

# SIMPLIFY THE DAILY DINNER DILEMMA #2

## 5 FREEZER MEAL PLANS WITH RECIPES AND GROCERY LIST

1. Black Bean Pork Tacos - CPFM
2. Merlot Mushroom Chicken - CPFM
3. BBQ Pulled Pork Stuffed Sweet Potatoes - ULOM
4. Meatball Veggie Soup - CPFM
5. Grilled Hamburgers – FM
6. What To Do With The Leftover Ingredients...

# GROCERY LIST FOR ALL 5 MEALS

<b>PRODUCE</b>		Price-WM
Tomatoes	1	0.46
Avocados	1	0.44
Carrots	6 – 1 small bunch	0.78
Sweet potatoes	4-5 large	2.85
Sweet onions	4 / 3 lbs	2.84
Green onions -TO	1 bunch	1.18
Zucchini	2 med/ 1 lb	1.98
Romaine lettuce	2 bunches	3.56
Cherry tomatoes (for salads)	1 pkg	1.98
Mushrooms, sliced	1 lb/16 oz	3.64
Limes	3	0.99
Fresh parsley (or cilantro) - TO	1 bunch	0.98
<b>FROZEN</b>		
Green beans	1 bag	0.98
Broccoli florets	1 bag	1.44
Small meatballs	1 lb	5.94
<b>DAIRY</b>		
Parmesan cheese	1 wedge or 1 bag pre-shredded	3.98
<b>MEATS</b>		
Pork shoulder roast, boneless	4 lbs (aka Boston butt)	7.38
Chicken thighs, boneless/skinless	3 lbs	8.98
Ground hamburger	2 lbs	9.64
<b>CANNED</b>		
Chicken Bouillon (or Broth)	5 cups	3.72
Crushed tomatoes	28 oz	1.12
Tomato paste	6 oz	0.46
Diced tomatoes	1-14 oz	0.58
<b>DRY GOODS</b>		
Dried black beans	1-32 oz	3.07
Crusty whole grain bread	1 loaf – S/O	1.00
Whole wheat pasta (or brown rice)	1 pkg	1.38
Whole wheat hamburger buns	1 pkg	1.74
		<b>Total: \$73.09</b>
<b>PANTRY – already have on hand</b>		
Ziploc Gallon Freezer Bags	Sugar	Ground cumin
Corn Tortillas	Dried basil	S/P
Minced garlic (jar)	BBQ sauce	Garlic salt
Chili powder	Dill (dried or fresh)	Apple cider vinegar
Ground cumin	Soy sauce	Merlot

# MEAL PREP DAY

## SUPPLIES

---

- Sharpie to label bags
- Gallon-sized plastic freezer bags, labeled (pork roast will be in 2 bags)
- Bread pans(s) – used for keeping bags stable while filling
- Saran wrap
- Several mixing bowls
- Measuring cups, spoons
- Cutting boards
- Knife

## PRIOR TO STARTING

---

- Refrigerate any dairy and meats until ready to use
- Place any frozen items in freezer until ready to use
- Label all gallon-size freezer bags with recipe names and date
- Get all supplies out and set up meat only and veggie only cutting stations with bowls

## PREP

---

1. Rinse all veggies and lay on paper towels to dry.
2. Prep veggies and place in their own bowl once prepared:
  - Mince up 8 cloves garlic (if using fresh)
  - Halve, trim and thinly slice 2 sweet onions
  - Finely dice up 2 sweet onions
  - 6 carrots, peeled and sliced into coins
  - 1 large zucchini, ends cut off, halved and sliced
3. Line the freezer bag labeled for hamburgers with a sheet of parchment paper, lay flat.
4. Trim pork shoulder roast of any excess fat.
5. Use individual Recipes for directions on how to fill gallon freezer bags.
6. Remove as much air from the gallon-sized freezer bags as possible, seal, and lay flat in your freezer.
7. Place fresh crusty bakery bread (for soup meal) in freezer as it tends to mold after only a few days.
8. Place any toppings and sides in refrigerator or freezer until serving.

# RECIPES

## Tips, Tricks and Suggestions:

- Read through all of this first before shopping.
- I doubled each recipe for 10 dinners. You will never regret having an extra set of meals in the freezer and the prep work is all the same. You only have to make a mess once! Just don't forget to pick up twice as much as you need on the grocery list.
- Go through your pantry and cross off items you already have on hand from the grocery list and add any that you don't or make any SO's for the ingredients to use what you have! (Ex: recipe calls for frozen green beans but you have frozen corn – go with what you have; recipe calls for veggies in a soup and you also have spinach and carrots you need to use up – USE THEM!).
- If I am making more than one meal with the same meat (similar seasonings) I will cook it all for one meal and then halve it and save for the next recipe in the refrigerator and it makes the next mealtime that much faster (and less dishes to clean!).
- I am feeding a family of 5 (two adults and three picky kids – 14, 12, & 10) and occasionally my parents (they live with us 6 months out of the year). These recipes are enough to feed 6-7 of us, or a family of 5 with leftovers, so feel free to adjust accordingly to what your family normally eats.
- These are good in the freezer for 3 months, but I doubt they'll last that long.

