

MEATLOAF, FULLY



THE COOKFUL

Edited by Christine Pittman and Heather McCurdy

Meatloaf, Fully

Say hello to Meatloaf! We can't wait for you to try these **tasty loaves of comfort. You're going to love them.**

We've researched methods and tested classic favorites to bring you the very best recipes that will become part of your regular cooking rotation.

We just know that these meatloaf recipes are going to become a delicious part of your life.

Let's dive in!

Christine



THE COOKFUL

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10 Tips for Making Great Meatloaf

By Kevin Kessler

If you're gonna make meatloaf, you don't want just any old meatloaf. You want the best. We're sharing all our secrets so you can make the best meatloaf ever.

Ah, meatloaf. This is one of the best hearty dinners for the family to gather around. Meatloaf is great for large gatherings or just for comfort food while you're snowed in for a weekend. It's one of those extremely rare foods that is just as good the next day, making it one of the best leftover meals you can have.

But if you're serving up meatloaf for your family, you should make sure you're giving them the best possible meal. That's where these 10 helpful tips for making great meatloaf come into play.

DON'T GO ALL BEEF

Ground beef is obviously the most traditional ingredient in meatloaf, and we're not saying to nix it completely. But if you want to give your family a truly great meatloaf, consider adding some ground pork or sausage into the mix. The added flavor will work perfectly with the meat and make for an unforgettable culinary experience.

GET YOUR HANDS DIRTY

Handle your meatloaf with care. Don't mix it up with a spoon or other utensil. Wash your hands thoroughly and then dig in, carefully kneading it with your hands. A light touch is the key to creating a perfect meatloaf; overmixing leads to tough meat in the finished product. If you're cooking in a loaf pan, don't pack it all in too firmly. Gently pat it down into the pan and let it develop naturally while baking.

WATCH YOUR SEASONING

Don't stop at just salt and pepper when seasoning your meatloaf. Add some additional spices. Maybe use garlic salt instead of regular salt; red pepper instead of black. Add in some chili powder or paprika for a nice spice or use ranch seasoning for a memorable flavor. Play around with different combinations and find what works best for you.

PASS THE MILK

Preserving juices while baking is never easy. I've found that adding some milk to the mixture along with the eggs adds a bit of extra moisture to my meatloaf. This goes a long way toward

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ensuring that when you cut into your finished product it won't be a dried-out mess.

FIND YOUR FILLING

Filling can either make or break a meatloaf and we've given you the scoop on ten fillers you've got to try here. The most traditional tried and true filling is Italian-style breadcrumbs or soaked bread. But if you're on a low carb diet, consider dried veggies like onions and mushrooms or even crushed up pork rinds which add a nice bit of fat into the mixture. (Perfect for you Keto folks!)

GLAZED GLORY

A good glaze is the final touch to your meatloaf masterpiece. You can't go wrong with the traditional ketchup and brown sugar mixture but play around with some variations. Consider sriracha ketchup or barbecue sauce for something a little different.

LET IT REST

I know it's exciting when your meatloaf is done, but don't rush things. The smell it fills my house with is often enough to make me ravenous. But you should be letting your meatloaf rest for at least five minutes after coming out of the oven. This allows the mixture time to settle, making the loaf easier to carve into and enjoy.

STUFF IT UP!

Stuffed meatloaf is one of the most amazing things you'll ever eat. When you're putting your meatloaf together in the pan, split the mixture in two. Then, place some other kind of food on the bottom half and cover it up with the top. Some common meatloaf stuffing includes cheese (my favorite), bacon and even hard boiled eggs and ham. Wrap ham or bacon around the cheese or hard boiled eggs for some extra goodness.

SHAPE IT

Play around with the shape of your meatloaf. It doesn't always have to be the traditional loaf shape despite what the name implies. One of my favorite variations involves baking the meatloaf as a ring with space in the middle. Then, when the meatloaf is served, fill the middle with mashed potatoes. It's delicious and makes a great presentation.

