Newspapers

In this hearty vegetarian dish, a takeoff on traditional eggplant parmesan, meaty Portobello mushrooms are dressed in a rich tomato sauce and covered with mozzarella and Parmesan cheese.

The entree ingredients are placed in a skillet and cooked in 8 minutes. The side dish is made with whole wheat linguine. It can be found fresh or dried. Either works well here.

Countdown:
—Put water for pasta on to boil.
—Make Portobello parmesan.
—While mushrooms cook, make linguine.

PORTOBELLO PARMESAN

1 teaspoon olive oil
1 pound sliced Portobello mushrooms
1 teaspoon dried oregano
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 1/2-cups low-fat, low-sodium tomato sauce
1 cup fresh basil, torn into large pieces
1/2 cup shredded, part-skim milk mozzarella cheese
1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
Heat oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add the

mushrooms and sprinkle with the oregano and salt and pepper to taste. Cook for 3 minutes. Add the tomato sauce and basil and mix well. Sprinkle shredded mozzarella over the sauce and cover the skillet. Simmer 5 minutes to warm the sauce and melt the cheese. Remove from heat and spoon Parmesan cheese on top.
Makes 2 servings.

LINGUINE

1/4 pound whole wheat linguine
1 teaspoon olive oil
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Place a large sauce pan with 3 to 4 quarts of water on to boil over high heat. Add linguine to boiling water for 3 minutes if using fresh or 9 minutes if using dry linguine. Drain and toss with olive oil and add salt and pepper to taste. Place linguine on dinner plates and top with Portobello Parmesan.
Makes 2 servings.

SHOPPING LIST

Here are the ingredients you'll need for tonight's Dinner in Minutes.
To buy: 1 package shredded, part-skim milk mozzarella, 1 package Parmesan cheese, 1 can low-fat, low-sodium tomato sauce, 1 package whole wheat linguine, 1 pound sliced Portobello mushrooms and 1 bunch basil.
Staples: Olive oil, dried oregano, salt and black pepper, corns



Riesgaard-Anderson

Alison Riesgaard and Devin Anderson were married August 15, 2009, at Trinity Lutheran Church with the Rev. David Wildermuth officiating.

Parents of the couple are Cal & Deb Riesgaard, Yankton, SD, and Jim & Gale Anderson, Willmar, MN.

Maid of Honor was Megan Riesgaard, Chicago, IL. Bridesmaids were Rosalynn Rudd, Jolene Anderson, Nikki Thaden, Jessie Dirksen, and Dana Czmowski.

Best man was Justin Nelson, St. Louis Park, MN. Groomsmen were Brandon Riesgaard, Corey Rudd, Jason Donley, Justin Cummings, and Peter Rhoades. Ushers were Brian Thunker, Tim Jensen, and Mike Machos.

The bride graduated from Minnesota State - Mankato. She is currently pursuing a Special Ed degree and works for Frasier Institute in Minneapolis, MN.

The groom graduated from St. Cloud State - MN. He is currently a project manager for Target Corp. in Minneapolis, MN.

The couple resides in St. Louis Park, MN.

Slow Cookers Making A Big Comeback

BY JACKIE BURRELL

Contra Costa Times ©2009 (MCT)

Slow cookers — those retro workhorses of yore — are surging back to popularity. Gone are the days of cream of mushroom soup-coated roasts, simmered into bland oblivion. Now, foods as fresh and complex as creamy risottos and braised Basque chicken have ended up in the slow cooker and the results are downright yummy.

But talk to any professional chef, including three who have penned recent cookbooks on the art of slow cooker cuisine, and chances are, you'll hear sheepish confessions. "I have to be honest. It wasn't my go-to for a long, long time," says Cordon Bleu-trained Diane Phillips, author of "The Slow Cooker: The Best Cookbook Ever" (Chronicle Books, 544 pp., \$24.95).

"Some of the food in these (old) cookbooks is really disgusting," she says. "The dump-and-run theory is really what has turned a lot of people off."

It took a bout of physical therapy — and the upheaval that the schlep to rehab wrought on dinner prep — to motivate Phillips, a San Diego-based chef who teaches classes several times a year at Draeger's cooking schools in San Mateo, Menlo Park, Los Altos and Danville, Calif.

"When I finally figured out what it took — well, this thing is really pretty great, and no one knows it," Phillips says. "I preach the slow cooker gospel now."

The trick is to put in extra effort on the front end. What you're doing isn't a dump-and-run, it's a low, slow braise, and that's a culinary technique with a long and beloved history. It's what inspired Michele Scicolone's Crock-Pot epiphany in Rome, too.

