

Recipes for the Solar Hot Pot



www.blackhillspicturebooks.com

www.blackhillspicturebooks.com



This photo shows how you can add a baking rack to your Hot Pot to hold up your thermometer. Our baking rack just happened to fit perfectly.

Put the thermometer in the Pot while the food is raw so you do not have to mess with it and lose heat later. Put the lid on and watch the temperature rise. 😊

Table of Contents

(Please Note: cooking times are **approximate**. Times for “average” lunch or supper are given exactly how I actually cooked the recipe. Adjust accordingly for alternate meals/times keeping in mind food cooks quicker when the sun is higher.)

Main Dishes

1 hour

Sunny Side Up Eggs

2 hours

Helio Hard-Cooked Eggs

Flamin’ Sun Burgers

Mexican Eggs del Sol

Sun-Kissed Quiche

Sun-Baked Oatmeal

Sun-fetti Rice (with meat)

Sunray Refried Bean Dip

3 hours

Chicken Hot Pot Pie

Sunny Yellow Quiche with Potato Crust

Sunshine Shredded Chicken

3-5 hours

Megasun Meatloaf

Sunbeam Meaty Beans

Sunny Spuds and Hotpot Dogs

Sunlight Chicken & Rice

5 hours

Sunny Chili

Heatwave Pineapple Pork

Pizza Sunbeans

Orange Sun Chicken

7 hours

Bright Chicken Curry

Chick Hot Pot NOT Pot Pie

Italian Chicken from the Sun

Nupshugahr Chick Paprikash

Sunlight Pineapple Chicken

Salsa Sun Chicken

Sunshine Stew

Helio Hamburger Casserole

Lemon Chicken

Suntanned Tuna Casserole

Side Dishes

1 hour

Sun-drenched Carrots

2-4 hours

Solar Baked Flat Bread

Sun Sweet Potatoes

Sunbeam Banana Bread

Sunny Snack Pizza

Sunny Yellow Squash & Onions

6 hours

LIGHT Brown Challah

Desserts

1 hour

Chocolate Sun Fondue

Sun-Candied Cereal

2 hours

Easy Sun Fruit Dessert

Sunny Apple Crunch

Sunrise Peach Cobbler

3 hours

Cosmological Cake

Upside-Down Sunshine Pumpkin Pie

Sunny Fudge Sandwiches

Spiced Apple Cider

Main Dishes

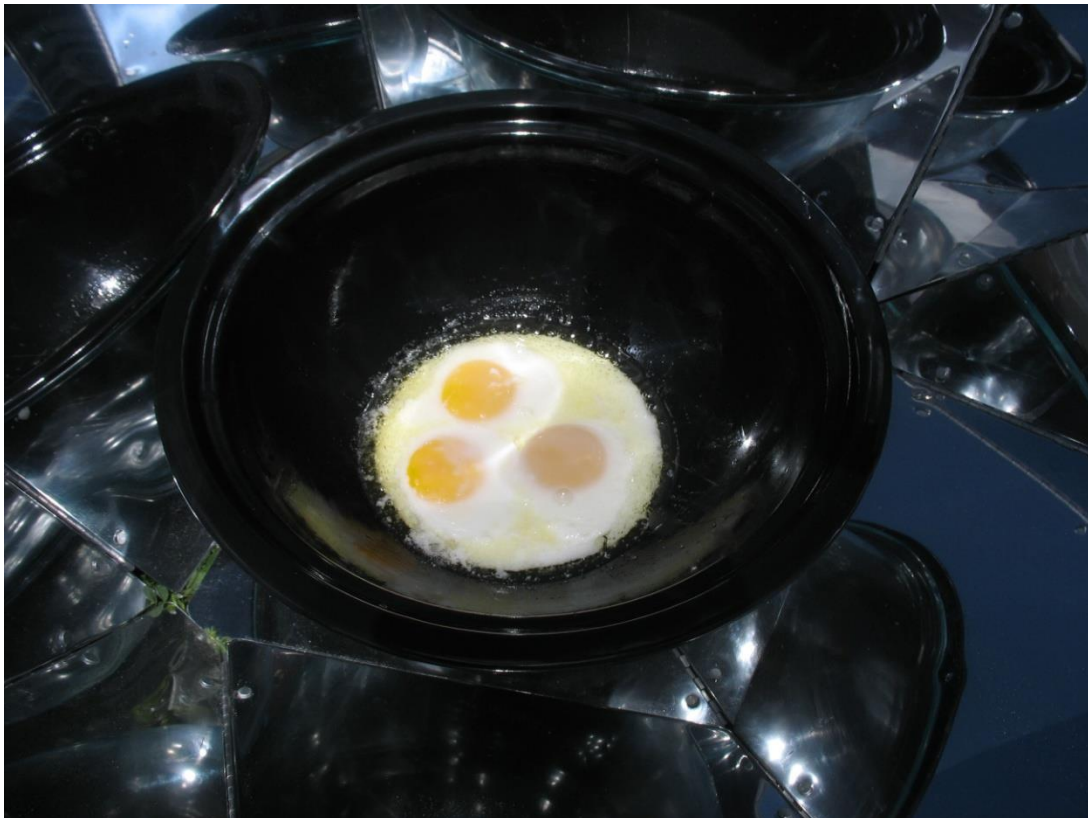
Sunny Side Up Eggs

11:40 am—scant 1 T butter: put in Hot Pot. Cover, set up facing the sun, set timer for 20 minutes. (I might do 30 min. next time to give a hotter start to the eggs.)

12:00 pm—3 eggs: crack into butter. Cover, and watch.

With our partly-cloudy day, these three eggs took about 40 minutes. Look for the whites turning white, but you can also jiggle the Pot a little to check for doneness. If the white part still “jiggles like Jello,” it’s not done yet.

It was so cool to see the egg whites turning creamy, then white, as they cooked! I’m already looking forward to cooking more eggs this way. Amazing—I loved cooking before, but with the Solar Hot Pot, it’s even more fun! It’s watching solar science in action!



Helio Hard-Cooked Eggs

As recommended, put eggs straight into dry Hot Pot dry, cover, set up facing the sun, and set timer for one hour. Check (without opening lid) and adjust Hot Pot to continue facing sun until done.

They said the eggs would get little brown spots on the outside when they are done. Here is what ours looked like when they were done (except the one on the bottom left isn't quite done), after a little more than 2 hours I think:



Flamin' Sun Burgers

(Recipe name by our teenage son!)

3:15 pm—2 T butter: put in Solar Hot Pot, cover, set up facing the sun, set timer for 15 minutes.

Then prep:

8 oz. mushrooms (slice THICKLY. It will be easier to leave the mushrooms in the whole time the burgers are cooking.)

1 1/4 lb. ground meat or vegetarian burger mix (form 5 small, flat burgers, season with salt and pepper)

Place flat burgers on round baking rack (make sure rack fits in Hot Pot!)



You could also do onions, peppers, garlic, or other veggies to go with the burgers.

3:30 pm—veggies: place in bottom of Hot Pot.

Then put baking rack with burgers in top of Hot Pot. Cover, set up facing the sun, set timer for 1 hour.

4:30 pm—(check burgers), adjust to sun, set timer for 30 to 60 minutes, depending on how done your burgers are looking.

5:00 pm—check burgers and mushrooms. If burgers are not done, be aware of food safety. Don't leave food for more than 2 hours under 150 degrees Fahrenheit.

After burgers are done, add cheese and put cover back on to melt cheese, if desired.

The hamburger grease dripped down onto the mushrooms. If you don't like this, consider lean veggie burgers or lean venison burgers. (Or, of course you could skip the veggies underneath.

Mexican Eggs del Sol

10:00 am—2 T. butter: cut in pieces and put in pot, cover, set up facing the sun, set timer for 20 minutes.

Then prep: chop 1 small sweet green pepper (and 1/2 small hot pepper if you want it HOT!) (garlic)

10:20 am—chopped pepper: add, stir into butter, cover, set timer for 20 minutes.

Then prep: set out eggs and salsa to come to room temperature.

Lightly whip:

- 9 eggs
- 1 T water

Gently stir in:

- salsa
- canned black beans

10:40 am—egg mixture—quickly pour over pepper, cover, adjust to sun, set timer for 30 minutes.

11:10 am—check to see if eggs are done by carefully picking up Pot (with pot holders) and ‘swirling’ with lid still on. If eggs are still runny, try to swirl most of the runny-ness out to the edges. Set timer for another 30 minutes.

11:40 am—check for doneness; if still runny, swirl out again and set timer for another 20 minutes. Sprinkle with cheese, cover, adjust to sun, let cheese melt.

Serve with sour cream, guacamole, and/or more cheese if desired.

Sun-Kissed Quiche (Crustless)

10 am—4 T. butter (I didn't say it was low-fat! ☺): cut in pieces and put in pot, cover, set up facing the sun, set timer for 20 minutes (or watch until butter is melted/hot).

Then prep: slice and chop veggies, sprinkle seasonings on veggies.

- 4 mushrooms (slice thinly)
- 1/3 of a sweet pepper (chop)
- a bit of onion or green onion to taste (chop finely)
- 1 small tomato (chop)
- sprinkle salt (and pepper if desired)
- sprinkle parsley (optional)



You can add others of your favorite quiche veggies and seasonings and even bits of pre-cooked sausage or other meat if you like.

10:20 am—veggies and seasonings: add, stir into butter, cover, set timer for 20 minutes.

10:40 am—Set eggs out to come to room temperature. Set timer for 20 minutes.

11:00 am—9 eggs, 1 T water, 1/2 t. salt (pepper if desired): whip lightly together and quickly pour over veggies, cover, adjust to sun, set timer for 30 minutes.



11:30 am—check to see if eggs are done by *carefully* picking up pot (with pot holders) and ‘swirling’ *with lid still on*. If eggs are still runny, try to swirl most of the runny-ness out to the edges. Set timer for another 30 minutes.

12:00 noon—check for doneness; if still runny, swirl out again and set timer for another 20 minutes. (Ours was done at 12.)



Optional: sprinkle with cheese. Serve with toast and fruit.

Sun-Baked Oatmeal

10:15 am—grease lower half of Hot Pot with butter, cover, set up facing the sun (to preheat), set timer for 15 minutes.

Then make batter by mixing:

- 1/2 c. olive oil
- 3/4 c. sugar
- 2 eggs
- 3 c. dry oatmeal
- 1 1/2 t. cream of tartar
- 3/4 t. baking soda
- 1/2 t. salt
- 1 c. milk

11:00 am—pour batter into Hot Pot, cover, set timer for 90 minutes.

12:30 pm—check cake to see if it is ‘set’ by picking up Hot Pot (with pot holders!) and tipping back and forth a bit to see if the cake batter ‘moves’ or stays still. If still wet and ‘moves,’ set down, adjust to sun, and keep checking every 20 to 30 minutes until done.



Sun-fetti Rice with Meat

10:00 am—6 T butter: cut in pieces and put in Hot Pot, cover, set up facing the sun, set timer for 30 minutes.

Then prep:

1/2 onion (finely chop)
1/2 sweet pepper (finely chop)
2 carrots (finely chop)
1 stalk celery (finely chop)
salt (sprinkle on veggies)
parsley (sprinkle on veggies)

10:30 am—veggies and seasonings: add to Hot Pot (listen to it sizzle!), quickly stir into butter, cover, set timer for 15 minutes.

Prep by opening one 13 oz. can of chicken, drain (save broth if you like), and stir into chicken:

1 t. ground sage
1/2 t. poultry seasoning
1/4 t. thyme
light sprinkle of dried rosemary



Or, the day before, you could make some nice chicken by cooking raw, bone-in chicken with the above seasonings and a little water in the Solar Hot Pot! Take the chicken off the bone and then use it and the broth in this recipe.

10:45 am—about 1 1/4 c. water or chicken broth, 1 c. dry white rice, seasoned chicken: add, stir, cover, adjust to sun, set timer for 1 hour.

11:45 pm—check to see if rice is done by ‘swirling’ the pot (pick up with pot holders—it should be hot!) without taking the lid off. See if all the water is absorbed into the rice. Ours wasn’t even close, so we adjusted to sun and set timer for 1 hour.

12:45 pm—check for doneness; if not done, be aware of food safety and finish at a higher temp. if need be. Don’t leave for more than 2 hours at a temperature below 150 degrees Fahrenheit. Taste rice from the center of Pot to check doneness.

Sunray Refried Bean Dip

3:00 pm—1 T. butter: put in Hot Pot, cover, set up facing the sun, set timer for 30 minutes.

Then prep:

1/2 onion (chop finely)

1/2 sweet pepper (chop) (you can use green, red, or whatever you have)

1/2 small hot pepper if you want it hot! (chop finely; leave ribs and seeds in if you want it even HOTTER!)

1 clove garlic (smash and finely chop)

1 T. cumin (sprinkle on veggies)

1 t. paprika (sprinkle on veggies)

1/4 t. cayenne (optional) (another way to get it hot if you don't have fresh hot peppers) (sprinkle on veggies)

salt (and pepper) to taste (sprinkle on veggies)

3:30 pm—veggies and seasonings: add, stir into butter, cover, set timer for 30 minutes.

We got a little SIZZLE when the veggies went in! ☺ And the butter didn't even really take 30 minutes to melt.

