

FISHERMEN'S VOICE

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News & Comment for and by the Fishermen of Maine

FREE

Crock Pots

This article is for singles, people who work all day and hate to cook at night—and for those who travel on boats. Probably not a guy thing.

I have great admiration for the gentleman (must have been a man scientist) who thought up the idea of cooking with light bulb power. Remember the play stove your sister had? Baked cookies and cakes with a light bulb in the oven part. Remember how hard it was for her to wait till whatever creation was done? Ever see her try it more than twice? Sad, think of the electric bill savings for dear old Mom and Dad. Why if all little sisters did the baking in those light bulb ovens we could disconnect the Middle East and I wouldn't feel the guilt gassing the suburban. Think crockpot—actually I'd rather address them as slow cookers. Crockpot seems to have a different connotation.

Used twice. Like a lot of slow cooker trials. Another retired gimmick for an already over-equipped kitchen. Not our house. In this boy's opinion if for no other reason I savor the delicious smells when I walk through the door from a long hard day of retirement. Too, I know that the bit left to do will be a simple side dish, a salad or just bread on the table. Cleanup for this elegant meal? One pot, silverware, glasses and paper plates. Whoa! Evenings free to paint, write, read, go for a walk or catch a DVD.

Years ago, good friends were staying with us for a few days in the summer. AJ and I were both working. Six o'clock we trudged in. Good smells greeting. Dinner was ready. Quick swim and cocktails. Meal was layed out on the porch. Mary was drinking "Boone's Farm" back then and me "Gallo Paisano". AJ and Lonnie bought theirs in liter bottles with dates on the labels. I asked Lonnie what the heck his recipe was and how he'd prepared the pot roast, not having seen a pot.

"Slow Cooker," he smiled, "one package of Knorr onion soup mix, water, and brown the roast first. Throw in an onion just for fun."

Fun meal and no one had to work at it.

One place we've really appreciated a slow cooker is on board 'Helen J', our old 40' cruiser. On hot days it's a real inconvenience to light up the gas stove, so we'll put something together in the morning and let the pot simmer all day, enjoying the aroma against the diesel. As I was writing this last paragraph we were approaching St. Simon's Island, Georgia headed north. As the fickle finger of fate would have it, AJ had assembled a fine split pea soup in the cooker an hour earlier. Sound was quite choppy with a 15-knot breeze and full moon tide

running. Big “Sea Ray” cruiser came up close on our port (left) side going at a good clip. Being a thoughtful fellow he decided to slow down as he got abreast of our port bow, creating a huge wake (better if he’d stayed on plane). No chance to turn our bow head to the waves. We rolled big time. Books flew. Water bottle tumbled down the console. Chart books slammed to the floor and the tethered cooker tried a launch across the salon. Brought up short by the power cord it tipped but the soup kept its predetermined course. Layed a swath across AJ’s new rug, one with lighthouses from Marshalls, and fetched up on the starboard settee. “Mess” was too simple an understatement. We’re still finding split peas, bits of carrots and onions in hatch covers, doors and under the fridge. Dinner was from a can and cooked on the stove that night. Cooker is now tied in place.

Try this for its simplicity.

Cowboy Pot Roast

Serves 8

3 lbs. boneless beef chuck eye roast (2” thick)
1 can 15 oz. chili beans

1 can 14-1/2 oz. stewed tomatoes

Heat a large non-skid skillet over medium heat. Add beef and cook ten minutes turning once until brown. Place beef in slow cooker and pour beans and tomatoes over beef. Cover and cook on low 9-11 hours or until beef is tender. Serve beef with juices and beans from cooker. Add chilies if desired.

Fair winds and good roads.

Lee S. Wilbur