Letter from the Editor

Dear Recipe4Living Member,

At Recipe4Living, we understand the importance of cooking on a budget. That's why we have compiled this book of recipes that cut the cost without sacrificing flavor and nutrition. No recipe has more than 10 ingredients, and most of the ingredients you'll find you already have in your house. We hope that this budget-friendly recipe cookbook will help with meal planning and your wallet!

We'd also like to remind you that our eCookbooks are a completely FREE exclusive service for our members. If you would like to share this amazing collection, please pass it along to friends and tell them to signup at Recipe4Living for even more!

If you think we're missing a recipe or you want to share your own, please visit the site and submit your recipes now!

Please enjoy this Budget-Friendly Recipe eCookbook!

Happy Cooking!

Hillary
Editor
www.Recipe4Living.com
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Affordable Appetizers

Cutting costs doesn't mean you have to cut the appetizer. You can still serve tasty entertaining starters that are fit for your company!

**Deviled Eggs**

This is a classic dish that everyone loves and is work the little bit of extra work.

**Ingredients**

- 6 eggs, hard-boiled
- 1/4 C. mayonnaise
- 2 tsp. Dijon mustard
- Fresh ground pepper

**Directions**

Cook until hard-boiled, cool and then peel the eggs. Split them lengthwise. Place the yolks in the bowl of a food processor. Add the mayonnaise, mustard, and pepper. Pulse until smooth. Spoon into the egg whites. Chill well before serving.

Yield: 12 servings

**My Recipe Notes:**
**Baked Barbecue Wings**

*You can't go wrong with BBQ wings and this recipe is super-easy to multiply for larger parties.*

**Ingredients**

- 1 bottle of any BBQ sauce
- 1 small can frozen orange juice (undiluted)
- 6 Tbs. brown sugar
- 1/4 C. red wine
- 2-3 lb. wings

**Directions**

Mix together BBQ sauce, orange juice, brown sugar and wine. Set aside. Cut wings at the “elbow.” Dip pieces in sauce and lay in a Pyrex dish or a stainless steel baking pan. You can layer them. Pour any remaining sauce over all and bake uncovered at 375 degrees for 1-1 1/4 hours. These are terrific as leftovers so don't think you are making too many.

**My Recipe Notes:**
**Split Pea Soup**

*This is a family recipe. It reminds me of wintry nights at home with my folks. We'd make a meal out of it with crusty Italian garlic bread.*

**Ingredients**

1 bag dry split peas, any color  
1 spiral ham bone or bone pieces  
1/2 C. fresh carrots  
1/4 C. instant potato flakes or any other cooked potato (if potato is raw, peel and cube)  
4 C. water  
1 can vegetable broth or bouillon  
Pinch black pepper  
1 small can tender sweet peas with juice  
1/4-1/2 C. cooked rice or small pasta  
Grated cheese

**Directions**

Rinse and soak dry peas in hot water for about 20 minutes. Look for any rocks and remove if necessary.

Combine all ingredients except rice or pasta in large pot. Cover and bring to a boil. If using real potato, add in the last 5 minutes. Simmer and cook for about 35 minutes, half covered, stirring every 15 minutes.

Remove bone and/or ham pieces and use blender or immersion blender to combine all ingredients. Shred ham off bone and put back in soup. Pour in cooked rice or pasta and stir. Sprinkle with grated cheese to taste.

**My Recipe Notes:**
**Parmesan Dip**

*Very quick, easy, and delicious party dip.*

**Ingredients**

- 2 8 oz. packages cream cheese, softened
- 2 C. grated Parmesan cheese
- 2/3 C. onions, diced
- 1/2 C. mayonnaise

**Directions**

Heat oven to 400 degrees. Mix ingredients together and spread into an ungreased 8 x 8-inch baking dish. Bake for 20 minutes or until golden and bubbly.

**My Recipe Notes:**

You can find this recipe and more than 15,000 others at [www.Recipe4Living.com](http://www.Recipe4Living.com). Browse our collection and submit your own favorites!
Easy Cheese Fondue

Rich, cheesy, gooey and yummy. Grab a stick and dig in!

Ingredients

1/2 lb. Swiss cheese, shredded
3 small cans of condensed cheese soup
3 garlic cloves, crushed
1/4-1/2 C. beer

Directions

Mix first 3 ingredients together and heat in your fondue pot, stirring occasionally until smooth and heated. Gradually add beer until it is the consistency you prefer. When fully heated you can keep warm, stirring occasionally or just reheat when necessary. Serve with French bread cubes for dunking.