30 minutes later...oh, my, the veggies and spices smell GOOD already!

4:00 pm—2 cans (32 oz. total) refried beans: stir quickly into butter and veggies, cover, adjust to sun, set timer for one hour.

Prep toppings, your choice of:

green onions (slice)

red onions (chop or grate)

tomatoes (chop)

black olives (slice)

avocados (slice or chop, toss with lemon juice to keep from browning)

baby corn (roughly chop)

cheese (any kind, grated or crumbled)

sour cream (to 'dot' on top of dip)

Prepare dippers, your choice of:

tortilla chips

baked pita bread triangles

pretzels

carrot sticks

celery sticks

flat bread (made in your Hot Pot earlier in the day! ☺)

5:00 pm—if not hot enough, keep checking every 15 minutes or so. Around 5:30, you are hitting the 2 hour mark for the veggies. Be aware of food safety—either eat (this is probably pretty good ‘luke-warm’!) or check temperature for food safety. Ours was perfect—wonderfully warmed—about 5:30.

Stir thoroughly, sprinkle with toppings, and eat with dippers!



Chicken Hot Pot Pie

1:00 pm—5 T. butter: cut into pieces, put in Solar Hot Pot, cover, set up facing the sun, set timer for 30 minutes.

Then prep:

4-5 mushrooms (slice thinly)

1/2 onion or small bunch of green onions (chop finely)

2 carrots (chop finely)

1 stalk celery (chop finely)

3 T flour (sprinkle on veggies)

1 t. curry powder OR 1/2 t. thyme (sprinkle on veggies)

1/8 t. or more cayenne (sprinkle on veggies)

salt (and pepper) to taste (sprinkle on veggies)

1:30 pm—veggies, flour, and seasonings: add, quickly stir into butter, cover, set timer for 30 minutes.

Then prep biscuit dough by mixing:

3/4 c. unbleached white flour

1/2 c. whole wheat pastry flour

1/4 t. salt

3/4 t. cream of tartar

3/8 t. baking soda

Drizzle in:

honey (about 1/2 t.)

Gently stir in, just until flour mixture is moistened:

1/4 c. olive oil

1/3 c. sliced green onions or chives, optional

1/4 c. water, or enough to make a soft dough

Pat out very thin (1/8 ") “biscuits.” Brush top of each “biscuit” with butter or oil.

This made enough for the Chicken Pie plus some extra dough for the kids to snatch.

2:00 pm—

1/2 c. canned drained peas (or frozen peas and THAWED before use)

1/2 c. canned drained green beans,

1 can chicken (13 oz., fully cooked, UNdrained)

1/2 c. cream:

Add all and quickly stir a turn or two. Quickly place biscuits on top.

(Never add frozen vegetables to Hot Pot because that will cool down the Pot too much and make cooking time take too long. This could jeopardize food safety.)

Set baking rack on top and thermometer through baking rack into food. Cover, adjust to sun, set timer for 90 minutes.

3:30 pm—check temperature (should be 150 degrees Fahrenheit at least by 4:00 pm. If not, find a way to get the heat up quickly for food safety!)

If it's 150 or over, look to see if biscuits look done (without opening lid if possible). If biscuits are not done, keep checking every 15 minutes or so. (Adjust to sun if needed.)

We noticed an interesting thing this time—as the sun gets lower, the front of the Hot Pot itself makes a slight shadow on the front food. So, the biscuits in the back were browning more than the front. Around 4:30, we turned the Pot (the Pot ONLY) in the reflector around 180 degrees, and that way the front biscuits got a little more browning. Then we actually let it coast all the way until 5:45.

It turned out amazing! The “sauce” is quite thin, but the flavor is good, the veggies are lovely, and the biscuits are flaky.

We're probably around the peak of optimal solar cooking (with the sun so high in the sky these days), but still—I seriously had no idea that the sun could cook food as good as this, browning the biscuits and everything.

You could so make this with no chicken—would be a great veggie pot pie! Increase all the veggies and/or add more varieties of veggies.



Sunny Yellow Quiche with Potato Crust

9:15 am—1 T. butter: put in Solar Hot Pot, cover, set up facing the sun, set timer for 15 minutes.

Then prep:

1/4 of an onion (chop finely)

1 clove garlic (smash and mince)

sprinkle salt (and pepper if desired)

1 t. parsley (optional)

9:30 am—veggies and seasonings: add, stir into butter, cover, set timer for 30 minutes.

Then prep:

Peel and grate 2 large potatoes.

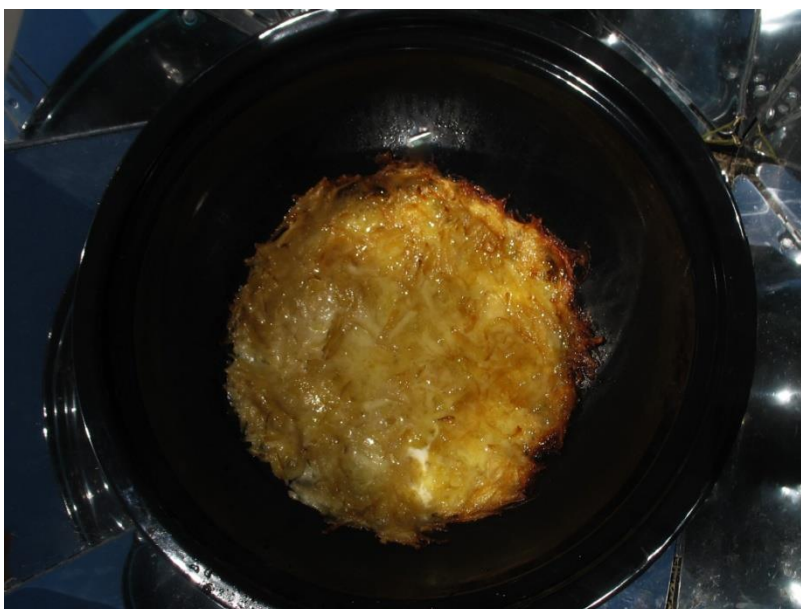
Toss with generous amounts of olive oil and salt.

Stir in 1 egg white.

10:00 am—take veggies out of Hot Pot and refrigerate (for food safety).

Butter the bottom half of the Hot Pot.

Grated potato mixture: quickly add and press out a bit, into a bowl-shaped “shell.” Cover, adjust to sun, set timer for 60 minutes.



11:00 am—Adjust to sun, set timer for 60 minutes.

When potatoes are almost finished, set out the rest of the veggies you already cooked and 6 eggs to come to room temperature.

(Since we are doing a double recipe, we had 2 leftover egg yolks. We used them in place of 1 egg. You could toss in your extra egg yolk and make it “6 1/2 eggs.” Won’t hurt to have a little extra.)

Then prep by whipping lightly together:

6 eggs

2 t. water

cooked veggies (onion, etc.)

1/2 can diced, DRAINED tomatoes

12:00 pm—egg mixture: quickly pour over potato crust, cover, adjust to sun, set timer for 30 minutes.

12:30 pm—check to see if eggs are done by carefully picking up pot (with pot holders) and “swirling” with lid still on. If eggs are still runny, try to swirl most of the runny-ness out to the edges. Check in another 15 – 30 minutes.

Optional: sprinkle with cheese. Serve with fruit.

.
This quiche rocked! Turned out better than I thought it would. Potatoes underneath made it so hearty. Despite the extra work, I don’t want to go back to the crust-less, now. LOL

Shredded Sunshine Chicken

We love this as an “alternative” to chicken salad, especially two of our children who hate mayonnaise. ☺

10:00 am--1 T butter: put in Solar Hot Pot, cover, set up facing the sun, set timer for 30 minutes.

Then prep:

1/4 of an onion (chop finely)

1 stalk celery (chop finely)

1 clove garlic (smash & mince)

10:30 am--veggies: add to Solar Hot Pot, cover, adjust to sun, set timer for 30 minutes.

Then prep by gently mixing:

5 c. cooked, shredded chicken (homemade or canned)

2 t. dried sage

generous 1/2 t. dried thyme

generous 1/2 t. rosemary

7-9 saltine crackers, crushed finely (or bread crumbs or other crackers)

1 to 1 1/2 c. chicken broth (pour over crackers and then mix all ingredients make it pleasantly “juicy”)

salt (omit if your broth and/or chicken is already salty)

11:00 am--chicken, herbs, crackers, and broth: add to Solar Hot Pot, stir quickly, cover, adjust to sun, set timer for 60 minutes.

12:00 pm--check chicken. If it looks like it needs more heating, adjust to sun and keep checking every 20 minutes or so. Ours was nice and hot around 12:30.

(Do NOT let it go more than 2 hours before reaching 150 degrees Fahrenheit for food safety.)

Add salt & pepper to taste. Serve on bread or buns.

Megasun Meatloaf

Prep by lightly mixing:

1 lb. ground meat

3/4 c. bread crumbs or crushed plain crackers (gluten-free if you want!)

1 egg

1/4 c. onion (finely chop)

1/3 c. ketchup

2 T. A-1 sauce (optional)

1 t. oregano

salt (& pepper)

I like to do this in a zip-top bag because I hate touching raw meat. Blech. Or get dear hubby to do it. LOL

9:45 am—preheat Solar Hot Pot by putting lid on and setting up facing the sun. Set timer for 15 minutes.

10:00 am—meat mixture—put in bottom of Hot Pot and make very even and relatively thin even if it goes up the sides of the pot. You don't want a thicker spot in the middle, because that spot will have a hard time getting done without drying out the edges. Your "meatloaf" will be shaped more like a bowl, but who cares as long as it tastes good! (Maybe I should have named this recipe Megasun Meatbowl. LOL)

Cover it all with ketchup.

Put baking rack in top and thermometer through baking rack to touch the middle of the meat.

Cover, set up facing the sun, set timer for 60 minutes.

11:00 am—adjust to sun, set timer for one hour.

12:00 pm—check temperature; needs to be at least 150 degrees Fahrenheit. See if you can tell if meat is done. This might be tricky! But, better to go too long than too short as long as it's up to 150 degrees. It is difficult to burn food in the Hot Pot, and it's also hard to "overcook" meatloaf. If not sure, adjust to sun and keep checking every 30 minutes to see if you can tell what's happening.

Clouds kept coming and going today, but ours was done by around 1:00 pm. I'm not sure why, but I liked the flavor and texture better than meatloaf done in the oven!! It was tender, moist, and tasty. The only problem with it was that there wasn't enough of it! LOL



Sunbeam Meaty Beans

This is like a cross between baked beans and sloppy joes. I actually like it on potatoes (baked or mashed), but you could probably put it on almost anything, including rolls.

If it is early in the cooking season or partly cloudy, you might want to start this at noon instead of 1:00.

1:00 pm—1 T. oil: put in Pot, cover, set up facing the sun, set timer for 30 minutes.

Then prep:

- 1/2 c. onions (chop finely)
- 1 clove garlic (smash and mince)
- salt (and pepper if you like) (sprinkle on meat)

1:30 pm—1/2 lb. ground meat, onions, & garlic: add, cover, set timer for 60 minutes. This is one of those recipes where we want the meat fully cooked before adding other ingredients.

Have ready (in sun??):

- 1 can drained pinto beans
- 1 can drained kidney beans
- 1 can drained lima beans

Then prep by stirring together:

- 3/4 c. ketchup
- 1/4 t. dry mustard
- 1/4 c. (very generous squirt) honey
- 2 T apple cider vinegar
- 1 T Worcestershire sauce
- 1 t. oregano

2:30 pm—check and stir meat to make sure thoroughly cooked. If not, quickly close Pot, adjust to sun, and continue cooking meat. The good news is that nothing really needs to be ‘cooked’ after the meat, just warmed up and flavors melded. But be careful of food safety principles, not leaving food—especially meat—more than 2 hours before it is thoroughly warmed to 150 degrees.)

As soon as meat is done—beans, and your homemade sauce: quickly add, stir, place baking rack in top of Hot Pot, set meat thermometer through baking rack to touch top of food pile.

Cover, adjust to sun, set timer for 90 minutes.

4:00 pm—check food temp without opening lid (should be at least 150 for food safety, at LEAST by 4:30, and really at this point, you are likely losing your sun. So, if you are struggling with temp, just put it in a pot on the stove and heat quickly, while stirring.)

If at least 150, make sure it stays (or has been) above 150 for at least 10 minutes, and then you are probably okay to “coast” to 5:00 supper like we like to do.



Sunny Spuds and Hot Pot Dogs

Okay, so today we want to heat up the leftover chicken curry for lunch before starting supper, and I'm hoping we have sun time to do that! Here's how we did it (and see below for the new recipe).

We took the chicken (of the leftover chicken curry) off the bone to heat faster (and be easier to eat! ☺)

Around 9:45, we preheated the Hot Pot for 15 minutes and then put leftover chicken curry AND some leftover cooked rice into the Hot Pot. We let it go almost 2 hours (adjusting to the sun once).

(Always be aware of food safety. Either take food out and eat after 2 hours, or monitor temperature to make sure it is up to 150 degrees Fahrenheit.) Ours was

After dishing up the curry, we quickly washed the Hot Pot. (It's easier to wash before residue dries on it.)