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PLAN AHEAD

I mentioned earlier that meatloaf leftovers are amazing. There are a number of recipes you can make with your day-old meatloaf, from simple lunches like a sandwich to something more complex like a breakfast skillet or pasta sauce. The leftover possibilities are endless!

10 Best Fillers for Meatloaf

By Kevin Kessler

Choosing the right filler for meatloaf can make it or break it. We're giving you the scoop on which ones to use and why. No dry meatloaf here!

Meatloaf is one of my favorite comfort foods. It's made with a fairly simplistic and straightforward formula. There's meat, seasoning, sauce and filler. The filler is one of the most important aspects of meatloaf because it can really affect the flavor.

There are a number of different fillers that one can use, from the obvious to the wild. Let's examine some of the best meatloaf fillers that we've found, and you can determine which is the best for yourself.

BREAD CRUMBS

This is the most common filler I've seen. Italian -style breadcrumbs blend in seamlessly with the meat and it's great for anyone who doesn't like to find huge chunks of bread in their meal. Also, the seasoning of the breadcrumbs compliments the meat quite well. This is an old reliable that you can't go wrong with (unless there's a gluten or dairy allergy. Make sure you check the label first!)

SOAKED BREAD

A lot of people like to make meatloaf using bread soaked in milk. This holds the meat together better and helps it maintain its natural juices. I've found the best way to do this is to break up white bread, drop it into the chopped meat mixture and pour the desired amount of milk on top of it. The bread will soak up the milk. Then you mix it together.

OATMEAL

I've personally never tried this one, but a lot of people swear by using dry oatmeal as the filler for their meatloaf. I can see the appeal as it's mostly flavorless and won't throw off the meat and seasoning. It is also lighter than bread or breadcrumbs, making it a good bet for those of us trying to watch our figures.

DRIED VEGETABLES

Certain dried out veggies can make great filler for your meatloaf. I've found that tomatoes, onions and mushrooms are the most effective at replacing bread. This is particularly helpful if you're on a low carb diet like Keto.

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PORK RINDS

Believe it or not, crushed pork rinds can be a good filler for meatloaf and meatballs. Because pork rinds aren't potato or corn-based like most chips, they're a Godsend for Keto practitioners. Pork rinds are actually bits of pork, so they're high in fat and low in carbs. If you crush them up and add them to a meat mixture it holds the meal together perfectly.

BOXED STUFFING

A simple stuffing mix like Stove Top can be another great alternative to blend in your meatloaf. Typically, stuffing mix is packed with a lot of extra ingredients like veggies and seasonings that can give you a much different meatloaf experience. Pair it with some mashed potatoes and gravy and you've got a great hearty meal.

COOKED RICE

Another outside the box alternative is cooked rice. It holds the meat together much the same as bread would. You can even play around with certain flavored rices for a vastly different experience.

DRIED SOUP MIX

This is another option most people don't think about. Adding dried soup mix into the meat not only holds everything together well but also gives you a great opportunity to play around with different variations of flavor. There are also low carb and gluten-free options, which are always great to have.

FRESH OR FROZEN VEGGIES

Consider adding some fresh spinach or frozen vegetables into the mixture. This will help keep density in check, but it won't absorb any of the meat's juices.

POTATOES

Adding potato flakes to meatloaf is another great way to hold everything together while adding an extra bit of creamy goodness. Potatoes are often served alongside meatloaf. Imagine a meatloaf with that potato flavor built right into the meat. Pure bliss.



The Easiest Meatloaf Ever!

By Brittany Poulson

We have the easiest meatloaf recipe coming right up. Seriously. Mix up these four ingredients and pop it in the oven. You'll be serving a delicious meatloaf dinner before you know it.

Who isn't super busy these days?! We all want to get a good dinner on the table fast but sometimes it just seems so time-consuming – especially when we're in the mood for comfort food. That's why we've come up with this easy meatloaf recipe.

