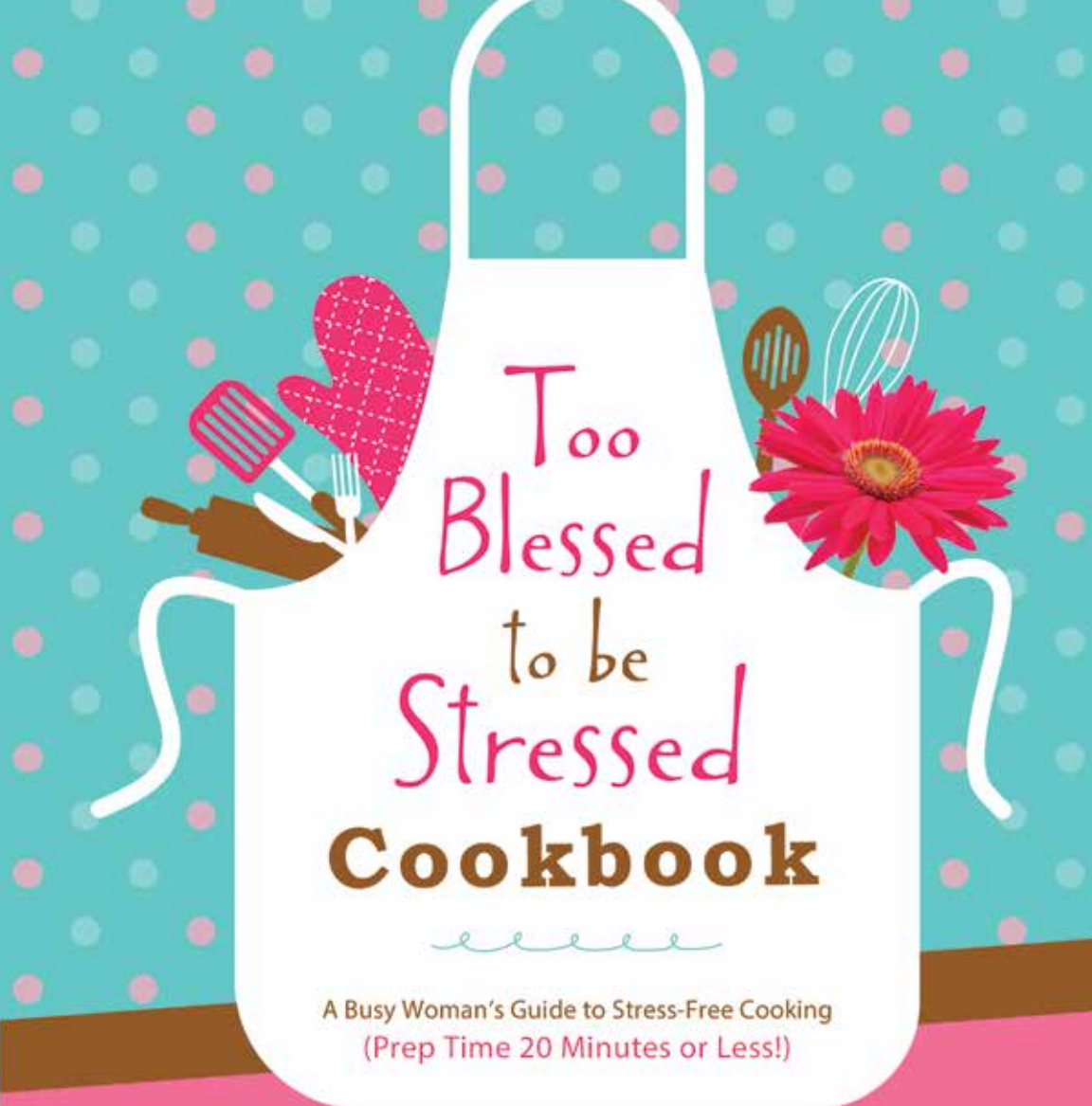


Too  
Blessed  
to be  
Stressed  
**Cookbook**

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Too  
Blessed  
to be  
Stressed  
**Cookbook**

A Busy Woman's Guide to Stress-Free Cooking  
(Prep Time 20 Minutes or Less!)

*From Popular Inspirational Humorist*  
**Debora M. Coty**

**BARBOUR BOOKS**  
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“Prepare me the kind  
of tasty food I like and  
bring it to me to eat,  
so that I may give  
you my blessing.”

GENESIS 27:4 NIV





Need a little help alleviating stress in other areas of your life besides the kitchen? Be sure to get copies of Deb's award-winning inspirational books, each available in print or e-version and chock-full of her unique brand of truth gift wrapped in humor:



*Too Blessed to Be Stressed*

*More Beauty, Less Beast*

*Fear, Faith, and a Fistful of Chocolate*

*Too Loved to Be Lost*

# Acknowledgments

Sweetened condensed gratitude to the following friends and family who contributed recipes, which have created happy memories and become beloved traditions in our home: Adele Mitchell (a.k.a. Mama), Cricket and Josh Boyer, Rebecca Coty, Jane Ann Coty, Suzi Coty Beatty, Pat Glickman, Gloria Foster, Sandi Heath, Pam Cunningham, Cheryl Johnston, Julia Thomas, Jan McRae, Dianne Mullins and her sweet mom, Lila Rae Yawn, Sandi Dorey, Betty Combee, Marlene Costa, Charmaine Andrews, Cheryl Barber, and Jenna Barber, my health food guru friend who has more healthy recipes to share at [www.skinnygirlcaneat.com](http://www.skinnygirlcaneat.com).