After eating lunch, then I worked on supper—the Sunny Spuds and Hotpot Dogs:

12:45 pm—Preheat the Hot Pot by setting up facing the sun (with lid on).

Then prep:

- 4 medium potatoes (wash and pierce)
- olive oil—rub on potatoes
- 1 garlic clove—cut in half lengthwise and rub cut side on potatoes

1:00 pm—Arrange oil-rubbed potatoes in the Hot Pot. My hubby hates hot dogs, so I made a little 'potato stand' out of foil to set his potato on and keep it up off the bottom and away from the hot dogs.

Cover, adjust to sun, set timer for 90 minutes.

2:30 pm—adjust to sun, set timer for 90 minutes.

4:00 pm—Quickly toss in 4 fully-cooked hot dogs (meaning that the hot dogs are labeled fully cooked from the store and only need to warm, not cook raw meat through).

We like Oscar Meyer Selects—all natural hot dogs (no chemicals).

Adjust to sun, set timer for 60 minutes. I don't know if the hot dogs will get warm this late in the day, but we'll find out! It helps that we are getting on towards summer and that we live at a higher altitude (3,500 ft.)

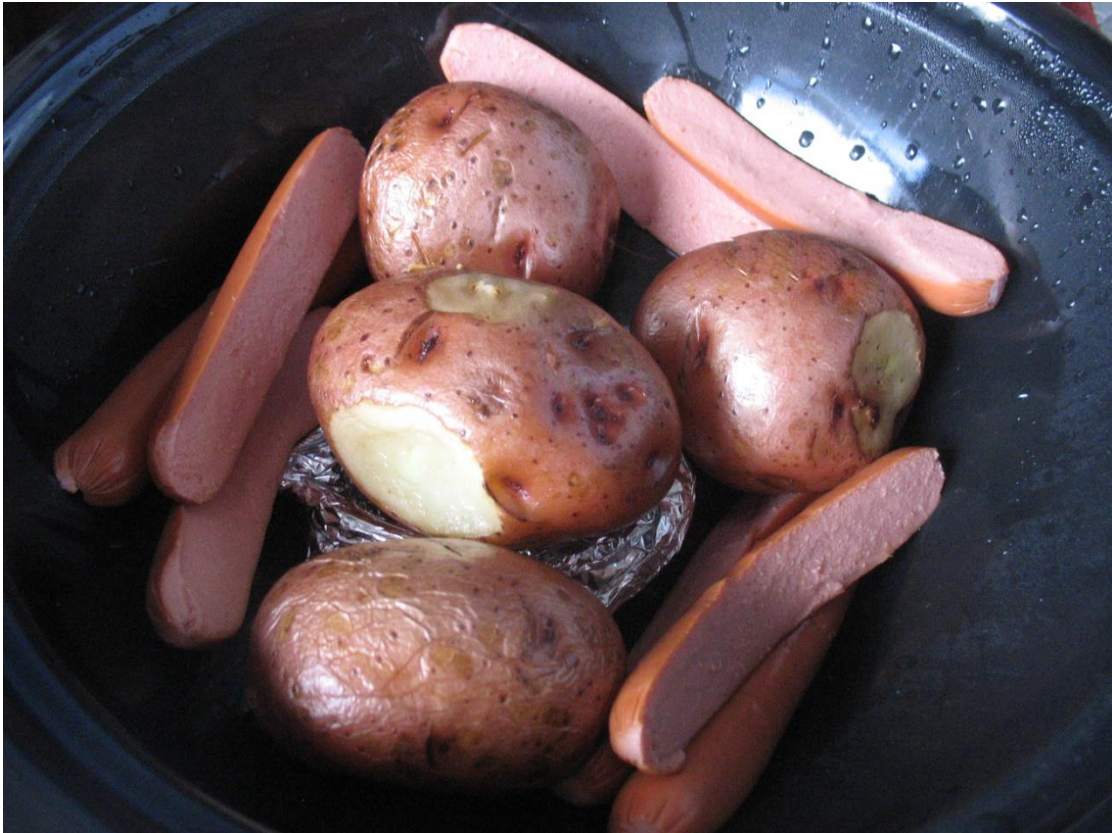
Prep side dishes/extras for meal. Ideas:

- tossed green salad
- Cole slaw
- raw veggies and dip
- fruit salad
- sliced watermelon
- corn-on-the-cob
- soup
- baked beans
- hot dog buns
- condiments

Gather toppings for potatoes. Ideas:

- cheese
- butter
- sour cream
- salsa
- chopped onion or chives
- parsley

5:00—eat!



Sunlight Chicken and Rice

This is a little similar to the Sun-fetti Rice when I added chicken to it, but yet the flavors are all different!

I'm not sure it's going to work, but I'm hoping that this unusual method will still turn out pleasing. I'm also hoping I don't overstuff my Hot Pot!

12:00 pm—2 T. butter: cut in pieces, cover, set up facing the sun, set timer for 30 minutes.

Then prep:

- 4-5 mushrooms (slice thinly)
- 1/4 onion (chop finely)
- 2 cloves garlic (smash and mince)
- 1/2 stalk celery (chop finely)
- 3 T flour (sprinkle on veggies)

12:30 pm—veggies and flour—quickly add to butter, stir, cover, set timer for 30 minutes.

1:00 pm—1/2 c. cream: quickly add, stir, cover, adjust to sun, set timer for 30 minutes.

1:30 pm—1 1/2 c. water, scant 1 c. rice: quickly add, put baking rack in top and thermometer through rack and into food, cover, set timer for 60 minutes.

Prep 'sauce' by mixing:

- 1 c. mayonnaise
- 2 t. lemon juice
- 1/4 c. chicken broth
- salt (and pepper if desired)

2:30 pm—hold your breath and hope the thermometer reads at least 150 degrees Fahrenheit! If not, you are hitting the 2 hour mark with the veggies.... Not sure how critical it is, especially since the veggies were probably pretty hot at 2:00? Well, just so you are aware of food safety and realize it's probably not a good idea to let it go too much longer if not 150 degrees right now. Check to see if rice is done by picking up pot (with pot holders) and 'swirling' to see if there is still water that the rice hasn't absorbed yet. Adjust Hot Pot to sun and keep checking until rice is done.

After rice is done, check to make sure still at or above 150 and add:

- 2 c. cooked chicken (canned, drained, is fine)
- 1 c. canned peas (or frozen peas that have been thawed to room temp)
- your homemade 'sauce' (mayo mixture)

Stir quickly, re-adjust thermometer to touch top of food, cover, adjust to sun, set timer for one hour.

3:30 pm—check food temperature; if still above 150 degrees, can let ‘coast’ until 5:00 suppertime! If not 150, eat by 4:30, and hopefully it’s warm enough to suit you! Once the rice is done, nothing else has to be ‘cooked,’ just ‘heated.’



Sunny Chili

I think this will be one of my favorites, not only because I love chili, but also because it is a very hearty main dish that can be successfully done in fewer hours than a stew. There are no hard veggies to cook through, and the idea is to get the meat fully cooked early and then not have to be concerned about how the meat gets done with a lot of other ingredients in there (which slows cooking time, especially wet ingredients).

So, on an ideal sunny day, we could make quiche or flat bread or rice for lunch (10 am – 12 noon) and then afterward get this in for supper! It would help to prep meat and veggies beforehand so that you don't have to interrupt your lunch to chop them. ☺

12 pm—swirl of olive oil in the pot, cover, set up facing the sun, set timer for 30 minutes.

Then prep: chop 3/4 lb. meat (or a little more) finely (or use ground meat). Chop 1/4 (or more) onion & a couple peppers.

12:30 pm—add 3/4 lb. chopped venison, 1/4 of an onion (chopped), and 1-2 sweet peppers (chopped) (minced hot peppers—optional) to pot, stir, cover, adjust to sun, set timer for 60 minutes. This time we want the meat fully cooked, if possible, before adding other wet ingredients.

Then prep: have all ingredients ready, can even set cans in the sun to maybe get a head start on warming and make it easier for the pot to get up to temperature quickly (at least 150 degrees for food safety). Just before 1:30, open cans etc:

- 2 cans tomatoes (any kind)
- 2 cans kidney beans, drained or 1 can beans and 1 can corn
- chili powder (sprinkle on beans to make it easier to add everything to Pot quickly)
- cayenne (sprinkle on beans)
- cumin (sprinkle on beans)
- salt (and pepper if desired) (sprinkle on beans)
- (crushed and minced garlic or garlic powder if desired) (sprinkle on beans)

1:30 pm—check and stir meat to make sure thoroughly cooked. (If not, quickly close pot and continue cooking meat. Again, the good news is that adding only the ingredients below, nothing really needs to be 'cooked' after the meat, just warmed up and flavors melded. But be careful of food safety principles, not leaving food more than 2 hours before it is thoroughly warmed to 150 degrees.)

As soon as meat is done—tomatoes, beans, and seasonings: add and stir into meat.

Stir

Cover, adjust to sun, set timer for 90 minutes.

3:00 pm—check food temp without opening lid (should be at least 150 for food safety, at LEAST by 3:30)— at 3:00, adjust to sun, set timer for 90 minutes.

4:30 pm—check food temp (hopefully holding at least 150 for food safety, but still not bad some below that if you can eat by 5 pm and immediately chill any leftovers). By now the sun is really going down, but our food should stay warm for our target supper of 5 pm.

Adjust to sun, set timer for 30 minutes.

(Prep sides for chili if haven't already. Ideas: carrot & celery sticks with dip, coleslaw, salad, bread and butter, garlic bread, cornbread, pasta, grated cheese for on top)

5:00 pm—eat!



Two different kinds of chili (with wind props on a windier day)

Heatwave Pineapple Pork

12:00 pm—1 T butter or oil: put in Hot Pot, cover, set up facing the sun, set timer for 20 minutes.

Then prep:

- 2 small onions (chop finely)
- 2 cloves garlic (smash and mince)

12:20 pm—onions & garlic: add, cover, set timer for 40 minutes.

Then prep:

- 20 oz. pineapple chunks [DRAIN; drink juice (smile)]
- 2 T honey (drizzle over pineapple)
- 4 T apple cider vinegar (stir into pineapple)
- 1/4 t. salt (stir into pineapple)

1:00 pm—4 small boneless pork chops, pineapple mixture: add, put baking rack in top to hold thermometer, and put thermometer in like this (touching food but not touching Hot Pot):

Cover, adjust to sun, set timer for 60 minutes.

2:00 pm—adjust to sun, set timer for 60 minutes.

3:00 pm—at this point, the food needs to be at least 150 degrees. If it is not, quickly bring to temp. and finish with a higher heat source.

If at least 150, adjust to sun and set timer for 60 minutes.

4:00 pm—you can test the doneness of the pork at this point by inserting the thermometer into the thickest piece of meat. It should read at least 170 degrees.

Serve over noodles or rice.

I think maybe you can overcook pork, even “braising” in a liquid like this, but I am not sure. However, we are still going to let ours coast until our preferred 5:00-ish supper and hope it’s not too dry or tough. ☺



Pizza Sunbeans

12:00 pm—preheat Hot Pot by setting up facing the sun, cover, set timer for 30 minutes.

Then prep:

- 1/2 sweet pepper (chop finely)
- 1/2 an onion (chop finely)
- 2 cloves garlic (smash and mince)
- 1 t. oregano (sprinkle on veggies)
- 1 t. basil (sprinkle on veggies)
- salt (sprinkle on veggies)
- 3/4 lb. ground sausage (optional) (break apart so it is 'loose')

12:30 pm—veggies, seasonings, and sausage: put in Hot Pot, cover, set timer for 45 minutes. This time we want the meat fully cooked, if possible, before adding other wet ingredients.

Then prep: have all ingredients ready, can even set cans in the sun to maybe get a head start on warming and make it easier for the pot to get up to temperature quickly (at least 150 degrees for food safety). Just before 1:30, open cans etc:

- 28 oz. tomatoes (any kind; canned is fine)
- 16 oz. canned kidney beans, drained
- 16 oz. canned pinto beans, drained
- ripe olives (optional) (slice)

1:15 pm—check and stir meat to make sure thoroughly cooked. (If not, quickly close pot and continue cooking meat. After the meat and veggies get cooked, nothing else really needs to be 'cooked,' just warmed up and flavors melded. But be careful of food safety principles, not leaving food more than 2 hours before it is thoroughly warmed to 150 degrees.)

As soon as meat is done (around 1:30?)—tomatoes, beans, and olives: add and stir into meat.

Place baking rack and meat thermometer (with tip in 'center' of food pile) in Pot like this:

Cover, adjust to sun, set timer for 60 minutes.

2:30 pm—check food temp without opening lid (should be at least 150 for food safety)—at 2:30, ours was already degrees; adjust to sun, set timer for 90 minutes.

4:00 pm—check food temp (hopefully holding at least 150 for food safety, but still not bad some below that if you can eat by 4:30 pm and immediately chill any leftovers). By now the sun is really going down, but our food temp is degrees and should definitely stay warm for our target supper of 5 pm.

Adjust to sun, set timer for 60 minutes.

(Prep sides for chili if haven't already. Ideas: carrot & celery sticks with dip, coleslaw, salad, bread and butter, garlic bread, cornbread, pasta, grated cheese for on top)

5:00 pm—eat!