We found a few shortcuts that still deliver the perfect flavor and we're using them all. This recipe really does call for just four ingredients. You read that right – meatloaf with only 4 ingredients. No long laundry list of ingredients to chop or measure out. We kept the ingredients simple and hassle-free: ground beef, egg, stuffing mix and barbecue sauce. It doesn't get easier than that. Although, if you love this recipe you're definitely going to want to add our [Easiest Meatballs](#) recipe to your arsenal too.

The Easiest Meatloaf Ever!

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Prepping this meatloaf for dinner literally takes all of 5 minutes, then you pop it in the oven to cook. After about 30 minutes, remove it from the oven and add additional barbecue sauce on top. Then it's back to the oven to finish cooking. By doing this, the meatloaf itself gets a nice dark brown crust and the sauce doesn't dry out. The end result is a flavorful meatloaf that took minimal work. Forget mom's meatloaf. This is the meatloaf your family will ask for again and again.

Yield: 4 servings

Prep Time: 5 minutes

Cook Time: 45 minutes

Total Time: 50 minutes

Ingredients:

1 lb. lean ground beef

2 eggs

1 (6 oz.) box stuffing mix

3/4 cup barbecue sauce,
divided

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Prepare 1.5 quart loaf pan by spraying with nonstick cooking spray then set aside.
2. Combine the ground beef, eggs, stuffing mix and a half cup of the barbecue sauce in a large bowl and knead/mash with clean hands until all the ingredients are incorporated together (do not over mix). Transfer to prepared loaf pan and press the mixture down, spreading it evenly in the pan.
3. Place in the oven and bake for 30 minutes. Remove from the oven and pour the remaining one-fourth cup barbecue sauce over the top, spreading to make an even layer. Return the pan to the oven and continue cooking an additional 15 minutes or until it reaches an internal temperature of 160°F. Remove from oven and allow to rest for 10-15 minutes before slicing and serving.



Italian Meatloaf

By Emily Dingmann

We're kicking meatloaf up a notch and stuffing it with a surprise. Just wait until you slice into this cheese stuffed Italian Meatloaf. If you're lucky you'll have leftovers.

Want to know the easiest and most delicious way to upgrade meatloaf? Stuff it with cheese, of course! This meatloaf smells so good while it's baking away in the oven, that it's almost impossible to let it rest the full 10-15 minutes.

But if you try to cut into it too soon, you'll see the precious juices running out and realize that cutting into it early really IS a mistake since it dries it out. (Not that we know this from experience or anything...)

This Italian-inspired meatloaf is reminiscent of meatballs in the best possible way. To really kick up the Italian flavor, we use a combination of ground beef with ground Italian sausage. If you'd like to skip the Italian sausage, you can sub ground beef, just add an additional

Italian Meatloaf

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teaspoon of Italian seasoning.

Instead of our favorite ketchup and mustard glaze, this one's topped with marinara sauce and finished with some fresh basil for a pop of color and fresh flavor. If you need a gluten-free option, we suggest following the basic directions for swapping the breadcrumbs and other gluten-containing ingredients for ingredients found in our Gluten-Free Meatloaf.

Yield: 8 servings

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 1 hour

Total Time: 1 hour 10 minutes

Ingredients:

1 Tbsp. cooking oil
1 small onion, chopped
1 lb. ground Italian sausage
1 lb. lean ground beef
1/2 cup dry breadcrumbs
1 Tbsp. Italian seasoning
1 tsp. garlic powder
1 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. pepper
1 egg, lightly beaten
4 oz. shredded mozzarella
1/2 cup marinara sauce
Fresh basil leaves
Grated Parmesan cheese