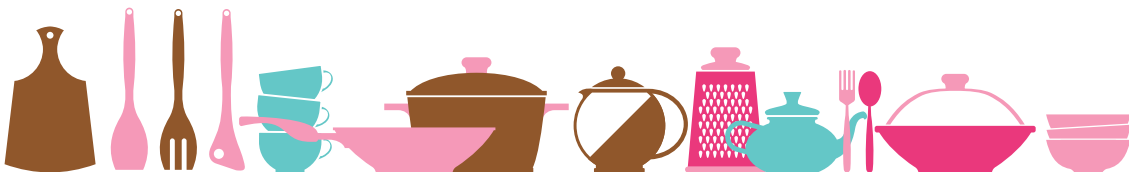
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- ♥ Sharron Cosby, speaker and author of *Praying for Your Addicted Loved One: 90 in 90*; [www.efamilyrecovery.com](http://www.efamilyrecovery.com)
- ♥ Elizabeth Hoagland, creator of one of my favorite blogs, *Worship with Words*, which can be found at her website [www.ElizabethHoagland.com](http://www.ElizabethHoagland.com)
- ♥ Julie Morris, RN, author of *Guided by Him to a Thinner, Not So Stressed-Out You!*; [www.GuidedbyHim.com](http://www.GuidedbyHim.com)

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Lovin' spoonfuls to my long-suffering, uncomplaining husband, Chuck, who has consumed my culinary flops and victories with equal gusto for the past thirty-seven years.





## \* Hey, BFF

*(Blessed Friend Forever),*

I'd love to connect with you via Facebook, Twitter, my website, [www.DeboraCoty.com](http://www.DeboraCoty.com), or my personal blog, *Living Life in the Crazy Lane*, [www.DeboraCoty.blogspot.com](http://www.DeboraCoty.blogspot.com).

*Got any good recipes we can swap?*





# Contents

|                                          |    |
|------------------------------------------|----|
| Introduction . . . . .                   | 13 |
| Basics for Stress-Free Cooking . . . . . | 14 |

## **Section 1: Time-Wise . . . . . 17**

|                                                                       |           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>DUMP DISHES: One-Stop Schlopping (Dinner in One Pan) . . . . .</b> | <b>19</b> |
| The Easiest Way to Cook a Chicken . . . . .                           | 20        |
| “Nobody Makes It Better” Pizza . . . . .                              | 21        |
| Quick as a Wink Stir-Fry . . . . .                                    | 22        |
| Beef ‘n’ Bean Bonanza. . . . .                                        | 24        |
| Everybody’s Fave Baked Spaghetti. . . . .                             | 25        |
| Impossible Meat Pie. . . . .                                          | 26        |
| Orzo-Veggie Chick-er-ole. . . . .                                     | 27        |
| Chuckle Break: Gender-Neutral Sandwiches, Anyone? . . . . .           | 28        |

|                                              |           |
|----------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>QUICK FIX: Workday Salvation. . . . .</b> | <b>29</b> |
| Starke Raving Chicken. . . . .               | 30        |
| Incredibly Easy Quiche . . . . .             | 31        |
| Mexican Salad. . . . .                       | 32        |
| Kicky Quickie Pasta Salad. . . . .           | 33        |
| Crispy Cheddar Chicken . . . . .             | 34        |
| Fabulous 15-Minute Fettuccine . . . . .      | 35        |

|                                                             |           |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>SLOW COOKER: Deb’s Delicious Teriyaki Pork . . . . .</b> | <b>36</b> |
| Lip-Smacking Barbecue . . . . .                             | 37        |
| Honey Mustard Chicken & Veggies . . . . .                   | 38        |
| Creamy Potatoes Au Gratin . . . . .                         | 39        |
| French Dip. . . . .                                         | 40        |
| Chuckle Break: Gettin’ Chili in Here. . . . .               | 41        |
| Humdinger Chili . . . . .                                   | 43        |
| Cricket’s Breakfast Casserole . . . . .                     | 44        |
| Parmesan Chicken and Pasta . . . . .                        | 45        |
| Pizza in a Pot. . . . .                                     | 46        |
| Taco Soup . . . . .                                         | 47        |

|                                                         |           |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>GOOD TO GO: Incredibly Easy Cheesecake . . . . .</b> | <b>48</b> |
| Magical Microwave Dessert . . . . .                     | 49        |
| Chocolate Blobs . . . . .                               | 50        |

|                                                                |    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Chuckle Break: Chocolate Repairs Relationship Cracks . . . . . | 51 |
| Cheese Crispies. . . . .                                       | 52 |
| Luscious Lime Pie. . . . .                                     | 53 |
| Cookies & Cream Heaven . . . . .                               | 54 |
| White Trash . . . . .                                          | 55 |

