

Lemon Thyme Chicken with Root Vegetables (crock pot version)

The notion that a real food diet has to be expensive is wrong. It is possible to enjoy real foods and keep your meals budget friendly. The recipes below for Lemon Thyme Chicken with Root Vegetables and Second Day Chicken Soup are very budget friendly and are perfect for busy families. The cost for these meals is under \$18 and they feed 4-6 people.



- Whole Chicken, 4-5 pounds
- 5 Russet Potatoes, peeled and chopped
- 1 Onion, chopped
- 5 Carrots, chopped
- 3 stalks of Celery, diced
- 2 Cloves of Garlic
- 1 lemon
- ½ teaspoon Salt
- ¼ teaspoon Pepper
- 1½ teaspoons Dried thyme

1. Place the chopped potato, onion, carrots, and celery in the bottom of the slow cooker. Mince one clove of garlic and sprinkle in over the vegetables.
2. Remove any giblets from the chicken and set them aside. Smash the remaining garlic clove and rub into all over the outside of the chicken. Place the clove inside the chicken when done.
3. Cut the lemon in half. Squeeze the half of the lemon over the top of the chicken. Place both halves inside the chicken.
4. Sprinkle the salt, pepper, and thyme all over the

chicken.

5. Place the chicken on top of the vegetables in the slow cooker and cover with lid.
6. Cook on high for 4-5 hours or on low for 7-8 hours.
7. Remove the chicken to a plate.
8. Remove vegetables and add additional salt and pepper if needed.

Budget Friendly Real Food Meal Tips

The FDA recommends filling half your plate with fruits and vegetables. To keep a meal budget friendly, add more vegetables and decrease the amount of animal protein (beef, chicken, fish, etc.), which is more expensive.

Buy produce in season. It is less expensive and tastes better too.

Whenever I prep or cut vegetables, I save the scraps (carrot tops, potato peelings, broccoli stems, etc.) and freeze them. When I make stock, I'll pull them out and reuse them. It's free and who doesn't like that!

Stock a healthy kitchen when products go on sale. Find our [healthy kitchen inventory list here.](#)

Second Day Chicken Soup

Homemade soup stock is free to make and it extremely easy. Whenever you roast a chicken, like we do in the Lemon Thyme Chicken, we will reuse the chicken carcass to make fresh stock. Adding herbs and vegetable scraps adds flavor and dimension to the broth that can be used in a number of other recipes.



- 12 cups of water
- Chicken bones and shredded chicken from previous meal
- Vegetable scraps, optional
- 1 Bay leaf
- 1 tablespoon dried parsley
- 3 potatoes, peeled and diced
- 5 carrots, chopped
- 4 stalks of celery, chopped
- ½ onion, chopped
- 2 cloves of garlic, finely minced
- 1 cup frozen peas
- 1 cup frozen corn kernels
- 1 cup diced tomatoes
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon ground pepper

Create a Homemade Broth Using Bones from a Whole Cooked Chicken

1. Remove any remaining cooked chicken from the chicken bones. Place the bones into a crockpot or a stock pot.
2. Add 12 cups of water to the pot, along with a bay leaf, 1 tablespoon of dried parsley, and any vegetable scraps (optional).
3. Cook this overnight in the crockpot or 1 hour in the stock pot.
4. Strain off the bones and vegetables. Place the broth in containers and store in the refrigerator.
5. Remove any additional chicken meat from the bones/broth. Refrigerate in a container for soup.

To Create Soup

1. Add chicken broth and enough water to equal 10 cups to a stock pot. Add all remaining ingredients, including shredded chicken, to stock pot. Bring to a boil. Reduce to a simmer and cook for 10-12 minutes, or until potatoes are fork tender.
2. Season with additional salt and pepper if needed.
3. You can serve now or slow simmer until ready to serve.

Some of the other quick and easy dinner ideas we like include:

- [Moroccan Chicken with Chickpeas and Tomatoes](#) (crock pot version)
- [Sweet Potato and Black Bean Chili](#)
- [Tacos al Pastor](#)
- [Flatbread Pizza](#)

Find more great recipes and tips on healthy eating at [Little Family Adventure](#).