Orange Sun Chicken

12:00 pm—2 T. olive oil: put in Hot Pot, cover, set up facing the sun, set timer for 30 minutes.

Then prep:

- 1/2 lbs. boneless meat (cut into small pieces)
- 2/3 c. flour (toss with meat to coat meat)

12:30 pm—meat/flour: add to oil, cover, set timer for 45 minutes.

Then prep by mixing:

- 8 oz. frozen orange juice concentrate, completely thawed (not diluted with water, though)
- 1 t. vinegar
- 6 T ketchup
- 8 T brown sugar
- 1 T salt
- 1/2 t. red pepper flakes (optional)
- 1/2 t. ginger (optional)

1:15 pm—pour homemade sauce over chicken, put baking rack and thermometer in Pot like this:

Cover, adjust to sun, set timer for 75 minutes.

2:30 pm—check Hot Pot temperature; needs to be up to 150 degrees Fahrenheit by now for food safety. If at least 150, adjust to sun, set timer for 90 minutes. (If not, quickly get meat up to temperature using an alternate, hotter heat source.)

4:00 pm—if still at least 150 degrees, adjust to sun, set timer for when you want to eat! (Well, don't let it go more than 2 hours.)

Serve over rice or pasta. The first time I ever ate this (though from a crock pot), I was immediately addicted! Somehow the sauce also makes the chicken easier to digest (at least it did for me). You wouldn't think so, because the orange etc. would seem hard on the tummy, but at the time I was struggling with some major, major issues and could still eat this! Crazy! But yummy!



Bright Chicken Curry

10:00 am—3 T. butter: cut in pieces and put in Hot Pot, cover, set up facing the sun, set timer for 30 minutes.

Then prep:

- 1 onion (chop)
- 1 clove garlic (smash with side of knife and then mince)
- 1/2 sweet pepper (chop)
- 1 T curry powder (sprinkle on veggies)
- 1/4 t. (or more) ground cayenne (sprinkle on veggies)
- salt (and pepper) to taste (sprinkle on veggies)

10:30 am—veggies and seasonings: quickly add to Hot Pot, quickly stir into butter, cover, set timer for 30 minutes.

11:00 am—3 chicken leg and thighs, cut apart (6 pieces of chicken), a handful of raisins, and 29 oz. canned tomatoes (drained—drink the juice or save for soup later): add, putting thickest pieces of chicken toward the outer edges of Pot and pouring tomatoes over chicken.

Place meat thermometer onto the surface of the meat. I wasn't sure how to make the thermometer stay 'upright,' so I came up with this plan:

After putting all food in, set round baking rack in top of cooker. Put thermometer in, touching the middle of the food (do not insert into meat) and letting the baking rack 'hold it up' for easy reading later. (Hey—now my baking rack is a multi-tasker!)

Cover, adjust to sun, set timer for 90 minutes.

12:30 pm—check Hot Pot temperature by peeking through lid (don't lift lid, just jiggle the Pot carefully to get the condensation off the inside of the lid).

If not up to 150 degrees, panic. (Just kidding. ☺ But for food safety, if it is not up to 150 degrees by 1 pm, give the food a quick boost by microwaving in a glass bowl, and maybe it should be finished on a stove. You might need to add some water or broth, and then just slowly simmer in skillet until done.)

If temperature is at least 150, adjust to sun, set timer for 90 minutes.

2:00 pm—check Hot Pot temperature (especially on partly cloudy days)—must be above 150, adjust to sun, set timer for 90 minutes.

3:30 pm—check Hot Pot temperature. If it is still above 150, then you are probably okay to do what we do—let it coast/cook more until 5:00, because we like a 5:00 suppertime better than

4:00. ☺ This likely works better on ideal sunny days, when the temp. has risen more and when the sun rays are less slanted in the summer. Adjust to sun, set timer for 90 minutes.

5:00 pm—Make sure chicken is fully cooked by pushing thermometer into the thickest part of the center piece of meat but not touching bone. It should read at least 165 degrees Fahrenheit. Serve over rice or pasta.



Chicken Hot Pot NOT Pot Pie

So I'm hoping this will end up tasting a little like chicken pot pie, only I'm going to forgo the pie and make it hearty with potatoes instead. ☺

10:00 am—1 T olive oil: into pot, cover, set up facing the sun, set timer for 30 minutes.

Then prep: cut up about 3/4 lb. boneless raw chicken (or cut chicken off the bone) into small pieces.

10:30 am—3/4 lb. small chicken chunks: quickly add and stir into oil, cover, set timer for 30 minutes.

Then prep:

- 1/4 onion (chop finely)
- 2 carrots (chop finely)
- 1 stalk celery (chop finely)
- 4-5 mushrooms (slice thinly)
- 5 very small potatoes (chop into very small pieces)
- 1/2 can green beans, drained
- 1/2 c. canned peas (or frozen peas that have been thawed)
- 1 t. parsley (sprinkle on veggies)
- 1 t. sage (sprinkle on veggies)
- 1/4 t. thyme (sprinkle on veggies)
- salt (and pepper if desired) (sprinkle on veggies)
- 1/2 c. cream (pour over veggies)



Meat after 30 minutes smells wonderful!

11:00 am—all veggies, seasonings, and cream: quickly add, stir, cover, put baking rack in top and put thermometer through rack to rest on top of food.

Adjust to sun, set timer for 90 minutes.

12:30 pm—check Hot Pot temperature **WITHOUT** opening lid; needs to be around or over 150 degrees Fahrenheit because we are hitting the 2 hour mark for the meat. For food safety, if it is not to 150 yet, consider whether you should boost the temp quickly/cook with other heat source.

Generally speaking, never let your food sit in the Hot Pot for more than 2 hours at less than 150 degrees.

(The fewer clouds you have, the less trouble you will have with this. Also it will be more critical to check earlier in the morning or later in the day or the farther away from summer you get.)

If over 150, adjust to sun, set timer for 90 minutes.

2:00 pm—adjust to sun and check food temperature (without opening lid), set timer for 90 minutes.

3:30 pm—adjust to set and check food temperature, set timer for 90 minutes.

5:00 pm—eat!

(Our son helped me name this recipe. It's fun to say. LOL)



Italian Chicken from the Sun

10:00 am—2 T. butter or oil: put in Hot Pot, cover, set up facing the sun, set timer for 30 minutes.

Then prep:

- 6 pieces of chicken (we like to get 3 leg and thighs and cut them apart) (wash, trim, cut apart)
- 1/2 c. water (pour over chicken)
- 29 oz. canned tomatoes (or 3 c. fresh tomatoes, chopped) (pour over chicken)
- 1/4 onion (chop, sprinkle over chicken)
- 1 clove garlic (smash, mince, & sprinkle over chicken)
- 1 t. oregano (sprinkle on chicken)
- salt (sprinkle on chicken)

10:30 am—chicken, veggies, seasonings: quickly pour into Hot Pot, stir, put baking rack in top of Pot, put thermometer through baking rack to touch top of meat.

Cover, set timer for one hour. (Go check your cupboard to make sure you have pasta or rice to boil on the stove later. Or call hubby to pick some up on the way home from work. LOL Or run to the neighbor's to borrow some!)

You're about done except for checking temp and adjusting to sun! Never leave food—especially raw, bone-in chicken!—in the Hot Pot for more than 2 hours unless the temperature has come up to about 150 degrees Fahrenheit.

This is why I don't try bone-in chicken dishes on days where clouds are predicted. But it might work okay for you even with some clouds if you are farther south than I am, or if it is mid-summer. As I hinted, boneless meat—especially if you cut it in small pieces—will cook quicker. But bone-in meat will produce a richer broth and more flavor, generally speaking.

That reminds me—there are basically four ways to do meat: one—whole/bone-in meat, two—ground meat, three—cut up into pieces (no bones, or maybe you could toss in a bare bone for flavor??), four—fully cooked meats like canned chicken, hot dogs, etc. Bone-in meat takes the longest to cook, ground meat slightly shorter (unless you just have a ton of ground meat packed together), cut-up meat shorter (especially if you cook it through by itself in some preheated oil before adding other ingredients), and pre-cooked meat the shortest of all—just needs heating. Often pre-cooked meat a good idea for adding to 'tricky' foods like rice or 'long cooking' foods (because of needing to boil the water) like pasta.

When taking conditions into consideration, anything that makes the sun less ideal (early in spring, far north, clouds, etc.) might push you to go to a quicker-cooking meat. You could even cut meat off the bone and into small pieces at the last minute (take a kitchen scissors to it).

However, even cooking meat through at the beginning of the recipe or adding fully-cooked meat to the Pot, you still need to watch that it does not go below 150 for more than 2 hours.

Okay, where was I? Oh, yes.

11:30 am—adjust to sun, set timer for one hour.

12:30 pm—check temp—needs to be around 150 degrees Fahrenheit. (If not, find a way to get the temp. up quickly. Someday maybe I will figure out whether it could be finished in the Hot Pot after boosting the food temp....) If at any time in the afternoon you are concerned about food temp, boost the temp quickly or finish cooking the food another way. Many foods could be quickly boosted on the stove, though you might need to add water or broth.

If at or above 150, adjust to sun, set timer for 90 minutes.

2:00 pm—check temp, adjust to sun, set timer for 1 hour. (Or you could probably wait 90 minutes to check again, especially if you have a good, strong sun. If you check and adjust every hour, you will have greater chance of success because the sun rays will be more direct more often, and you will also get more good exercise going out to check. Who knows, maybe solar cooking can help with weight loss! LOL)

3:00 pm—check temp, adjust to sun, set timer for 1 hour.

4:00 pm—check temp, adjust to sun, set timer for 1 hour. If it is still 150 or above (and especially if it has been at a good temp all afternoon), you can let it coast to a 5:00 supertime like we like to do. Oh, and don't forget to boil your spaghetti or rice and maybe sauté some nice onions and zucchini to go with it!

Nupshugahr Chicken Paprikash

Nupshu-what? you may be asking. Glad you asked! LOL The actual spelling is napsugar, but I spelled it phonetically so you could ‘hear’ it in your head. Napsugar is the Hungarian word for “Sunshine.” 😊 (Oh, and paprikash is actually spelling paprikas. But in Hungarian, the ‘s’ has an ‘sh’ sound. That is why Lisa on the old Green Acres show would often say an ‘sh’ sound instead of ‘s’ sound. 😊) And it’s sort of weird to mix Hungarian and the English “Chicken,” but then I’ve never been known to be ‘normal’....

Anyway, I’m half Hungarian and wanted to do a Hungarian meal today!

I am nervous, because I am sure this will not live up to my Grandma’s version! But I’ll try anyway, because it is so yummy that it will still taste good even if not as good as Grandma’s.

10:00 am—2 T butter: cut in pieces and put in Hot Pot, cover, set up facing the sun, set timer for 30 minutes.

Then prep by mincing two medium onions.

10:30 am—onions: quickly stir into butter, cover, set timer for 60 minutes.

Then prep (close to 11:30):

- 1 large, ripe tomato (peel and chop)
- 1 green pepper (slice)
- 3 lb. chicken (cut up)
- 2 T paprika (Hungarian paprika of course! LOL) (sprinkle over chicken)
- 1 t. salt (sprinkle over chicken)



11:30 am—chicken, veggies, and seasonings: add, put in baking rack and thermometer.

Cover, adjust to sun, set timer for 60 minutes.

12:30 pm—adjust to sun, set timer for 60 minutes.

1:30 pm—check temp—should be at least 150 degrees Fahrenheit for food safety. (If not, use alternate, hotter heat source to bring up to temp.) If at least 150, adjust to sun, set timer for 90 minutes.

3:00 pm—check temp. If at least 150, adjust to sun, set timer for 90 minutes.

4:30 pm—check temp. If at least 150, you can let it coast until 5:00 suppertime like we like to do! If not at least 150, eat now and chill leftovers quickly. Oh, but don't forget to make sure the chicken is cooked through! It needs to be about 165 degrees Fahrenheit internally (insert meat thermometer into thickest piece of chicken to check).



Serve with sour cream that people can stir into their own bowls.

We requested this every summer when we'd come to visit because we loved it so much, but Grandma used to laugh and say it was only a peasant dish. So, eat up, peasants! LOL

(This post written in honor of my Grandma, 1917-2010. She was a REAL lady, a lovely person who always spread sunshine and kindness to all she met. And to my other Grandma, 1910-1995, who was ALSO a real lady, and one of the first to welcome my immigrant-Grandma to town! I hope I can be as good a person as they were.)

Sunlight Pineapple Chicken

So now to convert this crock-pot recipe to Hot Pot recipe (which is funny, because originally this recipe was an oven recipe to be baked with raw rice)! This one will be an easy convert, because it lends itself well to the Hot Pot. (Mostly cut the recipe down and also cut back on the liquid a bit.)

The night before, place in zip-top bag set in large bowl:

- 3 lb. chicken pieces (bone-in) (make sure you cut apart leg and thighs)
- 1/3 c. chopped onion
- 1/2 lg. red pepper, chopped

Mix together, pour over chicken in bag, fridge 4-24 hours to marinate:

- 10 oz. crushed pineapple
- scant 1/3 c. frozen orange juice concentrate (not diluted)
- 1 t. Worcestershire sauce
- 1/4 t. salt
- dash ground cloves

10:00 am—set up facing the sun to preheat Hot Pot, set timer for 30 minutes.