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Heat the oil in a medium skillet over medium heat. Add the onion and saute until softened, about 5 minutes. Transfer onions to a large bowl.
2. Add in Italian sausage, ground beef, breadcrumbs, Italian seasoning, garlic powder, salt, pepper and egg. Use your hands to evenly mix the spices into the meat, being careful not to overmix.
3. Line a large baking sheet with foil. Transfer meat to baking sheet and shape into a 10×5 inch loaf. Create a well in the center of the loaf with your hands. Sprinkle cheese into the well and form meat back to form a “seal.” The cheese should all be stuffed into the meatloaf. Bake for 45 minutes.
4. Remove meatloaf from oven and spread with marinara sauce. Return meatloaf to oven and bake until internal temperature on an instant read thermometer is 160°F, about 10-20 more minutes. Remove meatloaf from oven and let rest for 10-15 minutes. Top with fresh basil and Parmesan cheese if desired.



The Best Gluten-Free Meatloaf

By Kasey Goins

Cutting gluten from your diet often means missing out on some of your favorite comfort foods. We have the secret ingredient to making a Gluten-free Meatloaf you'll love.

Is there any comfort food better than Classic Meatloaf? We don't think so, but this Gluten-free Meatloaf is just as comforting. It's made with savory spices and wholesome, filling ingredients for a comforting dinner everyone is sure to love.

The traditional meatloaf we're all used to gets an easy twist in this gluten-free version, but there's nothing complicated about it. Plus, the meatloaf is just as tender and delicious as the standard version, but made with certified gluten-free oats for those who are intolerant to gluten or wheat products.

Our secret to a filler that mimics your favorite meatloaf is certified gluten-free oats. They act as the binder in this easy, no-fuss meal. You might be thinking, "But rolled oats are naturally

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gluten-free. Why does it matter if they're certified gluten-free"? Regular oats are usually manufactured in facilities that also process wheat, so it's important to make sure your oats say "certified gluten-free." It's also important to ensure that your ketchup and Worcestershire sauce don't contain any gluten.

Planning to make this recipe tonight and you don't have gluten-free oats on hand? Feel free to substitute the same amount of gluten-free breadcrumbs instead. We just prefer the oats because they keep the moisture locked into your meatloaf better than gluten-free breadcrumbs.

The Best Gluten-Free Meatloaf

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Yield: 6 servings

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 1 hour

Total Time: 1 hour 15 minutes

Ingredients:

1 Tbsp. olive oil

1 cup diced yellow onion

3 cloves garlic, minced

2/3 cup certified gluten-free
oats

2 lb. lean ground beef

1 large egg

1/3 cup + 3 Tbsp. gluten-free
ketchup, divided

1 Tbsp. gluten-free
Worcestershire sauce

2 tsp. Italian seasoning

1 and 1/2 tsp. ground mustard,
divided

3/4 tsp. salt

1/2 tsp. black pepper

1 Tbsp. brown sugar

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F and line a 9 x 5 inch loaf pan with parchment paper or aluminum foil so that it slightly overhangs the long sides of the pan. This will make for easier removal from the pan. Spray lightly with cooking spray.
2. Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat then add the olive oil and diced onion. Saute, stirring frequently, until onion is translucent, about 5-6 minutes. Stir in the garlic for another 30 seconds, then remove from heat. Allow the onions to cool for 5-10 minutes.
3. Add the oats to a food processor then pulse lightly a few times until the oats are ground (but not flour-like). Pour oats into a large mixing bowl along with the cooled onion mixture, lean ground beef, egg, 3 tablespoons gluten-free ketchup, Worcestershire sauce, Italian seasoning, 1 teaspoon ground mustard, salt and pepper.
4. Using your hands, mix the meatloaf until all ingredients are well-incorporated. Pour the meatloaf mixture into the prepared 9x5 inch loaf pan, spreading evenly and smoothing out the top with a spatula.
5. To make the glaze, stir together the remaining 1/3 cup gluten-free ketchup, 1 tablespoon brown sugar and remaining 1/2 teaspoon ground mustard. Set aside.
6. Bake the meatloaf for 30 minutes. Remove from the oven and spread the ketchup glaze evenly over top. Return to the oven for an additional 30 minutes or until cooked through. Cool 10 minutes before removing from the pan using the parchment paper “handles”.