## **Section 2: Soul-Fed . . . . . 57**

|                                                                |           |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Chuckle Break: Satisfaction Guaranteed . . . . .               | 58        |
| <b>SOUTHERN BELLE FARE: Grandma’s Copper Pennies . . . . .</b> | <b>60</b> |
| Hot Chicken Salad . . . . .                                    | 61        |
| Mighty Pleasin’ Potpie. . . . .                                | 62        |
| Mimi’s Blue Ribbon Chicken Gumbo. . . . .                      | 63        |
| Scrumptious Shrimp & Grits . . . . .                           | 64        |
| Deb’s Famous Chicken Salad . . . . .                           | 65        |

|                                        |           |
|----------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>BREADS: Chew Bread. . . . .</b>     | <b>66</b> |
| Banana-Berry Loaf. . . . .             | 67        |
| Parmesan Nuggets. . . . .              | 68        |
| Monkey Bread . . . . .                 | 69        |
| Shrimp Pizza Bites . . . . .           | 70        |
| Harvest Bread . . . . .                | 71        |
| Chuckle Break: Lumps and All . . . . . | 72        |

|                                            |           |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>MUNCHIES: Strawberry Pizza. . . . .</b> | <b>74</b> |
| Puppy Chow . . . . .                       | 75        |
| Chocolate Brickle . . . . .                | 76        |
| To Die For Toffee . . . . .                | 77        |
| Guess Again Cookie Bars . . . . .          | 78        |
| Sweethearts . . . . .                      | 79        |
| Ooey Goey Brownies. . . . .                | 80        |
| Chuckle Break: No Substitutes. . . . .     | 81        |

|                                                      |           |
|------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>SWEET TOOTH: Triple Chocolate Threat. . . . .</b> | <b>83</b> |
| Pineapple Comfort Food. . . . .                      | 84        |
| Peaches & Cream Pie. . . . .                         | 85        |
| Cheese Blintz . . . . .                              | 86        |
| Banana Pudding . . . . .                             | 87        |
| Apple Fries . . . . .                                | 88        |
| Mudbar Ecstasy . . . . .                             | 89        |
| Blueberry Delight. . . . .                           | 90        |

## Section 3: Heart-Healthy . . . . . 91

|                                                          |    |
|----------------------------------------------------------|----|
| <b>LOW FAT: Greek-Style Orzo Chicken Salad</b> . . . . . | 92 |
| Delicious Fish Fillets . . . . .                         | 93 |
| Best Bean Soup Ever . . . . .                            | 94 |
| Chuckle Break: Martha's Meatloaf . . . . .               | 95 |
| Cures Anything Chicken-Veggie Soup . . . . .             | 96 |
| Sweet & Sour Vegetable Salad . . . . .                   | 97 |
| Veggie and Rice Sauté . . . . .                          | 98 |

|                                                         |     |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| <b>FIBER RICH: No Yeast Whole Wheat Bread</b> . . . . . | 99  |
| Wild & Crazy Chicken & Rice . . . . .                   | 100 |
| Keep You Full Breakfast Bowl . . . . .                  | 101 |
| Great Munchin' Granola . . . . .                        | 102 |
| Hearty 4-Bean Salad . . . . .                           | 103 |
| Eggplant Supreme . . . . .                              | 104 |

|                                                              |     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| <b>VEGETARIAN: California Cuisine</b> . . . . .              | 105 |
| Sweet Potato Home Fries . . . . .                            | 106 |
| Pasta Salad Deluxe . . . . .                                 | 107 |
| Veggie Latkes . . . . .                                      | 108 |
| Martha's Yummy Potato-Garden Salad . . . . .                 | 109 |
| Chuckle Break: Martha Bolton's Potato Salad Fiasco . . . . . | 110 |
| Carrot-Squash Sensation . . . . .                            | 111 |

|                                                             |     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| <b>SHADES OF GREEN: Spinach-Broccoli Surprise</b> . . . . . | 112 |
| Green Celebration . . . . .                                 | 113 |
| Fresh Brocco-flower Salad . . . . .                         | 114 |
| Fresh Green Bean Parmesan . . . . .                         | 115 |
| Summer Veggie Salad . . . . .                               | 116 |
| Zippity-do-da Coleslaw . . . . .                            | 117 |