10:30 am—chicken, veggies, fruit, marinade: quickly pour into Hot Pot, stir, put baking rack in top of Pot, put thermometer through baking rack to touch top of meat.

11:30 am—adjust to sun, set timer for one hour.

12:30 pm—check temp—needs to be around 150 degrees Fahrenheit. (If not, find a way to get the temp. up quickly. If at any time in the afternoon you are concerned about food temp, boost the temp quickly or finish cooking the food another way. Many foods could be quickly boosted on the stove, though you might need to add water or broth.)

If at or above 150, adjust to sun, set timer for 90 minutes.

2:00 pm—check temp, adjust to sun, set timer for 1 hour.

3:00 pm—check temp, adjust to sun, set timer for 1 hour.

4:00 pm—check temp, adjust to sun, set timer for 1 hour. If it is still 150 or above (and especially if it has been at a good temp all afternoon), you can let it coast to a 5:00 supertime like we like to do.

Serve over rice or pasta.

Salsa Sun Chicken

Prep:

Mix together:

- 2 c. of your favorite salsa
- 1 t. chili powder
- 1 t. cumin

Cut 3 leg-and-thighs, or one small whole chicken, into 6 pieces (or just use any six pieces of chicken).

10:00 am—chicken pieces: arrange in Hot Pot, with thickest pieces toward the outside edges.

Pour salsa mixture over chicken.

Put baking rack in top of Pot, then put thermometer in, resting tip on the center piece of meat. The baking rack will hold thermometer head up for easier reading, like this:

Cover, set up facing the sun, set timer for 60 minutes. You're basically done except for adjusting to the sun and checking the temperature!

11:00 pm—adjust to sun, set timer for 60 minutes.

12:00 pm—check temperature without opening lid (can carefully jiggle pot to get condensation off lid). If temperature is not up to 150 degrees Fahrenheit by now, for food safety, you need to get the chicken in the microwave and quickly bring up the temperature to 150 externally (on that skin where bacteria can be lurking) and finish cooking on the stove (or something that will keep it slowly simmering). (Put in large skillet or two, add 2 cups of water or chicken broth and/or more salsa if desired, heat on medium high until simmering, turn down heat and simmer until chicken reaches 165 degrees internal temperature—thermometer inserted into thickest part of meat but not touching bone.)

If at least 150 degrees, adjust to sun, set timer for 90 minutes.

1:30 pm—adjust to sun, set timer for 60 minutes.

2:30 pm—check temperature (must still be at least 150 degrees or needs to be boosted with microwave and finished at higher heat), adjust to sun, set timer for 90 minutes.

4:00 pm—check temperature. If it has dropped below 150, just eat now! ☺ Oh, well, first make sure the chicken is done by inserting thermometer into thickest part of center piece of meat but not touching bone. It should read at least 165 degrees. If so, you're good. Since it was at 150 degrees at 2:30, you know it hasn't been under 150 degrees for more than 90 minutes, so it is good to eat, but it's not good to let it sit in the Pot much longer.

If it is still above 150, you are probably okay to let it 'coast' until 5:00 like we like to do (for a bit later supper).



Take meat off bone, or if you're like me, serve pieces and let everyone take their own off the bone. 😊

Serve on tortillas with sour cream, refried beans, rice, and a side salad of greens if desired.

Sunshine Stew

I am so excited!! I got my new solar cooker this week—a Hot Pot!!
<http://www.solarcooker-at-cantinawest.com/hotpot-solar-cookers.html>

Decided to go for broke and do a whole, real meal! (Figured if I messed up, we'd just have to make sandwiches or order pizza. LOL)

So we read all the directions, washed the pot (with our nice, gentle Earth Friendly dish soap), and here we go!

10 am—“swirl” of olive oil: oil into the pot, cover, set up facing the sun, set timer for 30 minutes.

Then prep: cut up 3/4 lb. meat (small pieces, could be any raw meat—ground meat will take longer to cook, like maybe 45 minutes):

My very first sun-warmed food (hot oil) LOL It already smells good!

10:30 am—3/4 lb. venison chunks: quickly add into pot & stir & cover; the meat *sizzled* when we added it—how cool is that! Set time for 30 minutes.

Then prep: chop veggies fairly small, season veggies, open cans (this way all the ingredients are ready to dump quickly into pot and lose less heat that way).

- 1/4 onion (chopped)
- 2 carrots (chopped)
- 5 very small potatoes (chopped)
- 1 stalk celery (chopped)
- 2 chunks sweet pepper (red and green) (chopped)
- 1/2 can green beans, drained
- 1 can diced tomatoes
- drizzle of honey (optional)
- generous sprinkle parsley
- very, very generous sprinkles paprika
- generous salt (no pepper only because I have chronic heartburn struggles)

Meat after 30 minutes in pot—already browning!

11:00 am—chopped veggies (with herbs & seasonings) and canned veggies: quickly add (fill the pot no more than 2/3 full), stir, cover, adjust to sun, set timer for 90 minutes

Supper's basically done! (Well, except for letting the wonderful, free sunrays cook it!)

You can add any of your favorite stew ingredients or seasonings. Sometimes I like mushrooms and/or Italian seasonings in mine. Often we change-up the seasonings to make it “stew but not the same.” This version (above), with the peppers, tomatoes, and paprika, has a bit of a Hungarian twist to it. (To further add to the Hungarian feel, after serving, stir sour cream into your bowl of hot stew—oh my and yum!) To try a Tex-Mex version, add black beans, corn, and chilies (leave out potatoes & green beans). In the mood for Indian? Try Indian spices (or ‘cheat’ and use curry) and cayenne (leave out potatoes), and serve over rice. My Mom taught me how to do this—easily change the flavors of ordinary recipes to suit your mood.

I have to say, I'm out by a river, and it is pretty awesome to be cooking to the sound of rushing water and trilling red-winged blackbirds! I feel like a hearty mountain woman cooking out in the open! LOL Only no smoke is getting in my eyes or giving me asthma!!!

12:30 pm—quickly test temperature of food by inserting meat thermometer into the middle of the ‘pile’ of veggies/food. (This is to be sure of food safety—needs to be over 140 or 150 degrees Fahrenheit to stay safe for any time longer than 2 hours). It was 150 degrees F. (Decided to leave meat thermometer in there, to watch temperature easier. Probably should have just put it in there to begin with! In another 15 minutes, it was up to 160 degrees F.) Adjust to sun. Set timer for 90 minutes.

Always test for food safety—conditions can vary, depending on temperature of food when you put it in the pot, sun angle, etc. Food should either be below 40 degrees (refrigerator) or above 140 or 150 degrees. It should not be left at any temperature between these any longer than 2 hours. Therefore, when cold or room temperature food is put into the Pot, it needs to come up to 140 or 150 degrees within a 2 hour time period, like mine did today.

2:00 pm—adjust to sun and check food temperature (it was about 180 degrees) WITHOUT opening lid, set timer for 90 minutes

3:30 pm—adjust to sun and peek at food temp (it was over 200 degrees and boiling around the edges) WITHOUT opening lid, set timer for 90 minutes

5:00 pm—check temp (it was 170 degrees. By around 4 pm, we began to lose sun angle of course, but it presumably cooked a bit more as it began to cool down, and we like a 5:00 supper better than 4:00.

Then take off lid, inhale fabulous aromas, close mouth so as not to drool into pot, stand up and yell, “Dinner’s ready!”



Oh, my, how phenomenal that we cooked this for free!!! No fuel, no nasty propane combustion, no asthma-inducing (for me) smoke, not even any electricity. FANTASTIC! The veggies were cooked perfectly, and the meat was tender. There was some rich 'broth' in the bottom—this was my favorite part—I could have eaten a whole bowl of that! It took about 7 hours all together, with minimal work (basically checking temp & adjusting to sun) the last 6 hours.

Also one thing that I LOVE (besides starting this new adventure) is this:

“When you purchase a HOT POT™, you are also supporting an international non-profit initiative which helps eliminate human health and environmental problems associated with indoor smoke and deforestation in developing countries. From Mexico to Mali, Africa, HOT POT™ solar cookers are helping people in poor communities in their efforts to live a better life.”
<http://www.solarcooker-at-cantinawest.com/hotpot-solar-cookers.html>

Very cool!!!

Other notes:

We are around 3,500 feet in altitude (ideal—the sun rays are less filtered).

We are located around the 43rd parallel (not ideal, because solar cookers like to be closer to the equator where the sun rays are not as slanted, I think. However, I am guessing our altitude helped, and obviously we just cooked a meal perfectly well in this pot!)

It is very early May (not ideal—a bit early for more ‘ideal’ summer sun cooking, but again, as you can see for my stew, it worked great!)

Mostly sunny (a few stray clouds) (almost ideal)

Light breeze kicking up to a bit more breeze off and on (almost ideal; aluminum flaps wiggled in the breeze a bit but didn’t tip over)

This was just enough to feed our family of five, although we needed a bit of dessert to fill up. But stews are often like that anyway.

Stay tuned—Recipe Two coming soon!

Helio Hamburger Casserole

9:30 am—preheat Hot Pot by setting up facing the sun, cover, set timer for 30 minutes.

Then prep: finely chop about 1/2 of an onion (or less if you don't want it that oniony). Crush & mince 1 clove of garlic.

10:00 am—onion, garlic, & 1 lb. hamburger: break up until it's 'loose' (not packed), put in Hot Pot, cover, set timer for 45 minutes.

10:45 am—quickly stir meat to see if it's done. If not, cover, and keep checking (without opening lid again) every 15 minutes or so. Take out at least by 12:30 (for food safety. If still not done, finish quickly with a hotter heat source.)

When done, take out and chill until later (refrigerate, or put in freezer for an hour to chill quickly if it has been out for a long time).

11:00 am—6 c. room temp. water: put in pot, cover, adjust to sun, set timer for 2 hours.

1:00 pm—adjust to sun, set timer for 90 minutes. (Adjust to sun and let go longer if still not boiling after 90 more minutes. Ours was boiling by . We actually just let it go on a boil until 2:30, because we didn't want to eat supper too early! Plus it's really fun watching the sun boil water for some reason! No, Seriously, I got such a kick out of it! The kids had a quick science lesson, too. I can't explain the scientific way what is happening, but we talked about what works and what doesn't—like clouds.)

2:30 pm—3 c. macaroni (or other noodles), 1 t. salt: stir into boiling water, quickly cover, adjust to sun, set timer for 40 minutes. (Some noodles will cook quicker; thicker ones might take longer than 40 minutes.)

A little while before the pasta is done—get pre-cooked hamburger/onion/garlic mixture out of refrigerator to come to room temp. Sprinkle over it:

- 1 t. parsley
- 1 t. paprika
- salt (& pepper if desired)
- dash cayenne

3:10 pm—test pasta to be sure it's done (eat a piece). (While it's cooling in your spoon enough to eat, put lid back on Hot Pot to conserve heat.) If done, drain pasta (drain the water into a pot, let it cool a few minutes, set pot in fridge, and later use it to make soup!)

Then add to the pasta in the Hot Pot:

- pre-cooked hamburger/veg that you had chilled and then brought to room temp. and seasoned.
- 1/2 c. beef broth or milk or some of each
- cheese (as much or little as you like. I hate to admit this, but back when I could eat cheese, I preferred the processed cheese food kind in this recipe. ☺)

Set timer for one hour. Hope there's enough sun left to heat it at least a little! (Everything is already cooked, so we're just looking for pleasantly hot food, melding of flavors, and hopefully melting cheese.) Let it coast until you're ready to eat (being careful not to let food stay under 150 degrees Fahrenheit for more than 2 hours). Stir thoroughly.



In case anyone's wondering, one reason I decided to blog so detailed was for...me! ☺ I really wanted to try a variety of recipes in the Hot Pot, but I actually haven't had internet access this whole time to look up recipes. (My DH goes to the library to send my posts each week. Lately he's even been helping me type them up.) So, I've been enjoying very much adapting other recipes for the Hot Pot. But I cannot even keep track of myself coming and going, so I knew it would be very stressful to try to cook without thinking it all through ahead of time. Thus these detailed recipes. Then I also can remember what I've done each time and tweak or whatever the next time. I hope I have not wearied you all with details, and I hope you enjoy solar cooking as much as I have!

Lemon Sunshine Chicken

The night before, mix:

- 3/4 c. lemon juice
- 1 t. honey
- 1/4 t. salt

Pour over 6 pieces of chicken, and marinate in fridge overnight.

9:30 am—3 T. butter: cut in pieces and put in Hot Pot, cover, set up facing the sun, set timer for 30 minutes.

Then prep:

- 1 small onion (chop finely)
- 2 cloves garlic (smash and mince)

10:00 am—onion and garlic: stir into butter, cover, set timer for 30 minutes.

10:30 am—chicken and marinade: put into Hot Pot, try to quickly spoon some of the onions over the chicken. Put baking rack and thermometer in like this:

Cover, adjust to sun, set timer for 60 minutes.

11:30 pm—adjust to sun, set timer for 60 minutes.

12:30 pm—check temperature without opening lid (can carefully jiggle pot to get condensation off lid).