Turkey Meatloaf

By Georgina Walker

Let's face it. Meatloaf made with ground turkey or chicken sometimes gets a little dry and bland. We solved that problem and we know you'll love our Turkey Meatloaf.

This is a moist turkey meatloaf recipe requiring just one bowl and one pan. Oven baked for one hour, this is a great meal for weeknight dinners. Plus, it's super easy to make and great to feed a crowd.

If you're a meatloaf fan, then you'll love this turkey meatloaf recipe. Made in the traditional way, but with turkey as a substitute for beef, you'll be amazed at how juicy it is.

I love using turkey as a substitute for beef when I want a dinner that's a little lighter. Seriously, though, the hardest thing about making turkey meatloaf is how dry and bland it can be. There is nothing worse than dry meatloaf, and I promise you, this turkey meatloaf is anything but dry. And while it's nice and juicy, it won't fall apart on you. So how does it stay so moist?

Turkey Meatloaf

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There are two key tips to making your turkey meatloaf super moist. The first is the type of breadcrumbs you use, and the second comes with the onions.

First, I use panko breadcrumbs rather than regular breadcrumbs. Panko breadcrumbs are a Japanese breadcrumb and are found in regular supermarkets with the packaged breadcrumbs. Panko breadcrumbs really help the meatloaf hold its shape and doesn't make the meatloaf go soggy at all.

Second, by grating the onions, you add in some extra moisture from the onion juice you get from grating rather than cutting the onions. You also won't find big chunks of onion in your meatloaf, which I love!

Here are the four easy steps for making the perfect turkey meatloaf.

1. Combine all the ingredients together in one bowl.
2. Place in a greased loaf tin.
3. Pour over half the ketchup glaze.
4. Bake in a 350 degree Fahrenheit oven for 45 minutes, then bake at 400 degrees Fahrenheit for 15 minutes with the remaining glaze.

This meatloaf is great served with our [Classic Mashed Potatoes](#) and easy enough to make any weeknight. It serves six so if you're lucky enough to have leftovers, we recommend you enjoy a nice meatloaf sandwich for lunch.

Turkey Meatloaf

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Yield: 6 servings

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 60 minutes

Total Time: 1 hour, 10 minutes

Ingredients:

2 lb. ground turkey

1 cup panko breadcrumbs

1 onion, grated

1 egg

4 Tbsp. ketchup

2 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce

1 garlic clove, crushed

1 tsp. dried thyme

1 tsp. dried oregano

Ketchup Glaze

1/2 cup ketchup

1 Tbsp. brown sugar

1 Tbsp. red wine vinegar

1 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease a loaf pan with olive oil spray.
2. Combine ground turkey, panko breadcrumbs, grated onion, egg, garlic, ketchup, Worcestershire sauce and dried herbs in a large bowl. Combine with your hands until well combined and shape into a loaf shape.
3. Transfer to your greased loaf pan and smooth out the edges so the top is flat and the surface is even.
4. Combine the ingredients for the ketchup glaze in a small bowl. Pour half the glaze over top of the turkey meatloaf. Bake for 45 minutes.
5. Remove the meatloaf from the oven and pour the remaining glaze over it. Increase the oven temperature to 400°F. Bake for another 15 minutes. Remove from the oven to cool for 10 minutes.
6. Turn onto a long plate and slice to serve.



Keto Meatloaf

By Emily Dingmann

Diets often mean you can't enjoy your favorite comfort food. Well, we've got news for you. With a few simple changes you can enjoy meatloaf even on a Keto diet.

While meatloaf is fairly easy to make diet-friendly, there are a few ingredients in our Classic Meatloaf that need to be swapped in order to make it Keto-friendly. Both breadcrumbs and ketchup are high in sugar and carbs and a definite no-no for keto meatloaf. But don't you worry about that. We've got that problem solved for you.