## Abbreviations:

tsp	Teaspoon
Tbsp	Tablespoon
S/P	Salt and pepper
EVOO	Extra virgin olive oil
SO	Swap Out (alternative ingredients you might already have on hand or due to preferences)
T/O	Topping, Optional (appears on grocery list)
S/O	Side, Optional (appears on grocery list)
LO	Leftovers
CPFM	Crockpot Freezer Meal
ULOM	Using Leftovers Meal
FM	Freezer Meal

# Black Bean Pork Tacos

CPFM – Crockpot Freezer Meal

## INGREDIENTS

---

- 1-16 oz pkg dried black beans
- 1-4 lb boneless pork shoulder roast, trimmed of any excess fat
- 1-14 oz cans diced tomatoes (try with jalapeños if you dare!)
- 2 Tbsp minced garlic (about 4 cloves, minced)
- 2 Tbsp chili powder
- 2 Tbsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp garlic salt
- S/P to taste
- 1 pkg corn tortillas
- ¼ cup fresh cilantro, chopped (SO parsley)
- Lime, wedges
- Topping: diced avocado and cilantro

## PREP

---

1. Place pork roast in freezer.
2. Reserve tomatoes, toppings and dried black beans in cupboard until cooking.

## COOKING

---

1. 24 hours before cooking, move the pork roast to your refrigerator to thaw.
2. The morning of cooking, pour the rinsed and picked through (according to package) dried black beans into crockpot. Place roast on beans and add minced garlic, chili powder, ground cumin, S/P.
3. Fill crockpot with enough water to cover the roast a little over halfway.
4. Cover and cook on low for 10 hours or until beans are tender.
5. Remove roast to a tray (or plate) and shred, discarding excess fat.
6. Place ½ of the shredded roast in a separate container on the counter to cool. Once cool place in the refrigerator to be used in the BBQ Pulled Pork Stuffed Sweet Potatoes recipe.
7. Return the other half of shredded pork to crockpot and stir in can of diced tomatoes and chopped cilantro.
8. Serve pork mixture in corn tortillas with a lime wedge and diced avocados.

# Merlot Mushroom Chicken

CPFM – Crockpot Freezer Meal

## INGREDIENTS

---

- 2 lbs boneless skinless chicken thighs (2/3 of the 3lb bag)
- 1 lb sliced fresh mushrooms
- 1 large sweet onion
- 2 Tbsp minced garlic (approximately 2 cloves fresh minced garlic)
- 1 cup merlot
- ½ cup chicken broth (or water seasoned with chicken bouillon)
- 1 – 6 oz can tomato paste
- 2 tsp sugar
- 1 tsp dried basil
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- S/P to taste
- ½ cup fresh grated Parmesan cheese
- Frozen broccoli florets – not needed until day of cooking
- Brown rice (or whole wheat pasta) – not needed until day of cooking

## PREP

---

1. To the labeled baggie layer ingredients from the recipe above: mushrooms, sliced onions, chicken, minced garlic, dried basil, S/P.
2. Remove as much air from the gallon-sized freezer bag as possible, smoosh around to mix, seal, and lay flat in your freezer.
3. Keep frozen broccoli in freezer until cooking.

## COOK

---

1. Night before cooking move baggie from freezer to refrigerator.
2. Morning of cooking combine in small bowl tomato paste, merlot, chicken broth, and sugar until blended. Empty baggie into crockpot and pour mixture over chicken.
3. Cover and cook on low for 6 hours.
4. Before serving cook whole-wheat pasta or brown rice.
5. Serve with steamed broccoli florets, pasta or rice and sprinkle with grated Parmesan cheese.

# BBQ Pulled Pork Stuffed Sweet Potatoes

ULOM - Using Leftovers Meal

## INGREDIENTS

---

- 2 lb cooked, shredded pork shoulder roast (1/2 of reserved shredded pork from Black Beans Pork Tacos recipe)
- 3-4 sweet potatoes (each serving is ½ sweet potato)
- 2 sweet onions, halved and thinly sliced
- ¼ cup apple cider vinegar
- 1 cup BBQ sauce
- Green onions, sliced (TO)
- Romaine lettuce salad – optional side

## PREP

---

1. To a small sandwich baggie place the sliced onions and keep in refrigerator until using.
2. Keep sweet potatoes in pantry until ready to bake.