[If temperature is NOT up to 150 degrees Fahrenheit by now, for food safety, you need to quickly bring up the temperature and finish cooking with higher heat source. (This recipe would work to finish in the broiler. Baste with more butter and lemon juice to keep moist; cook onions separately on stove or microwave.)]

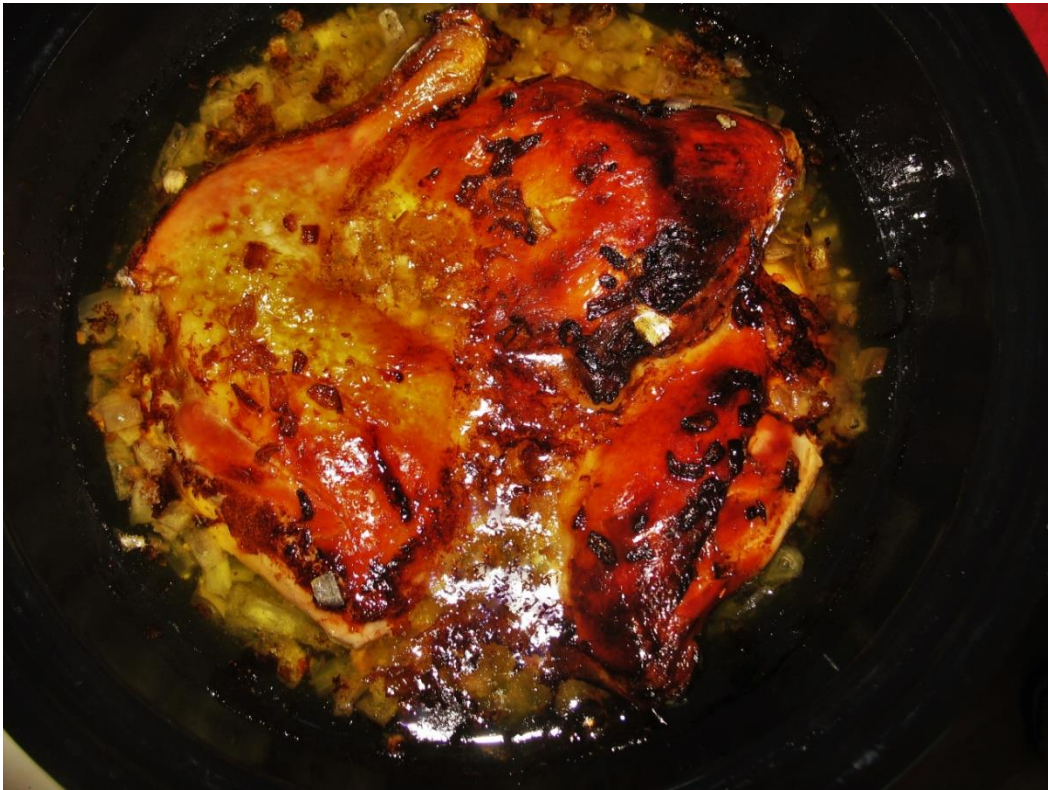
If at least 150 degrees, adjust to sun, set timer for 60 minutes.

1:30 pm—adjust to sun, set timer for 60 minutes.

2:30 pm—check temperature (must still be at least 150 degrees or needs to be boosted with microwave and finished at higher heat), adjust to sun, set timer for 90 minutes.

4:00 pm—check temperature. If it has dropped below 150 degrees, make sure the chicken is done by inserting thermometer into thickest part of center piece of meat but not touching bone. It should read at least 165 degrees. If so, you're good. Since it was at 150 degrees at 2:30, you know it hasn't been under 150 degrees for more than 90 minutes, so it is good to eat, but not good to let it sit in the Pot much longer.

If it is still above 150, you are okay to let it ‘coast’ until a bit later supper (just don’t open the lid, and keep an eye on the temp).



Suntanned Tuna Casserole

You might not want to print out this recipe until I make sure this one works! LOL It's an experiment, and I also wouldn't try it on a 'partly cloudy' day. But, since it's canned tuna (and not fresh meat), the cans can just sit in your cupboard until a sunny day comes along! Also, in a pinch, you could use canned mushrooms. If using canned mushrooms, still cook them in the butter at the beginning because they will pick up the butter flavor (even though they are already cooked to death in the can).

Suntanned Tuna Casserole

10:00 am—4 T. butter: cut into pieces, put in Hot Pot, cover, set up facing the sun, set timer for 30 minutes.

Set a jug of water (6 cups) in the sun and let it 'preheat'!

Then prep:

- 5 or 6 mushrooms (slice thinly)
- 1/2 onion (chop finely)
- 1 clove garlic (smash and mince)
- 1 t. parsley (sprinkle on veggies)
- 1 t. salt (sprinkle on veggies)
- 3 T. flour (sprinkle on veggies, trying to distribute evenly)

10:30 am—veggies, seasoning, and flour: add to Hot Pot, quickly stir into butter, cover, adjust to sun, set timer for 30 minutes.

11:00 am—take veggies out and CHILL in refrigerator until later today.

After taking veggies out (quickly if you can, to conserve heat)—6 c. room temp. water: put in pot, cover, adjust to sun, set timer for 2 hours.

1:00 pm—adjust to sun, set timer for 90 minutes. (Adjust to sun and let go longer if still not boiling after 90 more minutes. Ours was boiling by . We actually just let it go on a boil until 2:30, because we didn't want to eat supper too early!)

2:30 pm—3 c. macaroni (or other noodles), 1 t. salt: stir into boiling water, quickly cover, adjust to sun, set timer for 40 minutes. (Some noodles will cook quicker; thicker ones might take longer than 40 minutes.)

A little while before the pasta is done—get pre-cooked veggies out of refrigerator to come to room temp.

3:10 pm—test pasta to be sure it's done (eat a piece ☺). (While it's cooling in your spoon enough to eat, put lid back on Hot Pot to conserve heat.) If done, drain pasta (drain the water into a pot, let it cool, and later water your favorite plants with it!)

Then add to the pasta in the Hot Pot:

- pre-cooked veggies/flour that you had chilled and then brought to room temp.
- 2 cans tuna in water (NOT drained—the water is your 'broth')
- 1 can peas (drained) (or use frozen peas that have been thawed or fresh peas that have been steamed)

Set timer for one hour. Hope there's enough sun left to heat it at least a little! (Canned tuna is already fully cooked, so we're just looking for pleasantly hot food and melding of flavors.) Let it coast until you're ready to eat (being careful not to let food stay under 150 degrees Fahrenheit for more than 2 hours). Stir thoroughly.

If desired, sprinkle crushed potato chips or corn chips on top.

It was savory and filling! I wasn't sure if the mushrooms etc. would flavor it enough done this way, but I thought the veggies and tuna stirred through worked pretty well.

Side Dishes

Sun-drenched Carrots

10:00 am—2 T. butter: cut in pieces and put in Hot Pot, cover, set up facing the sun, set timer for 30 minutes.

Then prep:

- 8 medium carrots (slice very thinly)
- honey (drizzle over)
- salt (sprinkle lightly over, not too much)
- dash cinnamon or cloves (optional)

10:30 am—carrots, honey, and salt: add, stir into butter, cover, set timer for 45 minutes. After 45 minutes, check every 15 minutes or so until carrots look like they are the amount of softness/cooked that you like them. Adjust to sun if it goes longer than an hour. Be aware of food safety if it goes longer than 2 hours (especially if you have had clouds and your Hot Pot cooled down).



Solar Baked Flat Bread

Warm flat bread is one of my favorite snacks! Today I am making plain bread, but it can be dipped into salsa, marinara, sour cream dip, or guacamole; spread with tuna salad or cheese spread; or of course served with meals such as chicken curry, stew, etc.

I don't do well with baking soda much or even a lot of yeast, so I like to make flat bread with eggs. It gives it a softer/nicer texture than trying to do completely unleavened bread (although I have done that, too).

I am doing plain bread since I am experimenting with the Hot Pot. If this works, another day I'll probably try adding things to the bread!

10:00 am—make dough by mixing:

- 2 c. unbleached, all-purpose flour
- 1 c. whole wheat flour
- 1/2 t. salt
- 1/2 c. olive oil
- drizzle of honey
- 1 egg
- enough water to make a soft dough

Knead just a bit for dough to come together. Pat into 'cakes' about 3 inches across and 1/8 inch thick. Brush each piece of bread with more olive oil.

11:00 am—bread pieces: gently lay in the bottom and somewhat up the sides of the Hot Pot (don't press them onto the Pot or they might stick to the Pot?).

Set a round baking rack in the top and fill with more bread.

Put lid on Solar Cooker and wait and see what happens! LOL

I really am not sure how this is going to go, so I will check on the bread and be back later.... I'm back! (Did you miss me? LOL) After 30 minutes, I peeked and shook the moisture off the lid into the grass. The dough was 'warm' but still pretty doughy. Checked again after another 30 minutes—still doughy but cooking I think! It's starting to smell good now! Now I'm going to let it go another hour and see how it does. So that was....

11:30 am—open lid, shake moisture into grass, quickly cover again.

12:00 pm—open lid, shake moisture into grass, quickly cover, adjust to sun, set timer for one hour.

1:00 pm—check to see if bread is cooked through by taking a piece out (with tongs) and breaking in half—be careful, the bread will probably be really hot (I burned my fingers just a bit!) The inside should look ‘baked’ and fairly uniform in color. (If it is not done, the inside will be darker in color and raw or doughy-looking.) If not done, cover, adjust to sun, and keep checking every 15 minutes or so. Ours was done at 1:00.



Okay, some interesting developments—the bread on the sides of the Hot Pot browned on the bottom of each piece (yum!), though not on the top, and were generally softer than the bread on

the rack. The very middle piece of bread in the bottom center of the Pot was soggy—oops. Likely the moisture collected from the lid etc. and ran down and soaked that middle piece of bread. So, next time I will try a lightly crunched ‘disc’ of foil in the middle to keep the other pieces of bread up out of the middle and let the moisture collect under it. Or, if I could find a baking rack with a smaller circumference, that would work even better.

Well, not bad for the first try—only one piece of soggy bread (with a little bit of sog on the edges of a few other pieces). I might try the soggy piece dipped in marinara sauce. (Or maybe I’ll feed it to the dog! LOL)

And, the bread done on the rack is so good!! It has a nice olive oil and nutty whole wheat flavor. Our kids say it tastes a little like elephant ears (like at the fair) but so good that it doesn’t even need cinnamon and sugar—wow, what a compliment to the chef! ☺ (But if you like cinnamon and sugar, I bet that would be good on it.)

Sun Sweet Potatoes

Okay, this is kind of a ‘cheater’ recipe (and not all that healthy either), but here’s the thing: right now we are camping in a Winnebago, and we can’t use propane (stove or oven), campfire, grill, gas stove, or any other combustion (because they all make me sick because of my extremely severe Toxic Injury).

So, we have a small microwave, crock pot, electric griddle, and this wonderful Solar Hot Pot. That’s actually a really nice variety of cooking devices, but for a family of five, getting everything done at the same time can still be tricky.

To tackle that problem, we put zucchini and onions and butter in the crock pot on high (about 2:00 pm) and will need the griddle to cook some meat and the microwave to warm some other stuff. So, the sweet potatoes will get a nice warming in the Hot Pot, and everything can be done at once!

This is also pretty late in the day to be starting solar cooking, but the yams really don’t need much more than warming, though a bit of cooking will ‘candy’ them a bit more. And at least it’s a little later in the spring now—more direct rays coming our way!

2:45 pm—4 T. butter—put into Hot Pot, set up facing the sun, set timer for 15 minutes.

3:00 pm—1 large can (40 oz.) sweet potatoes (drain some or all of the juice depending on how ‘juicy’ you like your potatoes; keep in mind that more liquid will slow down the heating), 1/2 c. brown sugar: stir sugar into juices or sprinkle on potatoes. Carefully add all to Hot Pot (I had trouble with splashing the butter, but will do better next time ☺); set timer for one hour.

4:00 pm—*using pot holders*, carefully ‘swirl’ pot to ‘stir,’ *with lid on* (don’t peek other than through the glass lid). I had trouble getting mine to ‘mix’ much, but oh, well. Adjust to sun, set timer for one hour.

5:00 pm—serve! Don’t wait too long, as the yams are hitting the 2 hour mark. If they did not get above 150 degrees Fahrenheit at this late time of day, they need to be eaten right away (leftovers chilled immediately).

Not sure it can get much easier than that. ☺
Even if you do have the use of an oven or crock pot, this is great in the summer because it won’t heat up the house (and tastes better than sweet potatoes warmed in the microwave, IMHO).
And despite all that butter and sugar, they still have some good nutrients and fiber. ☺



Sunbeam Banana Bread

This is one I would wait for a good, sunny day. I don't know how clouds might mess up the baking. Though if I ever end up with clouds doing this recipe, I'll let you know what happens.

😊 (Each day of cooking with solar heat is somewhat like a science experiment—fun! I suppose this is how human beings' cooking got started—experimenting!)

10:00 am—preheat Hot Pot by setting in the sun.