My Recipe Notes:
Cost-Conscious Casseroles

Casseroles are inherently perfect for budget cooking since they are essentially one-dish dinners. Make the most of your dinners with these easy, cheap and filling casserole recipes.

Simply Delicious Ham and Potato Casserole

This ham and potato casserole has all the essential elements: It is easy to make, quick to prepare, inexpensive, nutritious, and absolutely delicious. It is the epitome of a comfort food.

Ingredients

4 Tbs. unsalted butter
1 lg. sweet onion, thinly sliced
4 white potatoes, peeled and thinly sliced
1 lb. ham, cut into bite-size pieces
salt and pepper
1 1/4 C. milk
8 oz. sharp cheddar cheese, grated

Directions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Melt butter in a 10-inch skillet over medium heat. Add onions and saute until soft, about 4 minutes. Remove from heat. Peel and thinly slice potatoes. Place a layer of potato slices in the bottom of 4-qt. casserole dish. Add about one-third of the butter onion mixture, 4 oz. of ham. Sprinkle liberally with salt and pepper. Continue to repeat this step for three additional layers with no onion butter mixture on top level, and sprinkle salt and pepper on each layer. Add milk to dish. Place casserole in oven and bake for 1 hour. Remove and add cheese to top of casserole and bake for additional 15 minutes or until cheese begins to brown. Remove from oven and allow to “rest” at least 10 minutes before serving.

My Recipe Notes:
Eggplant Casserole

This is a casserole version of eggplant parmesan that is much easier that the traditional way! Still the same great taste.

Ingredients

1 1 1/4 lb. eggplant
salt and pepper
4 oz. Swiss cheese, shredded
1 C. grated Parmesan cheese
3 medium tomatoes, sliced
1/4 C. butter
1 C. tomato sauce
1 C. seasoned bread crumbs

Directions

Peel eggplant and slice in 1/4-inch thick rounds. Place in a bowl with about 2 Tbs. salt and enough water to cover. Let stand 20 minutes, then drain. Meanwhile, preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease bottom and sides of a 13x9-inch baking dish.

Mix cheeses in a bowl. Remove and reserve 1/3 the cheese mixture. Layer 1/3 the eggplant and 1/2 the tomato slices in prepared baking dish. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Top with 1/2 the remaining cheese mixture. Repeat layers once. Top with remaining eggplant and dot with butter. Pour tomato sauce over top, sprinkle with bread crumbs, then the reserved cheese mixture. Cover with foil. Bake for 1 hour. Uncover and bake 15 minutes longer or until eggplant is tender.

Yield: 8 servings

My Recipe Notes:
Spaghetti Beef Casserole

Easy baked spaghetti becomes a hearty meal with beef and bacon.

Ingredients

8 oz. spaghetti noodles
4 strips bacon
1 onion, chopped
1 lb. hamburger
1 tsp. salt
1 10-oz. can tomato soup
1 10-oz. can mushroom soup
1/2 C. water
grated cheese

Directions

Cook spaghetti until tender. Set aside. Dice and fry the bacon then add onion and fry until transparent. Add meat and cook until meat begins to color. Drain spaghetti well and add meat mixture, salt, soups and water. Taste for seasonings. Spread in a greased 2-qt. casserole or bake dish and sprinkle with cheese. Bake at 350 degrees for about one hour.

Makes 8 servings.

My Recipe Notes:
**Hamburger Rice Casserole**

*This hamburger rice casserole recipe is great on a cold wintry night; the kids love it!*

**Ingredients**

- 1 lb. hamburger meat, cooked and drained
- 1 C. rice, uncooked
- 1 10-oz. can cream of mushroom soup
- 1 med. onion, chopped
- 6 Tbs. soy sauce
- 2 Tbs. brown sugar
- 4 C. boiling water
- salt and pepper to taste

**Directions**

Brown hamburger meat and chopped onion until hamburger is no longer pink and set aside. Pour boiling water over uncooked rice in a 2-3 qt. casserole dish. Add in cream of mushroom soup; stir until it is dissolved into water and rice. Next add soy sauce and brown sugar. Finally, add hamburger meat and onion and mix well. Bake in a 350-degree oven for 1 hour.

**My Recipe Notes:**

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Chicken and Cheese Casserole
This simple layered dish is cheap and makes dinner a snap!