## COOK

---

1. Preheat oven to 400 F.
2. Pierce sweet potatoes with a fork several times and place on baking sheet, drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with S/P.
3. Bake for 45 minutes or until tender.
4. While potatoes are baking sauté sliced onions in saucepan with EVOO until translucent.
5. Add BBQ sauce and apple cider vinegar to saucepan and let simmer for 30 minutes.
6. Add shredded pork to sauce to warm through.
7. Remove sweet potatoes from oven and using an oven mitt hold and slice down the middle, squeezing the ends together to open at seam.
8. Fill each sweet potato with the pulled pork mixture and sprinkle with chopped parsley, sliced green onions and drizzle with extra sauce. Serve with side salad.

# Meatball Veggie Soup

CPFM – Crockpot Freezer Meal

## INGREDIENTS

---

- 1 lb small meatballs, ½ of a 32 oz bag (frozen or homemade)
- Crushed tomatoes, 24 oz can
- 4 cups chicken broth
- 3 carrots, peeled and sliced into coins
- 1 bag frozen (or 3 cups fresh, trimmed) green beans
- 1 large zucchini, ends cut off, halved and sliced
- 1 sweet onion, diced
- 1 Tbsp minced garlic
- 2 tsp garlic salt
- 2 tsp oregano
- S/P to taste
- 1 ½ tsp dried (or fresh chopped) dill
- Parmesan cheese, grated
- Crusty whole grain bread, optional

## PREP

---

1. To labeled baggies layer ingredients from the recipe above: carrots, green beans, zucchini, onion, seasonings and meatballs.
2. Remove as much air from the gallon-sized freezer bags as possible, seal, and lay flat in your freezer.
3. Place crusty bread in freezer until night before meal.

## COOK

---

1. The night before cooking, move freezer bag and crusty bread to your refrigerator to thaw.
2. The day of cooking pour contents of freezer bag into your crockpot, mix in crushed tomatoes and chicken broth.
3. Cover and cook on low for 8 hours.
4. Sprinkle soup with grated Parmesan cheese and serve with crusty whole grain bread.

# Grilled Hamburgers

FM – Freezer Meal

## INGREDIENTS

---

- 1 1/2 lbs ground beef
- 1/2 sweet onion, finely diced
- 1 Tbsp garlic salt
- 1 tbsp soy sauce
- S/P to taste
- Topping: Sliced tomatoes and romaine leaves.
- Sides: served on hamburger buns with baked sweet potato fries

## PREP

---

1. Place ground hamburger in large bowl, add diced onion and seasonings and mix gently.
2. Form into patties and place in single layer on parchment paper in labeled baggie.
3. Makes 9 patties.
4. Remove as much air from the gallon-sized freezer bag as possible, seal, and lay flat in your freezer.

## COOKING

---

1. 24 hours before cooking, move a freezer bag to your refrigerator to thaw.
2. The day of cooking, preheat oven to 400 F.
3. Preheat grill.
4. While preheating, slice 1-2 sweet potatoes into "fries".
5. Place on baking sheet and drizzle with olive oil and S/P, toss to coat. Arrange in single layer and place in oven to cook for 40 minutes, turning halfway through.
6. Place hamburgers on grill at low, turning once, until cooked through.
7. Serve on whole-wheat buns and top with tomato slice and romaine leaf with sweet potato fries on the side.

# What To Do With The Leftover Ingredients

## LEFTOVERS

---

- Approximately 1 lb chicken thighs
- 2 carrots
- 2 zucchini
- 16 oz meatballs
- 16 oz black beans
- Green onions
- 1 avocado

If you have two crockpots make them at the same time and have a “snack” dinner – my kids love doing this – it’s my secret to cleaning out the fridge!

For a “snack” dinner or appetizers: Black Bean Lime Dip and Sweet and Sour Meatballs

## CHICKEN BLACK BEAN LIME DIP

---

Black beans are easily turned into a yummy last minute dip with the addition of shredded chicken, garlic, grated carrots, grated zucchini, green onion, cilantro, and a generous splash of lime juice. Serve with blue tortilla chips or on Naan bread.

### Crockpot One:

16 oz black beans

Enough water to cover the black beans + 2 inches

1 lb chicken thighs

2 carrots shredded

2 zucchini, shredded

2 Tbsp minced garlic, S/P to taste

Toppings: chopped green onions, diced avocado, cilantro, cheese and lots of lime juice!

Add to crockpot in order listed and cook 8 hours on low, shred chicken.

## SWEET AND SOUR MEATBALLS

---

### Crockpot two:

Meatballs

To **make sweet and sour sauce:** in small Pyrex measuring cup, mix ½ cup brown sugar (and 1 can crushed pineapple with juice if you have), 1 Tbsp ketchup, 2/3 cup water, 1 Tbsp soy sauce and the salt. Cook 5 minutes. Stir in 1/3 cup rice vinegar. In separate small bowl: mix 1 Tbsp cornstarch and 1/3 cup cold water then add both to meatballs.

Cook on high for 4 hours or low for 6 hours.