Then prep with these next five steps:

1. Butter a small loaf pan (or just butter the Hot Pot and you'll have a round, 'pie-shaped' banana bread. 😊)

2. Mix together:

- 1/3 c. olive oil
- 1/6 c. honey (or a generous drizzle so don't have to wash a sticky measuring cup 😊)
- 1 egg

3. Sift or mix together (and then add to oil mixture, mixing thoroughly but don't beat it to death):

- 1/2 c. whole wheat pastry flour
- 1/4 t. baking soda
- dash salt

4. Stir into oil/flour mixture:

- 1/3 c. mashed bananas (or 1 small banana)
- 1/2 t. vanilla
- 1/8 c. chopped walnuts or pecans or just a bit of ground flax seed
- 1/2 c. chocolate chips—optional

5. Pour into buttered, small loaf pan (or straight into buttered Hot Pot).

10:30 am—set loaf of bread in middle of Hot Pot. Cover, adjust to sun, set timer for one hour.

11:30 am—adjust to sun, set timer for one hour.

12:30 am—check for doneness by picking up Pot—with pot holders—it will be hot! Jiggle gently with the lid ON to see if the bread has set. If not, keep checking every 15-20 minutes until bread is set and doesn't 'jiggle' (no wet batter in the middle).

Sunny Snack Pizza

I am calling this snack pizza because for 5 people, each person will only get a 'snack.' But I bet it would work great for one very hungry person or two or three people (and you could serve a salad etc. with it). If I get another Hot Pot next year, doing 2 pizzas would solve the problem for our family. ☺

Prep pizza dough by mixing in large bowl or bowl of stand mixer:

- 1/2 t. yeast
- 3/8 c. warm water (about bathwater temp., not over 115 degrees)
- drizzle of honey or 1 T sugar

Wait until yeast bubbles. Then add:

- 1 1/2 t. salt
- 1 1/2 t. olive oil
- 1/2 c. unbleached white flour
- 1/2 c. whole wheat flour (not pastry)

Stir until dough comes together. Then knead with dough hook in electric stand mixer for 15 minutes or by hand 30 minutes (or just knead until you're tired and don't worry about it. Unless you are picky about your pizza crust texture, it will still be good. LOL)

For increased flavor, you can fridge dough for 18-24 hours. Either way, let dough rest 15-30 minutes before using.

(You can even make a double batch or more and put the rest of the dough in the freezer to use the next time.)

So, we are more into summer now, and the sun is pretty high in the sky by 9:00 am. (Plus we are on the eastern end of our time zone, so our 9:00 am is actually a bit closer to "9:30 am.")

Anyway, I'm going to start at 9:00 am, but obviously you could print this recipe out and cross out & adjust all times for yourself.

9:00 am—1 T butter or oil: put in Hot Pot, set up facing the sun, set timer for 30 minutes.

Then prep by chopping toppings you want on your pizza. Some people like these 'raw' on their pizza; I like mine 'sautéed' a bit, and it will help the over-all Hot Pot cooking process:

- green and/or banana pepper (chop small)
- onion (chop small)
- black olives (slice thinly)
- mushrooms (slice thinly)

Rub butter on a round baking rack (one that fits in your Hot Pot of course). (I wonder if a small metal pan would work, too. I don't have one small enough to fit in the top of the Hot Pot; feel free to comment below if you find one and it works!)

Stretch your dough to fit baking rack, brush bottom with oil or butter so that hopefully it will not stick to the baking rack. Set dough on baking rack.

9:30 am—veggies: add to butter, stir. Pizza dough on baking rack: set in top of Hot Pot. Set timer for 1 hour. Again, if you don't like your pizza veggies cooked to death, you could take them out after 30 minutes. I am going to leave them in, especially because the dough in the top of the Pot will slow down the veggies cooking in the bottom.



10:30 am—take veggies out, quickly wipe out the bottom of the Pot (don't want butter residue to cook), and top pizza:

Tomato sauce: spread a little on pizza.

Cheese: sprinkle on.

‘Sautéed’ toppings, and any other toppings you might like (fresh tomato, fresh basil, fully-cooked meats, pineapple): put on pizza.

Cover, adjust to sun, set timer for one hour.

11:30 pm—put pizza on plate or cutting board, cut, and eat! I guess today ours is more of an ‘appetizer’ than a true ‘snack.’ Adjust the times 3 or 3 1/2 hours later for a mid-afternoon snack.



Sunny Yellow Squash and Onions



10:00 am—4 T butter: cut in pieces and put in Hot Pot. Cover, set up facing the sun, set timer for 30 minutes.

Then prep:

- 1 medium onion (slice very thinly)
- 2 yellow summer squash (slice thinly)
- 2 zucchini (slice thinly)

10:30 am—onion: put in bottom of Pot. Squash and zucchini: put on top of onion. Cover, set timer for 30 minutes.

11:00 am—using pot holders, pick up Pot (with lid on) and ‘swirl’ a bit to stir. Adjust to sun, set timer for 60 minutes.

12:00 pm—if you have a nice, high, bright sun and these are nice and hot, you can probably let them go another hour or so to get sweeter.



If partly cloudy or ‘iffy,’ check the temp. for food safety—needs to be around 150 degrees Fahrenheit. If under temp, you can finish them with a hotter heat source or even just eat them now—they’ll still probably taste good even if a bit on the crunchy side. Hard to go wrong with these veggies and butter. The onions just get sweeter as you cook them longer.)

Salt before serving.

Our older kids absolutely gobble this up. I am guessing it’s a little like Almanzo Wilder’s favorite dish of fried apples ‘n onions. In fact, maybe next time we’ll try with apples instead of squash.

LIGHT Brown Challah

This is going to be a really enjoyable recipe! I love Challah (Jewish braided bread), and there is no food safety danger because bread dough can be out 'forever.' Probably the biggest risk is having the bread 'fall,' but I have never met homemade bread I didn't like! At the very worst, odd-textured bread can be turned into stuffing, egg casserole, etc. So, here we go!

Prep by making the dough, which can then be refrigerated for a day or two and set out early to rise the day you will bake. (Early to rise? I guess it will be healthy, wealthy, and wise. LOL) It will take almost twice as long to rise from the fridge, though, depending on the temperature where you set it—maybe up to 3 hours.

I'm going to go ahead and give the recipe for a normal loaf. The Hot Pot will bake only 1/2 of this at one time, but the rest of the dough you can bake later in the day or even freeze for at least 3 months and use next time. (Or of course just cut the recipe in half.)

Mix in small bowl:

- 1 pkg yeast
- 1/4 c. warm water (about 110 degrees)
- drizzle of honey

While you wait for this to bubble, mix thoroughly in large bowl:

- 3/4 c. very hot water
- 1/8 c. olive oil
- 2 t. salt
- 1 1/2 c. whole wheat flour

Then add to flour mixture:

- 1 egg, slightly beaten
- yeast mixture (which should be bubbly by now. If not, try again with better yeast.)

Let rest 5 min. Then add:

- 1/2 c. whole wheat flour
- 1 3/4 c. unbleached white flour

Knead 10 minutes. Cover and put in fridge OR continue with recipe:

Put in greased bowl, turn to cover dough with oil (or butter). Cover loosely and let rise 1 1/2 hours.

Deflate dough (a gentler way of saying 'punch down' dough LOL) and divide dough into 2 pieces; set one aside (or fridge or freeze it). Divide one of the halves into 3 pieces and shape each piece into a rope about the length of the Hot Pot diameter. Braid these pieces into pretty loaf and brush with oil or butter.

Make a 'disc' of foil to set in the bottom of the Hot Pot thereby making the Pot 'flat' on the bottom; heavily grease disc with butter.

11:30—set dough on buttered disc but do NOT cover with glass lid (only with a towel or something); we don't want the bread to begin baking until it has had a chance to rise first. Set timer for one hour.

12:30—make sure bread has risen, cover, set up facing the sun, set timer for one hour.

1:30—adjust to sun, set timer for one hour.

2:30—check bread to see if it is done.



If you start earlier than I did and/or have good, strong sun, you could bake both loaves in one day.

Desserts

Chocolate Sun Fondue

I just had to try it—fondue! (Fondue is one thing I like from the 1970s! ☺ Oh, and wild wallpaper, long straight hair, broomstick skirts, Castile soap, the movie *What's Up Doc?*....)

I am so curious to see how long the Hot Pot will keep this warm for us. 'Course the 5 of us can scarf up chocolate fondue pretty quickly.....

11:45 am—preheat Hot Pot by setting up facing the sun (with lid on).

12:00 pm—12 oz. chocolate chips, 1/4 c. cream, 1 t butter, 1 t. vanilla or almond extract: put in Hot Pot, cover, set timer for 30 minutes.

Prepare dippers, your choice of:

- strawberries
- pitted cherries
- pieces of banana (not too ripe or they will fall off into the chocolate)
- chunks of pineapple
- sugar cookies and/or biscotti
- anything else you like to dip in chocolate

12:30 pm—stir to see if chocolate has melted. If it looks like it could use some more time to be really warm, cover and check every 15 minutes or so.



Sun-Candied Cereal

How about a recipe that's easier (in some ways) than on the stove? Much less stirring needed, because the Hot Pot will not burn the butter or the sugar!

10 am—1/3 c. butter: cut in pieces and put in pot, cover, set up facing the sun, set timer for 30 minutes.

It was really cloudy when we started the butter, but it melted in 23 minutes anyway.

10:30 am—1/2 c. packed brown sugar: stir into melted butter; set timer for 30 minutes.

Okay, so a huge line of clouds came in and almost completely covered the sky (waaa, it was supposed to be sunny today), and the sugar didn't really warm/cook like it was supposed to; the Hot Pot is cold. So, we're going to wait and see if the sun comes out later today to finish the 'syrup.' Since it is only butter and sugar, there is no food safety issue and we can just leave it in the Pot and wait!

Later.... The sun came out and stayed out! After about 30 minutes, the sugar and butter were bubbling nicely!

After about 30 minutes of sun on sugar/butter mixture or until it bubbles a good bit—open lid and quickly stir.

After about 10 MORE minutes of sun on sugar/butter mixture—4 c. oat rings or other cereal: stir into butter/sugar mixture until cereal is thoroughly coated. (You can't really ruin the sugar/butter if it bubbles a bit shorter or longer than that.)

Optional—stir in:

- cashews
- sunflower seeds
- other nuts and/or dried fruit
- chocolate chips

Pour out of Hot Pot onto a cookie sheet. Cool 1 hour; store in airtight container. Yummy snack, and has the merits of whatever cereal you use—we use whole grain with fiber and some added vitamins.



We were going to cook chili in the Hot Pot for supper, right after finishing that cereal snack, but it's not a good idea to start 'sensitive' food on an iffy/very cloudy day! Plus we're running out of good sun time to get it done anyway. So Sunny Chili will have to wait until another day (and we'll just throw it in the crock pot for today instead)! That's okay—something to look forward to—trying chili in the Hot Pot.

BUT, the cereal snack turned out SO YUMMY (and the sun is still out) that we decided to do another batch right away! (This first batch probably won't make it through the day with our hungry children. ☺)

With the sun now high in the sky and fewer clouds, the butter only took 10 minutes to melt! Another way to write this recipe would be: melt butter, add sugar and wait until bubbles, stir once, cover and let cook 10-15 minutes more, stir in cereal.

Bring your afternoon cup of coffee and a book out, to read in between steps of the recipe, and this recipe can be done in time for an after-school snack for the kids!

One thing about solar cooking—flexibility is a help, but conquering the challenge of being flexible with 'adverse' circumstances is very satisfying! (Yes, I am smarter than the weather. LOL)

Easy Sun Fruit Dessert

Well, we're still getting lots of clouds these days. So I decided rather than risk a long-cooking and more sensitive meat dish, I'd do something quick and likely to work even with 'some' clouds. ☺ Plus, it's totally yummy and easy!

In medium bowl, mix:

- 1/2 c. unbleached all purpose (white) flour
- 1/2 c. whole wheat pastry flour (or can use all one kind of flour; all whole wheat will be a bit 'heavy')
- 1 c. sugar
- 1/4 t. baking soda
- dash or 2 or 3 of salt

In SEPARATE bowl, stir together:

- 1 can (21 oz.) pie filling (we like cherry)
- 1 can (15 to 20 oz.) crushed pineapple

About one stick of butter, room temperature

12:00 (or about 45-90 minutes before you'd like your dessert)—fruit: pour into Hot Pot. Sprinkle evenly with flour mixture. Dot pieces of butter, distributing all over on top of flour.

Cover, adjust to sun, set timer for 45 minutes. If butter is not melted and 'baking' the flour mixture yet, keep checking every 20 to 30 minutes. (Try to check with the lid on, to avoid losing heat by opening lid.) If you're struggling with clouds like we are, best to take it out at least by the time the fruit has been out for 2 hours (for food safety, just in case, though it is not as critical as meat). When it is done, it should look something like this:

It is delicious and rather addicting! Yeah, has lots of sugar, but also good fruit antioxidants and vitamins. Even a little fiber in the whole wheat flour. ☺



Sunny Apple Crunch

Prep by making topping. Mix:

- 3/4 c. whole wheat pastry flour
- 1/2 c. dry oats
- 3/4 c. chopped nuts (any kind)—that's the crunch!
- 1/4 c. butter (work it in with your hands to make a crumbly topping. Don't mix too much; you don't want a cookie dough, ☺ just a crumbly topping.)
- 3/8 c. honey (drizzle over all)

Set topping aside.