Ingredients

2 or more thin chicken breasts
1 C. marinara sauce
2 C. cheese, any combination of mozzarella, romano, cheddar
1 C. bread crumbs, cornflake crumbs, or flour
1 Tbs. Italian spices

Directions

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Oil baking pan with olive oil. Put chicken breasts on bottom of pan cover with bread crumbs. Add marinara sauce and sprinkle with spices. Add cheese on top. Cover and bake for 30 minutes.

My Recipe Notes:
More Money-Saving Main Courses

Sometimes we want a main course that stretches beyond the casserole dish but this doesn’t mean we have to stretch outside of our budget. Make some delicious marinated baked chicken or kid-friendly sloppy Joes for dinner! After all, simplicity tastes better anyway.

Marinated Baked Chicken

This recipe was used to cater a wedding! So many people enjoy it and it uses ingredients most people already have in their house.

Ingredients

- 5 lb. chicken pieces (your choice)
- 1 C. sugar
- 1 bottle Worcestershire sauce
- 1 bottle soy sauce

Directions

Mix sugar, soy sauce and Worcestershire sauce for marinade. Make marinade 4 days prior to baking. Marinate chicken for 3 days. On the 4th day, preheat oven to 475 degrees and remove marinated chicken from mixture and place in a covered baking dish. Reduce heat to 375 degrees and bake for 1 hour. Reduce heat to 275 and bake for another hour. Reduce heat to 175 and continue to bake an additional hour. Total baking time is 3 hours. Remove from oven and let rest for 45 minutes before serving.

My Recipe Notes:
Easy Jammin’ Jambalaya

Use your favorite meat and make five star flavor with only three ingredients.

Ingredients

1 lb. smoked sausage, chicken breasts, shrimp (your favorite meat)
1 lg. jar salsa
2 C. cooked minute rice

Directions

Cook minute rice according to box directions. While cooking, cut meat into bite-size chunks and brown in pan. Stir salsa in with meat. Simmer mixture on low, stirring occasionally. Serve over rice.

My Recipe Notes:
**Easiest Sloppy Joes**

_Make these easy and tasty Sloppy Joe’s sandwiches for kids or for parties!

**Ingredients**

- 1 1/2 lb. ground beef
- 1 10-oz. can tomato soup
- 1 sm. can condensed tomato paste
- 1 sm. onion chopped
- 1 sm. can mushroom stems and pieces (optional)
- 5 buns (for serving)

**Directions**

Brown ground beef and onion in pan. Dump in soup, paste and mushrooms. Mix and serve on buns.

**My Recipe Notes:**
Pork Chops You Can Cut With A Fork

See your family smile as they are eating these pork chops.

Ingredients

4-5 pork chops, with or without bone
1 can onion soup
1 can water
2 tsp. oil

Directions

Brown both sides of pork chops in oil on low heat in a large frying pan. After they are brown, add onion soup and water. Cover and simmer on low heat until tender. Add small amount of water if needed. If making more than 5 pork chops, add another can of soup and another can of water.

My Recipe Notes:
Smoke Sausage and Rice

Families love this easy, cheap recipe!

Ingredients

1 pkg. smoke sausage
1 can tomato sauce
1 bell pepper
1 onion
Rice

Directions

Cook rice as directed in cast iron skilled. Cook smoke sausage until done. Chop up bell pepper and onions (I always use half of each, but you can judge the size of your family). Put in smoke sausage and fry it up the rest of the way. Add tomato sauce and rice and let simmer.

My Recipe Notes:
Sensible Side Dishes

Make a side dish that won’t break the bank but simply uses up ingredients you already have in the house. There’s no need to skimp on a side dish to your main course.

Cranberry Apples

A great side dish or snack that will satisfy any sweet tooth, and that can be served hot or cold!

Ingredients

4-5 medium sized apples (mixed varieties of apples give best flavor)
1 can whole berry cranberries
1 Tbs. cinnamon
1/3 C. water

Directions

Wash and core apples. Chop apples into 1/2-inch to 3/4-inch size pieces (apple chopped too small will result in mushy apples). Cook apples and water over medium-low heat in a sauce pan until fork tender -- do not cover with lid. Remove from heat, stir in whole berry cranberries and cinnamon. Serve hot or cold.

My Recipe Notes:
**Cheap Cheesy Potatoes**

A very easy and cheap recipe everyone will love. Even people who don't like mushrooms will love this dish especially if you don't tell them what's in it.