"Every day I would pass this restaurant where there was a window, and you could see beans simmering in a wood-burning fireplace," the cookbook author recalls. "I thought, 'If only I could cook that way.' But I live in a Manhattan apartment, so slow cooking ... slow cooking, hmm ... slow cooker!"

Back stateside, the author of the "Sopranos Family Cookbook" and the new "The Italian Slow Cooker" (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 240 pp., \$22) bought a Crock-Pot — her first slow cooker ever. Scicolone was well aware of the disdain many people have for the homely appliance, and she knew how it earned that bad reputation.

"People weren't using fresh stuff," she says. "They were using canned soup or a package of this or that. It's only as good as what you put into it. The first thing I did was make beans. They came out so tender and creamy, just the way I remember having them, infused with the flavors of the herbs and the garlic. Every one was perfectly plump."

The key, say Phillips and Scicolone, lies in browning the meat before you drop it in, cooking with dried herbs, and adding fresh



MATHEW SUMNER/CONTRA COSTA TIMES/MCT

Ingredients slowly cook in a Crock-Pot in the kitchen of Stephanie O'Dea in Millbrae, California. O'Dea was on the Rachel Ray Show after they noticed her blog, www.crockpot365.blogspot.com.

herbs for a last minute punch of flavor. Suddenly, that slow cooker becomes not just a work horse but the provider of fragrant, braised Basque-style chicken and peppers, tomato-kissed Italian short ribs, kid-friendly tamale pie or pulled pork sliders for that Super Bowl party.

"Ethnic flavors really shine in this kind of cooking," says Phillips. "The French have been doing it low and slow for a long time. The Italians, the Indians, every cuisine has this kind of thing."

There's an economical element, too. Cheap, tough cuts of meat turn fork-tender. And a slow-cooked pork shoulder will yield carnitas, tacos, pork ragu and other dinners all week long.

"If you do that big brisket," says Phillips, "you've got lots of leftovers you can use for other things."

Of course, not everything should go in the pot.

Cooking filet mignon in a slow cooker is a waste of money. Bacon-wrapped scallops are ghastly, says Peninsula blogger Stephanie O'Dea, whose "Make It Fast, Cook It Slow" (Hyperion Books, 454 pp., \$19.99) cookbook has spent the last three weeks on the New York Times best-seller list. And broccoli that has been cooked for eight hours is about as horrible as you'd expect.

But the rest of the menu is fair game. It was creme brulee that turned O'Dea's slow cooker lark — her blog, CrockPot365, chronicled the year she spent using a slow cooker — into something serious. The next thing O'Dea knew, she was on Rachael Ray's show doing a Crock-Pot creme brulee demo, and

her blog was drawing 15,000 visitors a day. Now the blog has turned into a successful cookbook, and O'Dea is working on a second, budget-conscious volume.

"With the state of the economy, the one thing people can control is their food budget — and there's no easier way," she says.

And with a new baby and two young daughters at home, O'Dea keeps her slow cooker at a steady, burbling simmer. She couldn't, she says, live without it.

TIPS & TRICKS

—Enhance flavor and texture by browning meats and onions in a skillet before slow cooking.

—Use dried herbs, not fresh, in slow cookers. But you can punch up the flavor remarkably by adding chopped, fresh herbs at the very end, just before serving.

—Don't peek. Every time you lift the lid, you're letting heat escape.

—Anything that cooks on low in 6-8 hours, can be cooked on high for 3-4 hours.

—Even the most economical, sturdy cut of meat becomes tender and flavorful after a long, slow braise, so a slow cooker can help pare budgets. But not every food benefits from cooking in what is essentially a steam bath. Don't use expensive or delicate cuts of meat or seafood.

—Slow cookers can be used for stews, but also risottos, polenta and desserts. Use them to keep mashed potatoes warm or hot dips toasty during parties.

—Don't limit your slow cooker use to the chilly winter months. Use a Crock-Pot during the summer months and you won't heat up your kitchen.