## Section 4: Company-Happy . . . . . 119

|                                                      |     |
|------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| <b>HORS D'OEUVRES: Cha-Ching Chili Dip</b> . . . . . | 120 |
| Oyster Cracker Eaties . . . . .                      | 121 |
| Dilly Dip with Veggies . . . . .                     | 122 |
| Charleston Cheese Dip . . . . .                      | 123 |
| Crabmeat Rapture . . . . .                           | 124 |
| Buffalo Chicken Cheese Dip . . . . .                 | 125 |
| Chuckle Break: Turkey Memorial . . . . .             | 126 |

|                                                                     |            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| <b>SOUPS, SALADS &amp; SIDES: Cheese Broccoli Chowder</b> . . . . . | <b>128</b> |
| Pumpkin Soup . . . . .                                              | 129        |
| Gorgeous Grape Salad . . . . .                                      | 130        |
| Baked Corn Soufflé . . . . .                                        | 131        |
| Sweet Potato Dumplings . . . . .                                    | 132        |
| Squash Redemption . . . . .                                         | 133        |
| Sweet Onion Enchantment . . . . .                                   | 134        |
| Chuckle Break: Mystery Guest . . . . .                              | 135        |

|                                                                |            |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| <b>ENTRÉES: Tantalizing Tamale Pie</b> . . . . .               | <b>136</b> |
| Classy Ham Roll-Ups . . . . .                                  | 137        |
| Turkey-Frito Casserole . . . . .                               | 138        |
| Homemade Chicken Nuggets . . . . .                             | 139        |
| Skillet Pork Italiano . . . . .                                | 140        |
| Aunt Suzi's Breakfast Comfort . . . . .                        | 141        |
| Breakfast Quesadillas . . . . .                                | 142        |
| Chuckle Break: Like a Little Syrup with Your Turkey? . . . . . | 143        |

|                                                    |            |
|----------------------------------------------------|------------|
| <b>DESSERTS: Banana Split Pie</b> . . . . .        | <b>144</b> |
| Éclair Cake . . . . .                              | 145        |
| French Chocolate Cake . . . . .                    | 146        |
| Pit Stop Pie . . . . .                             | 147        |
| Chuckle Break: I Won't Tell If You Won't . . . . . | 148        |
| Just Shoot Me Snickers Cake . . . . .              | 150        |
| Scrumptious Strawberry Cake . . . . .              | 151        |
| Scrumptious Strawberry Frosting . . . . .          | 152        |
| Black Forest Pie . . . . .                         | 153        |

## **Menu Suggestions and Grocery Lists . . . . . 155**

|                       |     |
|-----------------------|-----|
| Selection A . . . . . | 157 |
| Selection B . . . . . | 160 |
| Selection C . . . . . | 164 |
| Selection D . . . . . | 168 |
| Selection E . . . . . | 172 |
| Selection F . . . . . | 176 |
| Selection G . . . . . | 180 |
| Selection H . . . . . | 184 |

|                        |     |
|------------------------|-----|
| Recipe Index . . . . . | 189 |
|------------------------|-----|

# Introduction

Welcome to my girl cave (some call it a kitchen). I'm so glad you're here!

Like you, I've spent many years juggling my crazy-busy schedule, trying to take care of my family—and myself—by providing nutritional, creative, fun food that's so delicious my kids will want to serve it to their children one day. Of course, I made my share of mistakes (a few of my misadventures are included for your chuckling pleasure), but that's how we learn, right? This book is the fruit of four decades of labor.

Whether you're into health food or comfort food or something in-between, there are exciting recipes for you here in the four sections: Time-Wise, Soul-Fed, Heart-Healthy, and Company-Happy.

About fifteen years ago, Spouse decided to go vegetarian, so I've collected some super meatless recipes as well as the yummy, down-home pork, beef, fish, and chicken dishes passed along by my Southern mama and granny. Not to mention the tried-and-true nutritious quickie fare I've developed myself over the years to fit my crammed schedule.

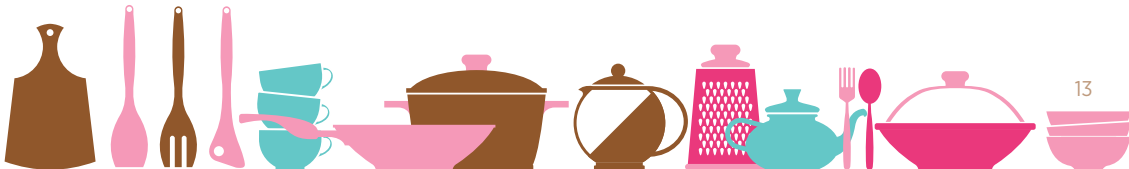
But a girl's gotta have fun, right? Just wait till you get to the choc-tastic recipes!

So dig in. Within these pages you'll find lots of terrific simple, time-saving recipes, menu suggestions, and even grocery lists to help decom-stress your life. Each recipe requires only 20 minutes or less prep time, so you no longer have to be glued to your kitchen. Hey, it's time to stop trading water in the stress-pool of life and actually *enjoy* cooking. May your culinary blessings outweigh your stressings!



*“This is my invariable advice to people:  
learn how to cook—try new recipes,  
learn from your mistakes,  
be fearless, and above all have fun!”*

JULIA CHILD



## Basics for Stress-Free Cooking

Okay, dear stressed-out friend, let's get started. For the recipes in this cookbook, I'm jotting a list of the staples I'm going to assume you already have on hand. That means these staples won't be included in the grocery lists for the suggested menus (see pages 155–187) unless required in an unusual quantity or by a specific brand name.

By the way, do check out the recommended menus in the back of the book—a marvelous little feature to help you plan great meals a week at a time while saving time, energy, and needless *stress*.