These swaps are pretty easy to make. Almond flour makes a great breadcrumb substitution and we think you'll be surprised by the result – you can't even taste the difference and it keeps the meatloaf really moist.

As for the ketchup, you'll need a sugar-free/low carb version which you can buy or make yourself. We found a great recipe for [low-carb ketchup from Wholesome Yum](#). For a low carb

Keto Meatloaf

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side you've got to go with our [Mashed Cauliflower](#).

Yield: 8 servings

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 1 hour

Total Time: 1 hour 10 minutes

Ingredients:

1 Tbsp. cooking oil
1 small onion, chopped
2 lb. lean ground beef
2 Tbsp. sugar-free ketchup,
divided
1/2 cup almond flour
1 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
1 tsp. Italian seasoning
1 tsp. garlic powder
1 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. pepper
1 egg, lightly beaten
2 Tbsp. mustard

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Heat the oil in a medium skillet over medium heat. Add the onion and saute until softened, about 5 minutes. Transfer onion to a large bowl.
3. To the bowl add ground beef, 1 tablespoon of the sugar-free ketchup, almond flour, Worcestershire sauce, Italian seasoning, garlic powder, salt, pepper and egg. Use your hands to evenly mix the spices into the meat, being careful not to overmix.
4. Line a large baking sheet with foil. Transfer meat to baking sheet and shape into a 10×5 inch loaf. Bake for 45 minutes.
5. Meanwhile, stir together remaining 1 tablespoon of ketchup with mustard. Remove meatloaf from oven and spread with ketchup mixture. Return meatloaf to oven and bake until internal temperature on an instant read thermometer is 160°F., about 10-20 more minutes. Remove meatloaf from oven and let rest for 10-15 minutes before serving.



Instant Pot Meatloaf

By Emily Dingmann

You won't believe how easy and fast meatloaf is to make when you make it in the Instant Pot. Plus, we're showing you the secret to giving it the perfect crust.

It's true. Just about anything can be made in the Instant Pot, and if you don't have one yet, we recommend grabbing one to make your life easier. Meatloaf is actually pretty easy in the Instant Pot, but of course we have a few tips, so be sure to read them before you jump to the recipe. It will be worth it.

Four tips for making the perfect Instant Pot Meatloaf:

1. Make it smaller. Most of our meatloaf recipes are made with two pounds of ground beef, but that's way too much meatloaf for the Instant Pot. There simply isn't room. And the more to cook, the longer it's going to take to get to pressure, so any time savings would be lost.
2. You need a foil "pan." We're going to create a small pan out of foil with the edges folded

Instant Pot Meatloaf

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up to form a rim. This rim is really important because you'll have a lot of juices that end up in the foil after it cooks and when you lift out the trivet (with the foil and meatloaf on top), you don't want that juice going everywhere.

3. Add water to the bottom. If you're an avid Instant Pot user, you may know this tip, but if you're a newbie you might be wondering why we add water to the insert of the pot. Because the Instant Pot is a pressure cooker, it requires water (or liquid) to create steam to create the pressure which then cooks food quicker than say an oven. While many Instant Pot recipes are made with a liquid, if we don't add water to this one, there's no steam and no pressure.
4. Don't skip the broil. This 2-3 minute step is so worth it. While the Instant Pot does a fantastic job of cooking a juicy meatloaf, there is no crust on it. So, when it's done cooking in the pot, top with the ketchup and mustard glaze and throw it under the broiler (in that same foil pan you made) for a few minutes.