**Ingredients**

- 5 lb. potatoes
- 1 pkg. cheese slices
- milk
- 2 cans cream of mushroom soup
- ham (optional)

**Directions**

Use as many potatoes as you want and cut them in half, then boil until tender. Put 1 or 2 cans of cream of mushroom soup in a pan depending on how many potatoes you have, then add a little milk and 8-10 slices of cheese. You can add a little more milk to make it soupier or a little more cheese to make it thicker. When cheese is melted, add potatoes and stir only a little. If you want, you can add ham or other meat to make it a main dish.

**My Recipe Notes:**
**Sweet Potato Fries**

*This is a favorite of anyone who loves sweet potatoes.*

**Ingredients**

3 med.-size sweet potatoes or yams
1/2 C. oil
salt (optional)

**Directions**

Pan-fry Method: Peel potatoes (if desired); cut lengthwise into 1/2 inch thick French-fry strips. In large skillet over medium heat, heat oil; panfry (in batches if necessary) until cooked through and lightly browned, about 6 to 7 minutes. Using a slotted metal spoon or spatula, transfer French fries as cooked to absorbent paper to drain. If desired, sprinkle with small amount of salt.

Oven Method: Heat oven to 400 degrees. In large bowl, toss cut potatoes with 1/4 C. oil to coat evenly. On 1 to 2 baking sheets, arrange in single layer; bake until golden on bottom, about 15 minutes. Using spatula or pancake turner, turn potatoes and bake until golden all over, about 15 additional minutes. Remove from oven; transfer to absorbent paper to drain.

Makes 4 servings.

**My Recipe Notes:**
**Crockpot Creamy Spinach Noodle Casserole**

*Served alongside baked or roasted chicken, this delicious side dish will please every person at your dinner table.*

**Ingredients**

- 8 oz. dry spinach noodles
- 2 Tbs. vegetable oil
- 1 1/2 C. sour cream
- 1/3 C. all-purpose flour
- 1 1/2 C. cottage cheese
- 4 green onions, minced
- 2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 1 dash hot pepper sauce
- 2 tsp. garlic salt

**Directions**

Cook noodles in a pot of salted, boiling water until just tender. Drain and rinse with cold water. Toss with vegetable oil. Combine sour cream and flour in a large bowl, mixing well. Stir in cottage cheese, green onions, Worcestershire sauce, hot pepper sauce and garlic salt. Fold noodles into mixture until well combined. Generously grease the inside of a slow cooker and pour in noodle mixture. Cover and cook on high for 1 1/2 to 2 hours.

Yield: 5 servings

**My Recipe Notes:**
Cuban Beans and Rice

With protein-rich kidney beans and white rice, this dish is a complete vegetarian meal.

Ingredients

1 Tbs. olive oil
1 C. chopped onion
1 green bell pepper, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 tsp. salt
4 Tbs. tomato paste
1 15.25-oz. can kidney beans, drained with liquid reserved
1 C. uncooked white rice

Directions

Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Saute onion, bell pepper and garlic. When onion is translucent add salt and tomato paste. Reduce heat to low and cook 2 minutes. Stir in the beans and rice. Pour the liquid from the beans into a large measuring C. and add enough water to reach a volume of 2 1/2 C.; pour into beans. Cover and cook on low for 45 to 50 minutes, or until liquid is absorbed and rice is cooked.

My Recipe Notes:
Discounted Desserts

And now for our favorite part: dessert! Fortunately for all the sweet tooths out there, Recipe4Living had some dessert recipes we can all afford. They aren't just budget-friendly, they are incredibly easy too!

**Super Easy Peanut Butter Cookies**

*Only three ingredients in this cookie recipe!*

**Ingredients**

1 C. peanut butter  
1 C. sugar  
1 egg

**Directions**

Mix all ingredients and form small balls. place 2 inches apart on a cookie sheet. Press balls with a fork to flatten.

Bake at 350 degrees for 5-7 minutes until golden brown.

**My Recipe Notes:**
The Easiest Coffee Cake Ever

This coffee cake could not be easier, and it's so delicious right out of the oven in the morning!

Ingredients

1 box yellow cake mix  
1 pkg. instant vanilla pudding  
1/2 C. Wesson oil  
1 C. sour cream  
4 eggs  
mixture of cinnamon and sugar

Directions

Mix dry mixes (cake mix and vanilla pudding); add oil and cream and blend together. Add eggs one at a time. Sprinkle Bundt pan with cinnamon sugar. Add batter and sprinkle top of cake with cinnamon sugar. Bake at 350 degrees for 45-50 minutes. Let cool in pan 10 minutes. Turn out and sprinkle cake again with cinnamon sugar.