Are you ready for some tummy-growling, saliva-flinging culinary adventures? In the immortal words of a certain curly haired kitchen heroine, *Bon appétit!*

### Equipment\*

*(besides a working stove, of course)*

electric mixer  
food processor

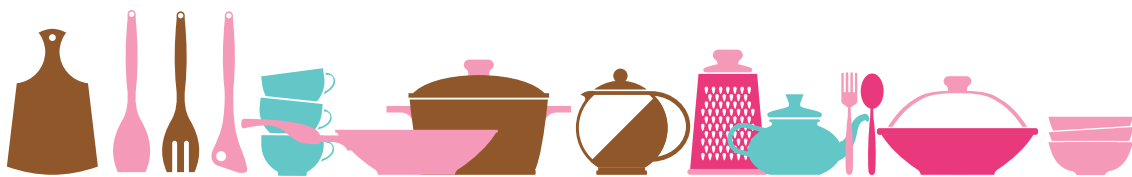
microwave  
slow cooker

*(\*Recommended but not absolutely necessary to create the culinary delights in this book.)*

## Terminology Used in This Book

Butter = butter or margarine unless specified “real butter”

Greased = coated with butter, oil, or cooking spray (in almost all recipes, I prefer spray)

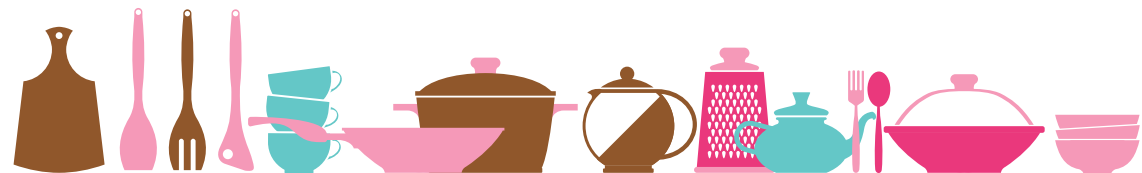


## Staples to Keep in Stock

|                          |                        |                          |
|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| allspice                 | nutmeg                 | chicken broth            |
| cooking spray (like Pam) | salt & pepper          | garlic (minced)          |
| light brown sugar        | baking powder          | paprika                  |
| powdered sugar           | eggs                   | teriyaki sauce           |
| apple cider vinegar      | onions                 | chili powder             |
| cornstarch               | seasoned salt          | garlic powder            |
| mayonnaise               | baking soda            | Parmesan cheese (grated) |
| rice (brown or white)    | extra virgin olive oil | vanilla                  |
| bacon bits               | onion flakes           | cinnamon (ground)        |
| cumin                    | soy sauce              | Italian seasoning        |
| milk                     | canola oil             | parsley flakes           |
| Ritz crackers            | flour                  | Worcestershire sauce     |
| baking cocoa             | oregano                |                          |
| dill weed                | sugar                  |                          |

These additional staples can be stored in your freezer so they're always available:

|                           |                                         |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| shredded cheddar cheese   | butter (best to keep one box of "real"  |
| whipped topping (tubs)    | salted butter sticks and one of cheaper |
| shelled pecans or walnuts | margarine)                              |









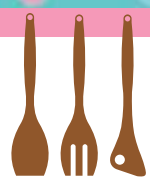
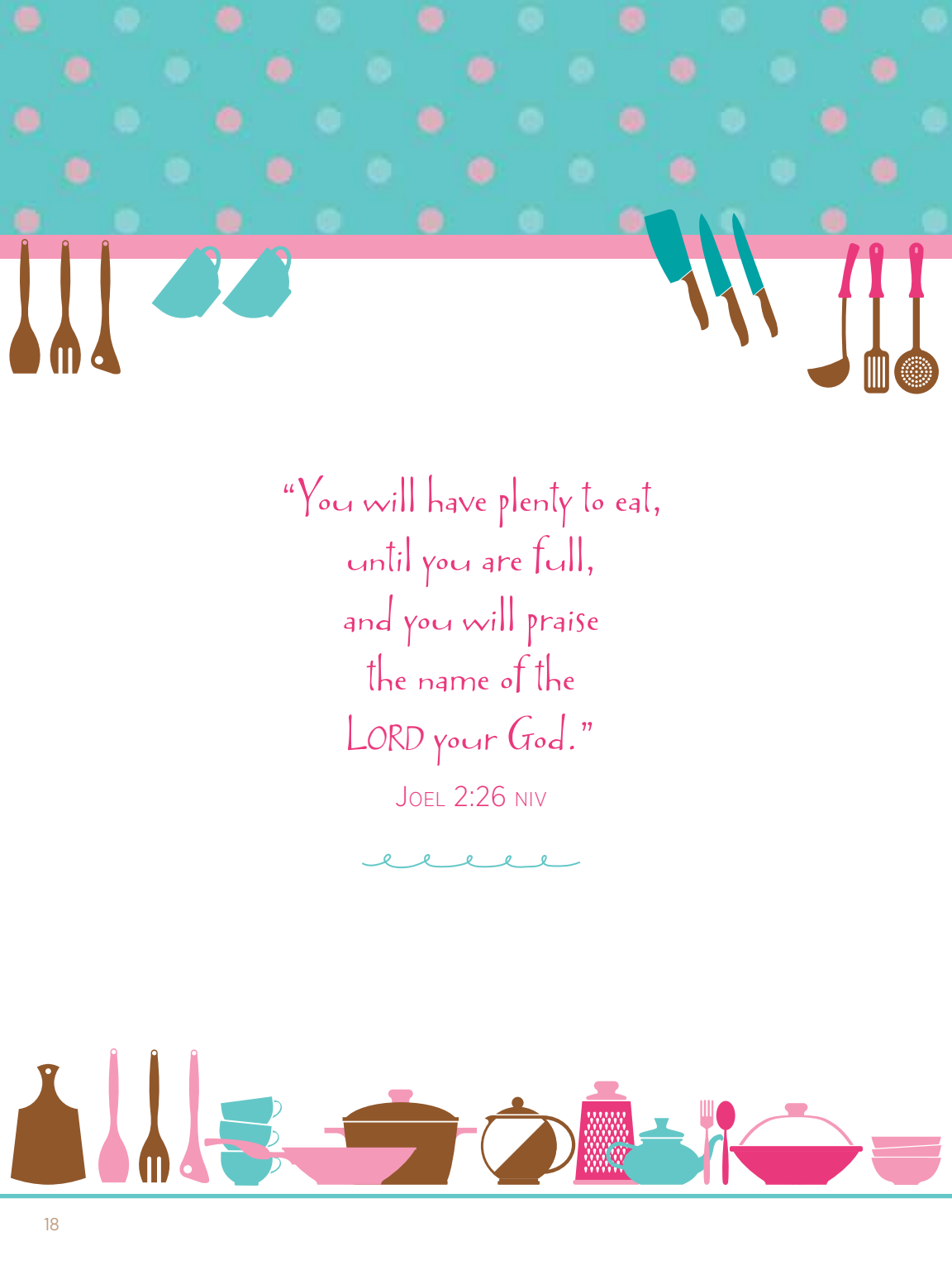
Section 1

