

Gourmet Cooking from Cans

Canned food sometimes gets a bad rap. There's a misunderstanding about the freshness and nutritional value of canned fruits and vegetables, but much of this bad press simply isn't true. Canned fruits and vegetables are comparable in nutrition to those that are cooked fresh or frozen. In fact, just like frozen food, canned fruits and vegetables are picked and processed at their peak, which seals in nutrients.

Also, canned foods are convenient: since the food inside is usually already cooked, it lessens your cooking time, allowing you to get food on the table faster.

Grocery Outlet has long promoted the benefits of canned food items, and we're here to show that you can create gourmet-style meals in your kitchen that are healthy, cheap and easy to make. Please follow our recipes for some terrific meals showcasing canned foods. We've even included a dessert!

Most of these items can be found at Grocery Outlet, though since we source opportunistically, you might not be able to find everything on your list at any given time. We encourage you to shop us first and save, then find whatever you're missing elsewhere. The canned foods featured are ones we regularly stock.

Sweet and Sour Chicken

Ingredients

3 tablespoons cornstarch
1 (10.5 ounce) can Condensed Chicken Broth
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
1 pound skinless, boneless chicken breast, cut into 1-inch pieces
1 (8 ounce) can pineapple chunks in juice, undrained
1/4 cup sugar
1/4 cup vinegar
1 small green pepper
4 cups hot cooked rice

Directions

1. Mix cornstarch and broth.
2. Heat oil in skillet. Add chicken and stir-fry until browned.
3. Add broth mixture, pineapple, sugar, vinegar and pepper. Heat to a boil. Cook and stir until mixture boils and thickens. Cover.
4. Cook over low heat 5 minutes or until done. Serve over rice.

Serves 4.

Cranberry and Mandarin Salad

Ingredients

- 8 cups baby spinach leaves
- 1/2 medium red onion, sliced and separated into rings
- 1 (11 ounce) can mandarin oranges, drained
- 1 1/2 cups sweetened dried cranberries
- 1 cup honey-roasted sliced almonds
- 1 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 1 cup balsamic vinaigrette salad dressing, or to taste

Directions

1. Place servings of spinach onto salad plates.
2. Top with red onion, mandarin oranges, cranberries, sliced almonds and feta cheese in that order.
3. Drizzle dressing over each salad.

Serves 4.

Turkey Pot Pie

Ingredients

- 2 (9 inch) unbaked pie shells
- 1 (10.75 ounce) can condensed mushroom soup
- 1 cup cooked, chopped turkey meat
- 1 (10 ounce) can mixed vegetables, drained
- 1/3 cup milk

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F (200 degrees C). Place one pie crust in an ungreased pie dish.
2. In a medium bowl, mix the mushroom soup and milk. Stir in the turkey meat and mixed vegetables.
3. Pour the mixture into the pie crust in the dish. Top with the other pie crust, and seal the crust edges by crimping with a wet fork.
4. Bake in the preheated oven 45 minutes; or until the crust is golden brown.

Serves 6.

Black Bean Chili

Ingredients

1/2 pound lean ground beef
1 large onion, diced
3 cloves garlic, minced
2 (15-oz.) cans black beans
1 (28-oz.) can tomato puree
1 (15-oz.) can corn, drained
1 tablespoon chili powder
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper

Directions

1. Preheat a deep skillet over medium-high heat. Brown beef until no longer pink, about 5 minutes. Drain.
2. Add onion and garlic and sauté until soft, about 5 minutes. Add beans (undrained), tomato purée, corn, chili powder, cumin and pepper.
3. Bring to a boil, cover and lower heat; simmer gently for 10 minutes until thoroughly heated.

Serves 6.

Pear Cake with Sour Cream Topping

Ingredients

1/2 cup butter or margarine, softened
1/2 cup sugar
3 eggs, lightly beaten
1 teaspoon grated lemon peel
1 3/4 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup milk
1 (29 ounce) can pear halves, drained

Topping:

1 cup sour cream
2 tablespoons brown sugar
1 tablespoon grated lemon peel

Directions

1. In a mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar. Add eggs and lemon peel; mix well.
2. Combine flour, baking powder and salt; add to creamed mixture alternately with milk. Beat well.
3. Spread batter into a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking pan. Slice pear halves and arrange in rows on top of batter.
4. Mix topping ingredients until smooth; spread over pears. Bake at 350 degrees F for 30-35 minutes or until cake tests done.

Serves 12.