BRAISED BASQUE CHICKEN

Serves 6-8

- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 10 chicken thighs, skin removed
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 2 medium onions, sliced into half-rounds
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 red and 1 yellow bell peppers, seeded and cut into 1/2-inch thick slices
- 1 teaspoon sweet paprika
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 2 tablespoons sherry vinegar
- 1 cup chicken broth
- 4 ounces Spanish chorizo or sopressa, cut into 1/2-inch dice
- 1. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Sprinkle the chicken evenly with salt and pepper. Add the chicken to the skillet, in batches, if necessary, and brown on all sides. Transfer the meat to the insert of a 5- to 7-quart slow cooker.
- 2. Add the onions, garlic, bell peppers, paprika and thyme to the skillet and saute until soft, 7-8 minutes.
- 3. Deglaze the pan with the vinegar and broth, scraping up any browned bits from the bottom of the skillet. Add to the slow cooker, along with the chorizo, and stir to combine. Cover and cook on low for 7 to 8 hours (or on high for 3 to 4 hours), until the chicken is tender and cooked through.

PULLED PORK

Serves 10-12

For sliders, pile the meat into soft rolls; serve with slaw and baked beans.

- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 1/4 cup red wine vinegar
- 1/2 cup firmly packed dark brown sugar
- 1/2 cup soy sauce
- 2 cups ketchup
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder or garlic salt
- 1 large onion, coarsely chopped
- 2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- 5-pound boneless pork shoulder roast, fat trimmed
- Barbecue sauce for serving

TAMALE PIE

Serves 6

- Cooking spray
- 15 ounce can black beans, drained and rinsed
- 15 ounce can fire-roasted diced tomatoes
- 15 ounce can corn, drained
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon paprika
- 1/4 cup diced onion
- 1/2 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- Cornbread topping:
 - 3/4 cup cornmeal
 - 1 1/4 cups flour
 - 1 teaspoon baking powder
 - 1 cup milk
 - 1/4 cup sugar
 - 1 large egg

1. Spray the inside of a 4-quart slow cooker with cooking spray. Pour in the filling ingredients — the beans, tomatoes, corn, spices, onion and cheese — and stir well, taking care to evenly distribute the spices.

2. In a separate bowl, mix the cornbread topping. Pour the batter evenly over the filling, spreading it with a spatula.

la. Cover and cook on low for 4-7 hours, or on high for 2-4 hours.

COUNTRY-STYLE PORK RIBS

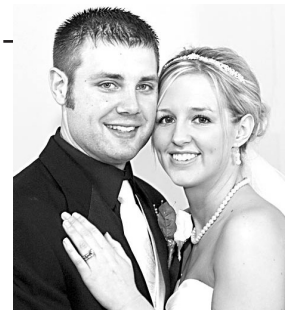
Serves 6

- 4 pounds country-style pork ribs
- Salt and freshly ground pepper
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 medium onions, chopped
- 2 large garlic cloves, chopped
- 1/2 cup dry white wine
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 1 cup tomato puree
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 4 medium red bell peppers, seeded, in 1/2-inch slices
- 1. Pat ribs dry and sprinkle them with salt and pepper to taste. In a large skillet, heat the oil over medium heat. Add as

many ribs as fit without crowding. Cook the meat, turning occasionally, until nicely browned on all sides. Place the browned ribs in the slow cooker. Repeat until done.

2. Add the onions and garlic to the skillet and cook 5 minutes, or until softened. Stir in wine and tomato paste and cook, scraping the bottom of the pan, until the liquid begins to simmer. Stir in tomato puree, oregano and salt and pepper to taste.

3. Scatter the peppers over the pork in the slow cooker. Pour the sauce over the meat. Cover and cook on low for 6 hours or until the meat is tender and coming away from the bones. Discard any loose bones and skim off the fat.



Zimmerman-Rudd

Tonya Zimmermann and Justin Rudd were married January 9, 2010 at Christ the King Lutheran Church, Yankton, SD, with Rev. Dani Jo Ninke officiating.

Parents of the couple are Bud and Tammy Zimmermann of Viborg, SD, Tim Rudd of Irene, SD and Pam Rudd of Irene, SD.

Matron of Honor was Lindsey Hauger. Bridesmaids were Rachel Sunne, Jamie Stucky, Jessica Rudd and Teresa Alderson. Flower girls were Josie, Clara and Adelynn Stucky.

Best Man was Mathias Stucky. Groomsmen were Joey Jaton, Lance Huber, BJ Zimmermann and Josh Zimmermann. Ushers were Brian Nielson, Terry Rye, Sarah Maly and Kyah Lauck.

Reception hosts were Rodney and Sandy Pearson, Todd Rudd and Lisa Rudd.

The bride is a 2005 graduate of Viborg High School, and will graduate in May 2010 from Mount Marty College with a degree in nursing.

The groom is a 2003 graduate of Irene High School, and 2005 graduate of Mitchell Technical Institute's HVAC program.

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The couple resides in Brookings, SD.