My Recipe Notes:
**Fudge Pie**

*This is very rich and it is so good just out of the oven with ice cream on top. It is also fairly cheap and easy.*

**Ingredients**

- 2 oz. semisweet chocolate
- 1/2 C. butter
- 1 C. sugar
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1 C. chopped pecans
- 1 9-inch unbaked pie crust

**Directions**

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Melt chocolate and butter together in a heavy saucepan over low heat. Remove the pan and add the sugar, then the pecans and then the eggs and beat well. Pour the filling into the pie crust and bake for 25 minutes.

**My Recipe Notes:**
**Inexpensive Sponge Cake**

*This is a great tasting cake and you can add any kind of frosting you'd like.*

**Ingredients**

- 2 eggs
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 1/2 C. sugar
- 1 C. flour
- 1/2 C. water
- 1 tsp. lemon juice
- 2 tsp. baking powder

**Directions**


**My Recipe Notes:**
Petite Cheesecakes
Made in a muffin tin, these cheesecakes are sized individually for each guest!

Ingredients

2 8-oz. pkgs. cream cheese
3/4 C. granulated sugar
1 Tbs. lemon juice
1 tsp. vanilla extract
2 eggs
24 vanilla wafers
1 21-oz. can cherry pie filling for topping if desired

Directions

Line muffin tins with cupcake liners and place one vanilla wafer in bottom of each tin. Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Soften cream cheese and beat until smooth and creamy. Stir in sugar, lemon juice, and vanilla. Set aside. Beat eggs until light and fluffy. Add eggs to cream cheese mixture and beat 2 minutes. Fill muffin tins 2/3 full. Bake at 375 degrees for 15-20 minutes. Remove from oven, cool, and spoon pie filling on top if desired. Chill before serving.

Yield: 24 cupcakes

My Recipe Notes:
Thrifty Budget Cooking Tips

Budget cooking is more than just finding recipes with cheap or fewer ingredients, there are other things you can do to make cost-effective meals for every dinner. The following tips will help you organize yourself for budget-friendly cooking.

Figure Out A Grocery Budget

Divide food between essentials, like milk and eggs, and optional foods that you can pare down if necessary. There are many free budget software programs out there that can help you with this task. Simply Google "free budget software".

Make a Grocery List

Before you step foot in the grocery, make a list based on your budget. Sit down on Sundays and figure out what you will be cooking for the week. Keep an eye on grocery deals, sales and coupons when planning your meals. It's generally better to go to the grocery more often and purchase less food as not to let food spoil and go to waste before you can eat it.

Compare Prices

Take note of the different prices of the products you usually buy at different stores to see who has the best price. Check out stores that will match prices too. That way if you notice a better price at a different store, you can still get that price at the store you're already at.

Buy Seasonally

The price of produce varies greatly from season to season, so keep an eye on the growing season and select recipes accordingly. Go to farmer's markets, especially at the end of the day when farmers are trying to clear out their stock. You can buy slightly damaged produce (usually with some completely safe bruising) at a reduced cost.

Ditch Brand Loyalty

Often times the generic brand will be the same as your brand item product. Try out the generic to see if you notice a difference, this will almost always save you money. If you notice a difference, switch back but in the meantime, it saved you money to try.
Buy Bulk on Some Items

When you find a good price on non-perishable goods, stock up (unless you don't have the storage space). Rice, pasta, dried beans, cereal, instant coffee and other items will save you money when bought in bulk. (Note: Dried beans are much more cost effective than the canned variety. Think about the price per serving to keep things in perspective.

Reduce Waste

In addition to grocery shopping more frequently, you can reduce waste in your own home in a couple of ways. Keep an eye on recipe yield and adjust to fewer eaters. Practice simple portion control when serving food (this will also help you not to overeat), and favor smaller portions. Freeze any leftovers in meal-sized portions for future lunches or dinners. Also, get comfortable with recycling leftovers into casseroles, wraps, and other dishes.

Freezing Food

Freezing food is one of the best ways to save money when it comes to the kitchen. But if you're just throwing leftovers in the freezer, you've got a lot to learn. Our users showed us that there are tons of time-saving tricks and easy tips for freezing and storing food the effective way.