**Time-Wise**



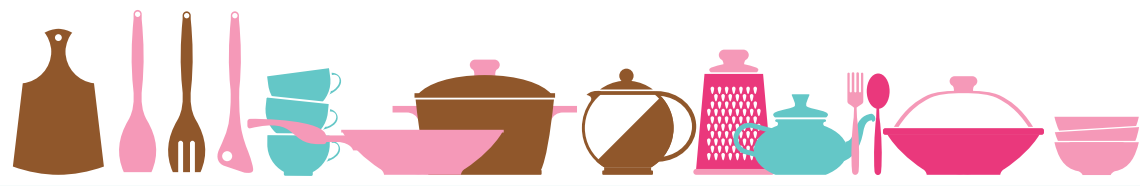
*“Hunger is the best sauce in the world.”*

CERVANTES



“You will have plenty to eat,  
until you are full,  
and you will praise  
the name of the  
LORD your God.”

JOEL 2:26 NIV



## Dump Dishes

### *One-Stop Schlopping (Dinner in One Pan)*

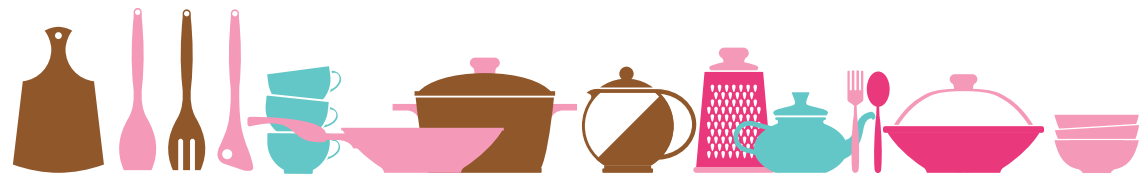


I was introduced to the concept of one-pan cooking when my first baby arrived. I visited a friend who, while we were chatting at her kitchen table and watching our babies crawl around on the floor, stood and walked over to her counter, dumped a few ingredients into a glass baking dish, popped it in the microwave, and within minutes placed before me a moist, luscious dessert with no muss, no fuss, and best of all, next to no cleanup.

Seemed like a dandy idea to me; not only would it save time, water, soap, and energy cleaning all those extra pots and mixing bowls, it would also free me up for more peek-a-boo time with my little one. How could this be a bad thing? (By the way, that very recipe—Magical Microwave Dessert—is included under “Good to Go” in the Time-Wise section).

So I became a dump cook. No, I didn’t say *dumb* cook, although some may beg to differ. I began experimenting with dumping an entire meal together in one dish—meat, vegetables, starch, occasionally fruit, and oftentimes bread. Some of my efforts worked out famously and some. . .er, didn’t. You might even call them infamous.

Like the night I came up with spinach-mango pizza. Sure seemed promising at the time. But I’m here to tell you that there are some flavors that flat refuse to join hands and tango. Nobody would eat the stuff. The kids retched. The dog took one sniff



and ran beneath the couch. I had to bury it in the backyard azalea bed. A week later I noticed my poor azaleas had withered like I'd watered them with lemon juice.