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Yield: 4 servings

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 40 minutes

Total Time: 50 minutes

Ingredients:

1 Tbsp. cooking oil

1/2 small onion, chopped

1 lb. lean ground beef

1/4 cup dry breadcrumbs

2 Tbsp. ketchup, divided

2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce

1/2 tsp. Italian seasoning

1/4 tsp. garlic powder

1/4 tsp. salt

1/8 tsp. pepper

1 egg, lightly beaten

1 Tbsp. yellow mustard

1. Heat the oil in a medium skillet over medium heat. Add the onion and saute until softened, about 5 minutes. Transfer onion to a large bowl.
2. To the bowl add ground beef, breadcrumbs, 1 tablespoon of the ketchup, Worcestershire sauce, Italian seasoning, garlic powder, salt, pepper and egg. Use your hands to evenly mix the spices into the meat, being careful not to overmix.
3. Pour 1 cup of water into the insert of the Instant Pot. Fold aluminum foil into a small “pan” with sides to catch cooking juices and place foil “pan” onto the Instant Pot trivet rack. Transfer meat to foil-lined trivet rack and shape into a 10×5 inch loaf. Carefully place the trivet rack with meatloaf into the Instant Pot, then secure the lid, making sure that the vent is closed. Select the “manual” or “pressure cook” function and program the Instant Pot for 25 minutes.
4. Meanwhile, in a small bowl combine the remaining 1 tablespoon of ketchup and mustard. Preheat broiler to high and position rack on the second level below the broiler.
5. When the Instant Pot time is up, carefully quick-release. Carefully lift out the trivet rack (make sure it’s not too hot!) and transfer meatloaf onto a rimmed baking sheet. (If there are a lot of juices, you may want to soak up some of them with a paper towel or turkey baster before transferring.) Spread ketchup mixture over meatloaf. Broil for 1-3 minutes. Let rest for 10-15 minutes before serving.



Air Fryer Meatloaf

By Emily Dingmann

We're comparing Instant Pot Meatloaf and Air Fryer Meatloaf to give you all the deets you need to decide which one to make. The answer's easy – both of them!

There's our Instant Pot Meatloaf and then there's Air Fryer Meatloaf. What's the difference, you ask? The main difference is that the air fryer manages to cook meatloaf quickly AND develop a crust, which is difficult to do in the Instant Pot. The short story is if you've got an Instant Pot and an air fryer we would use the air fryer.

We learned a few things while testing air fryer meatloaf recipes:

- **Make it smaller!** Most of our meatloaf recipes are made with two pounds of ground beef, but that's way too much meatloaf for the air fryer; there simply isn't room!
- **Line the basket with foil.** There are two reasons for this. One, you don't want all the juices

Air Fryer Meatloaf

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to drop down into the bottom of the air fryer. Two, you don't want the meatloaf to stick to the air fryer basket. So for ease of removing the meatloaf and ease of cleanup – line with foil!

- **Don't try to cook it too fast.** There's something tempting about cooking things in an air fryer at high heat, but be warned, the meatloaf will burn! We found that bumping the heat up after the initial cooking still led to a burnt meatloaf, so keep it at 370 degrees Fahrenheit for the duration.

And while the meatloaf is resting? Throw your side in the air fryer for a complete meal. We recommend broccoli.

Yield: 4 servings

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 25 minutes

Total Time: 35 minutes

Ingredients:

2 tsp. cooking oil
1/2 small onion, chopped
1 lb. lean ground beef
1/4 cup dry breadcrumbs
2 Tbsp. ketchup, divided
1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
1 tsp. Italian seasoning
1/2 tsp. garlic powder
1/2 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. pepper
1 egg, lightly beaten
1 Tbsp. ketchup
1 Tbsp. yellow mustard

1. Heat the oil in a medium skillet over medium heat. Add the onion and saute until softened, about 5 minutes. Transfer onion to a large bowl. To the bowl, add ground beef, breadcrumbs, 1 tablespoon of the ketchup, Worcestershire sauce, Italian seasoning, garlic powder, salt, pepper and egg. Use your hands to evenly mix the spices into the meat, being careful not to overmix.
2. Transfer meat to air fryer basket (lined with foil) and shape into a 4×6 inch loaf. Cook in air fryer at 370°F for 15 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, in a small bowl combine the remaining 1 tablespoon of ketchup and mustard. Remove meatloaf from oven and spread with ketchup and mustard mixture. Return meatloaf to air fryer and bake at 370°F for 8-10 more minutes. Remove meatloaf from air fryer and let rest for 10-15 minutes then slice and serve.