Now mix in Hot Pot:

- 4-5 c. apples (peel and slice thinly)
- 2 T sugar (sprinkle over apples)
- 2 t. flour (sprinkle over apples)
- 1 t. lemon juice (sprinkle over apples)
- dash of cloves (or you can use cinnamon; cinnamon sometimes gives me heartburn)

Sprinkle topping all over fruit.

10:00 am—set up filled Hot Pot facing the sun. (You can probably put more fruit than this in the Pot, but it cooks faster with less. And overall, better to fill the Pot only 2/3 full.) Set timer for one hour.

11:00 am—adjust to sun, set timer for one hour.

12:00 pm—check to see if it looks done. Be aware of food safety & check temperature if you are concerned (although I don't think fruit is that sensitive, especially with lemon juice....?) When done, it should look something like this:



Sunrise Peach Cobbler

Of course you can't really start this at sunrise because the sun is not high enough in the sky, but maybe those pretty peaches will remind you of the sunrise. LOL

I think I got this cobbler batter from somewhere on this website, but I can't check because I don't have good access to internet right now.

Anyway, prepare your fruit first, so it has a little time to chill out (well, really for the sugar to draw some juices out. I think that's what I read somewhere.)

5 medium peaches: peel if you like (we don't), slice thinly, then:

- honey (drizzle a little over peaches, maybe 1 t.)
- 1 t. flour (sprinkle over peaches)
- dash salt (on peaches)
- 2 t. lemon juice

9:45 am—butter lower half of Hot Pot, and preheat Hot Pot by setting up facing the sun (with lid on).

Then prep by mixing:

- 1/2 c. unbleached white flour
- 1/2 c. whole wheat pastry flour
- 3 T sugar
- 1/2 t. cream of tartar
- 1/4 t. baking soda

Whisk together:

- 1 egg
- 1/4 c. water
- 2 T oil

Pour wet mixture into the dry mixture, stir a few times, and then—as Alton Brown would say, “Walk away! Just walk away!” Over-mixing cobbler batter will produce an unpleasant result, so resist that urge to mix out all the lumps.

10:00 am—pour batter into Hot Pot. Gently put fruit mixture on top, trying to distribute over



batter. Cover, set timer for 60 minutes.

11:00 am—check cobbler to see if it's done by gently tipping Pot back and forth (use pot holders!) If the batter in the bottom seems to move 'wetly' (can something move wetly? LOL), keep checking every 20-30 minutes until batter is set and pretty much stays still when you tip it.

Cosmological Cake

Orange and chocolate—what better combination is there? (Unless it's cherry and chocolate, or almond and chocolate, or chocolate mint or Oh, sorry, I was on my chocolate island dreaming for a minute there.)

This is a very tender cake and probably going to fall apart when I try to get it out of the Hot Pot, but who cares—it's going to taste good!

10:30 am—grease lower half of Hot Pot with butter, cover, set up facing the sun (to preheat), set timer for 30 minutes.

Then make batter by mixing:

- 2 c. unbleached white flour (or 1 c. white and 1 c. whole wheat pastry flour)
- 1/2 c. sugar
- 1 t. cream of tartar
- 3/4 t. baking soda
- 1/4 t. salt
- 1/4 c. olive oil
- 2/3 c. frozen orange juice concentrate, thawed completely (but not diluted with water)
- 1 orange, zested (optional)
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten

11:00 am—pour batter into Hot Pot, cover, set timer for 60 minutes.

Get chocolate chips out. Eat a few. Go look at Hot Pot curiously.

12:00 pm—quickly throw in a couple handfuls of chocolate chips, cover, adjust to sun, set timer for 60 minutes.

1:00 pm—check cake to see if it is 'set' by picking up Hot Pot (with pot holders!) and tipping back and forth a bit to see if the cake batter 'moves' or stays still. If still wet and 'moves,' set down, adjust to sun, and keep checking every 20 to 30 minutes until done.



Upside-down Sunshine Pumpkin Pie

Now that the summer sun is at a good angle to brown baked goods, we are going to try a pie—upside-down! That way the crust should get nice and brown and crispy up on top. I hope.

Also we've had a can of pumpkin in the cupboard forever (driving me crazy).

Prep by mixing:

2 eggs
1/2 –3/4 cup sugar
1 can (15 oz.) pumpkin
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
1/4 teaspoon cloves
1 teaspoon sea salt
1 cup milk or cream

And make pie crust by gently mixing with fork:

1 c. flour (unbleached white or whole wheat pastry flour)
scant 1/3 c. olive oil (or more if dough is too dry)
scant 1/4 c. milk or cream
dash of salt

Roll/pat out into a circle on a piece of foil or parchment.

This actually made a little too much for the circumference of the Hot Pot. You can cut the recipe back, have a thicker crust, or nibble on the scraps. LOL

Actually, even the circle we used seemed too large. I might cut back next time.

12:15 pm—grease bottom half of Solar Hot Pot with butter, cover, set up facing the sun (to preheat), set timer for 15 minutes.

12:30 pm—pour batter into Hot Pot, cover with circle of crust, cover with Hot Pot lid, set timer for 1 hour.

1:30 am—adjust to sun, turn Hot Pot 180 degrees (Hot Pot only, not reflective panels), set timer for 1 hour.

2:30 pm—check for doneness by picking up Pot (with pot holders!) and swirling to see if the batter is “set,” and by checking to see if crust is browning. If not set (and it jiggles), keep checking every 15 to 30 minutes until done. (Be aware of food safety—don't leave longer than two hours at temps cooler than 150 degrees Fahrenheit. Lower temps can occur especially with

more clouds and/or in spring or fall.)

Serve with whipped cream.

I can't have the milk or cinnamon, but DH (dear hubby) says that this pie was delicious. ☺

Before we did the pie, we cooked up some beets for lunch with a little water; I'll include the beets picture just for fun. Love doing veggies this way! Gently, no burning, no watching—just throw them in and go. These were crisp-done in about 80 minutes.

Also baked another loaf of Challah in our other Hot Pot today. We are used to making our own bread anyway; such a help with avoiding chemicals. Baking it with the sun is SO cool!



Sunny Fudge Sandwiches

10:15 am—preheat Hot Pot by setting up facing the sun (with lid on).

10:30 am—12 oz (2 c.) butterscotch chips, 1 c. peanut butter: put in Hot Pot, cover, set up facing the sun, set timer for 30 minutes.

11:00 am—stir to see if chips have melted enough. If so, pour over:

8 cups of crisp rice cereal in large bowl

Stir to coat cereal. Press 1/2 of mixture into buttered 8 X 8 inch pan. Chill.

Wipe out Hot Pot to get ready for chocolate (or just leave, if you don't mind a wee bit of butterscotch and p.b in your fudge center).

11:30 am—12 oz. (2 c.) chocolate chips, 1 T water, 1 c. powdered sugar, 2 T butter: put all in Hot Pot, cover, set up facing the sun, set timer for 30 minutes.

12:00 pm—stir to see if chocolate chips have melted enough. If so, spread mixture over chilled cereal mixture. Spread remaining cereal mixture over top. Press gently Refrigerate.

Sun-warmed, Spiced Apple Cider

Prep:

- 6 c. apple cider (set out to bring to room temp)
- 4 sticks cinnamon (put in cider)
- 3/4 t. whole cloves (put in cider)
- dash nutmeg (put in cider)
- a few slices of dried apples to float in the top (optional; mostly to look pretty)

12:00 pm—put all in Hot Pot, cover, set up facing the sun, let it go! (Well, set timer for 2 hours if you are afraid you'll forget it. LOL And you can adjust to the sun after one hour to make it heat better, too.)

What fun to work outdoors in the cool, autumn air and come back around 2:00 for warm cider!



More Ideas

Vegetables

Beets



Mushrooms

Corn



Snow Peas

Kale Chips



Lentils



Grilled Cheese



Reheating leftovers (fried chicken,
chicken curry)



Beef Roast Contest

Today I would like to announce a heated contest between two amazing competitors: Solar Hot Pot and Electric Crock Pot.

The rules:

Each contestant will receive the same ingredients: one-half a small onion, 1 clove garlic, 3 carrots, 4 potatoes, 1/2 a sweet red pepper, salt, oregano, oil if desired, water if desired, and a hunk of beef roast.

The competition will begin at 10:00 am and end at 5:00 pm Mountain Time.

The judges are: Nathan (age 16), Alyssa (age 12), and Sarah (age 9) Upton.

Food will be judged on taste, texture, and appearance.

We will go now to interview each competitor.

Q. Mr. Crock Pot, why do think you will win this competition?

A. I have much more experience than Solar Hot Pot. I have been with the Uptons since Steve & Christa's marriage in 1992. (Technically, my clone joined them in 1992. I was their upgrade around 1999.)

Q. Why do you like to cook?

A. Many years ago, my clones began helping the Moms of America with their amazing ability to cook while the cook was away. My great-grand-clone taught me to love turning raw food into meals for families.

Q. What do you think is your greatest strength?

A. Electricity is my power! I do not fear clouds, rain, or low sun angle!

Thank you, Mr. Crock Pot. And now to join Ms. Solar Hot Pot outside.

Q. Should Mr. Crock Pot fear you, the relative newcomer?

A. Oh, yes, Mr. Crock Pot should be shaking on his counter! I can turn the beautiful sun into cooking power!

Q. Why do you think your food tastes better?

A. I am able to harness the sun to cook and even brown foods and produce more intense flavors. My grand-clone showed me how to team together with my partner, Aluminum Panels, to keep the sun rays directed at the food.

Q. What other reasons should people consider choosing you?

A. I allow people to enjoy the great outdoors while cooking, get exercise as they check on me now and then, and save money on fuel or electricity! Also, I cook with no combustion, and you can be out in the middle of nowhere to use me—no power lines and plug-in needed!

Thank you, Ms. Solar Hot Pot. Good luck to both our contestants!

Stay tuned for the results of this contest.

Beef Roast Contest, Part 2

Today we witnessed an epic battle between Ms. Solar Hot Pot and Mr. Electric Crock Pot. It was an amazing scene—vegetable peelings flying everywhere, roast being prepped, garlic being smashed. I had a chance to catch up with Ms. Solar Hot Pot outside (on this gorgeous, sunny day) and ask her a question or two.

Q. Ms. Solar Hot Pot, I see you started your onions and garlic without the other ingredients. Then you added the meat but still not the other ingredients. Why did you do this?

A. I like to bring out the natural sweetness of the garlic and onion by cooking them first in some lovely, hot olive oil. I also like to give the meat a little browned flavor.

Q. And you cut up the roast into tiny pieces. Is it technically still a roast?

A. Good question! Technically cutting up my meat makes the meal into a stew, but the rules did not say that the meal had to be a roast or that the meat had to remain whole! This technique will help me cook the meat quicker and be sure to get my food done on time.

Okay, then! We will see how the judges respond to having their roast cut up. Meanwhile, I also got to chat with Mr. Crock Pot.

Q. Mr. Crock Pot, why are you just sitting there?

A. I'm done; all I have left to do is heat!

Q. Are you sure this is the best technique for flavor?

A. I am very confident in my technique, and I'm sure the judges will love my food.

We are coming to the close of the competition..... 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, hands up! Oh, sorry, neither of our competitors have hands. Okay, well.... Cooking time is up. Let's see what the judges have to say.

Each judge can award up to 5 points each for taste, texture, and appearance.

First they will try Dish "A," (the food cooked by Ms. Solar Hot).

Judge Nathan (age 16) comments that, "The texture of the meat was just perfect. The veggies might have been slightly mushy, but I liked them. It looked like a classic stew; it was delicious."

Judge Alyssa (age 12) says, "I agree that the meat texture was perfect, but the potatoes and carrots were a little bit too soft for me."

Judge Sarah (age 9) says, "The meat was too slippery (to get on my spoon) and too hot and too tough. However, the flavor was delicious. The potatoes and carrots were too soft. But the stew had the right amount of salt."

Now the judges will try Dish “B,” (the food cooked by Mr. Crock Pot).

Judge Nathan says, “The meat was a little more fatty and didn’t taste quite as good as Dish A, but it was nice and tender. The vegetables were pretty good, but again not as well flavored as Dish A. The softness was about the same. It didn’t look quite as appetizing as Dish A either.

Judge Alyssa reports, “The flavor of Dish B wasn’t as good as Dish A. But the potatoes were a little firmer, and I liked that.”

Judge Sarah says, “The meat was too hard, and the vegetables were too soft. But it was good anyway.”

We have tallied the points, and the winner is.....

Ms. Solar Hot Pot!!!!!!

Here’s how the points break down. Ms. Solar Hot Pot received 15 points for taste, 9 points for texture, and 13 points for appearance, for a total of 37 (out 45 possible points). Mr. Crock Pot received 11 points for taste, 9 points for texture, and 8 points for appearance, for a total of 28 points.

It was a great Battle Beef Roast! Since neither competitor has hands to shake, they have exchanged nice words on each other’s food. All the food was good, and our judges are nice and full.

Until next time, Happy Cooking!

(PS We parents definitely agreed with the judges that Ms. Solar Hot Pot was the winner!)