Okay, so you live and learn.

The one-pan idea is still a good one for promoting the three culinary C's: combine, consolidate, and convenience. I hope you'll be motivated to experiment with your favorite food combinations and be sure to share them with me. (Unless, of course, your flower bed looks like it belongs to the Addams Family!)

\*Disclaimer: Some of the following recipes may actually take *two* pans (one for prep and one for cooking), but I promise I'll keep the cleanup as minimal as possible.

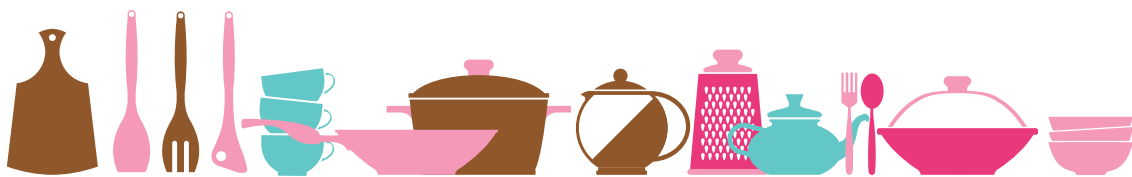


## The Easiest Way to Cook a Chicken

Since many of the recipes in this cookbook call for cooked chicken, I want to share this enormously helpful tip with you. The most stress-free way I've found to cook a chicken is to plop the whole bird (rinsed well and giblets removed) in your slow cooker with 1 cup water and a few dashes each of salt and pepper. So simple. Cook on low overnight while you're asleep and the meat not only falls off the bone the next morning, but you also have a nice broth to use for cooking pasta or rice. Freeze the meat in quart-size ziplock bags (about 2 cups each bag), and simply pull one out and defrost as needed. No muss, no fuss.

*“Life expectancy would grow by leaps and bounds if green vegetables smelled as good as bacon.”*

DOUG LARSON



*\*This recipe makes 2 large pizzas; great for home movie night with ice cream sundaes. I've left the ingredients open so you can customize with your family's favorite toppings.*

## "Nobody Makes It Better" Pizza



**PREP TIME:** 10 minutes

**COOKING TIME:** 10 minutes in preheated 400° oven

**SERVES:** 4 to 6

1 (10½ ounce) can condensed tomato soup (I like Campbell's best)

1 premade pizza crust (my go-to brand is Mama Mary's Thin & Crispy pizza crusts, which come in a handy 2-pack)

8 ounces shredded cheddar cheese

8 ounces shredded mozzarella cheese

Grated Parmesan cheese

### CHOOSE YOUR FAVE TOPPINGS:

Fresh or canned mushrooms (8 ounces, give or take to your preference)

9 ounces honey-roasted turkey breast or ham (lunch meat), chopped to postage stamp size

1 (20 ounce) can pineapple tidbits in pineapple juice

1 pound ground beef or turkey, browned and drained

4 ounces pepperoni (I use turkey pepperoni with 70 percent less fat than regular pepperoni)

Spread half of tomato soup (I use soup instead of tomato sauce for a milder, sweeter taste) on each crust; top with 2 to 3 of your chosen toppings. Top that with cheddar (you might consider reduced fat sharp cheddar if you're counting calories, although there's enough cheese on this thing to clog the English Channel) and mozzarella divided between the two pizzas. A generous sprinkling of Parmesan (use reduced fat if you want to save a few more calories to use on your sundae) on top is a sure winner. Bake for 10 minutes or until cheese melts. When you get a whiff of this happiness on a plate, you'll slobber all over yourself like one of Pavlov's dogs.



# Quick as a Wink Stir-Fry



**PREP TIME:** 10 minutes

**COOKING TIME:** 15 minutes on stove top

**SERVES:** 4 to 6

4 tablespoons soy sauce (about 10 shakes of the bottle)

2 tablespoons cornstarch

½ teaspoon sugar

½ teaspoon garlic powder

1 to 2 pounds raw boneless, skinless chicken breasts cut into bite-size chunks (I buy whole breasts or breast strips when they're on sale and freeze them)

4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, divided

6 to 8 ounces sliced fresh mushrooms (buy them already sliced)

1 medium onion, sliced into ¼-inch strips

*\* This tasty and healthy dish was my go-to dinner during the always-pinched-for-time years our kids were growing up. They called it Moo Goo in My Pan. I tweaked the original recipe many times to end up with this one, which was frequently requested (and still is whenever my kids come to visit). It's also an excellent source of vitamins A and C.*

1 red bell pepper, sliced into strips (optional)

1 (12 ounce) bag frozen stir-fry veggies (usually includes broccoli florets, snow peas, julienned carrots, bean sprouts, or various other ready-to-cook veggies)

Teriyaki sauce (optional)


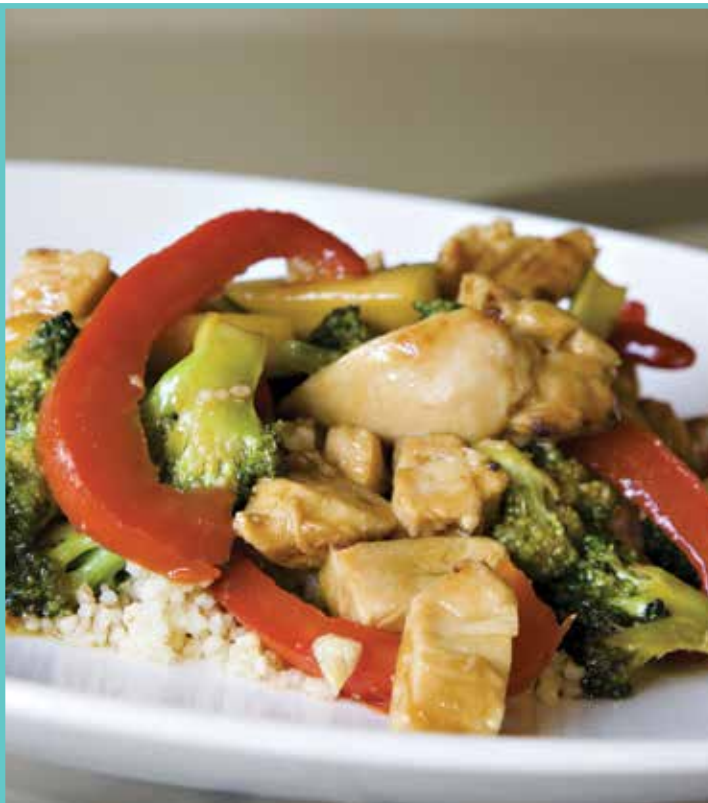
Handful cashews (optional)

2 cups cooked white rice (I use Minute rice; start cooking it first thing per package directions and it'll be finished and ready to devour when the meat and veggies are done)

In small mixing bowl, stir soy sauce, cornstarch, sugar, and garlic powder until slightly thickened (may need to add a little more cornstarch if it's really runny); then add chicken and set aside to marinate while you cook the veggies. If you have more meat than sauce, just add extra soy sauce until all meat is covered (don't worry—it's not an exact science; it'll turn out great).

In 12-inch skillet (or wok if you have one), heat 2 tablespoons olive oil over medium-high heat until it sizzles when you drop in a mushroom slice. Add veggies, stirring quickly and frequently until tender, not mushy (about 5 minutes). Pour veggies into large mixing bowl and set aside (okay, I'll admit there's more than one bowl in this recipe, but it can't be helped unless you want to marinate the chicken in the dog's dish and pour the hot veggies in your husband's lap).

In same skillet, add remaining 2 tablespoons olive oil, then marinated meat. Stir constantly (chicken will try to stick to pan) until meat turns whitish in color (cut a piece in half to make sure it's not raw inside). Return veggie mixture to skillet and cook with meat for 2 to 3 minutes. I like to add a few dollops of teriyaki sauce at this point for a little more Asian zing (but this is optional). Stir in cashews last, and serve over bed of rice.



*“After all the trouble you go to, you get about as much actual ‘food’ out of eating an artichoke as you would from licking 30 or 40 postage stamps.”*  
MISS PIGGY



# Beef 'n' Bean Bonanza

*\*Howdy, pardner! This one's for the hungry wranglers in your corral.*



**PREP TIME:** 10 minutes  
**COOKING TIME:** 10 minutes in microwave  
**SERVES:** 4 to 6

1 pound lean ground beef

1 medium onion, chopped

2 (15 ounce) cans pork and beans (nothing fancy, just regular ole pork and beans); don't drain

8 ounces sliced fresh mushrooms

1 (10½ ounce) can condensed tomato soup

Brown beef and onion in large skillet; drain. Add beans, mushrooms, and soup; mix well. Pour into greased microwavable baking dish and cook covered at medium power level for 10 minutes. Best if consumed wearing cowboy boots and hat.



*"Only a fool argues  
with a skunk,  
a mule, or a cook."*  
OLD COWBOY SAYING





# Everybody's Fave Baked Spaghetti



**PREP TIME:** 15 minutes

**COOKING TIME:** 30 minutes in preheated 350° oven

**SERVES:** 6 to 8

1 (16 ounce) box spaghetti noodles (I like angel hair)

1 pound ground beef or turkey (I use turkey)

1 small onion, chopped

2 (10½ ounce) cans condensed tomato soup

1 (10½ ounce) can cream of mushroom soup

1 (4 ounce) can mushrooms (or fresh mushrooms are even better)

4 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce

3 cups shredded cheddar cheese

½ soup can water

½ cup grated Parmesan cheese

Boil noodles according to package directions. While they're cooking, brown meat and onion in large skillet; drain. Add soups, mushrooms, and Worcestershire sauce, mixing well. Sprinkle in cheddar cheese gradually, reserving 1 cup. Stir in water and simmer for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add cooked noodles (rinsed and drained) to meat mixture and pour into greased 9x13-inch baking pan. Cover with foil and bake for 20 minutes. Remove foil and sprinkle with remaining cup of cheese and Parmesan and return to oven for 10 more minutes. For potlucks, double the recipe.



*"Everything you see I owe to spaghetti."*

SOPHIA LOREN