Slow Cooker Meatloaf

By Brittany Poulson

Prep your favorite meatloaf before work and walk in the door to the delicious aroma of dinner being almost ready. And we have a quick tip to get that nice caramelized top in no time.

Meatloaf is a classic American dish with so many variations on how to make it and what ingredients to use. Traditionally, it's cooked in the oven, but there's nothing like a set it and forget it meal. That's why we're sharing this slow cooker meatloaf. So, pull out that slow cooker and let's get cooking.

Our recipe follows this [Classic Meatloaf](#) as far as ingredients go. Only, instead of baking it in the oven, after mixing the ingredients and shaping the meatloaf, you place it in the slow cooker and leave it for a few hours. You can run some errands, tidy up the house or take a nap then come back to a moist, flavorful meatloaf.

After investigating how to make the best slow cooker meatloaf recipe, we decided to add a

Slow Cooker Meatloaf

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quick step at the end to give an extra dimension of flavor. After removing the meatloaf from the slow cooker, spoon some of the juices and sauce over top the meatloaf and broil it in the oven for a few minutes. This helps the sauce get nice and sticky. After that, you're ready to enjoy this simple, yet flavorful slow cooker meatloaf!

Yield: 6 servings

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 6 hours

Total Time: 6 hours 10 minutes

Ingredients:

2 lb. lean ground beef
1 small onion, chopped
1/2 cup dry breadcrumbs
3 Tbsp. ketchup, divided
1 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
2 tsp. Italian seasoning
1/2 tsp. garlic powder
1 egg, lightly beaten
1/2 cup tomato sauce (basic marinara)
1 Tbsp. yellow mustard
1 Tbsp. honey

1. Prepare slow cooker by lining with foil and spraying foil with nonstick cooking spray.
2. In a large bowl, add the ground beef, chopped onion, breadcrumbs, 2 tablespoons of the ketchup, Worcestershire sauce, Italian seasoning, garlic powder and egg. Mix and knead the meat with clean hands until ingredients are evenly distributed throughout. Do not overmix. Transfer meat mixture to slow cooker and shape into loaf.
3. In a small bowl, add the tomato sauce, 1 tablespoon of ketchup, mustard and honey and stir until blended. Pour over the meatloaf in the slow cooker. Cover with lid and cook on low for 5-6 hours or on high for 3-4 hours (times will vary depending on your slow cooker).
4. When the meatloaf reaches an internal temperature of 160°F, pull the meatloaf out of the slow cooker and place on a foil-lined baking sheet. Spoon some of the sauce from the bottom of the slow cooker over top the meatloaf.
5. Place meatloaf in oven and broil on high until the sauce on top is bubbly and sticky. Remove from oven and allow to rest for 10 minutes. Slice and serve.



Mini Meatloaf

By Emily Dingmann

Life might be busy but you can still enjoy your favorite classic comfort food. These mini meatloaves will be ready in no time!

Not only are mini meatloaves adorable, but they are even faster than a classic meatloaf because they don't need as much time in the oven. Because they are a little smaller, there's more chance for the meat to dry out so be sure to use ground beef with a little fat in it. We found lean ground beef (which is 80% lean, 20% fat) makes the perfect meatloaf.

While we recommend using an instant read thermometer for all our meatloaves, it's definitely worth using for the mini versions so you can keep a close eye on how fast they are cooking. If they are close to the 160 degrees Fahrenheit after the initial 25 minutes baking time, they may only need another 5-10 minutes. And the only way to tell? A thermometer.

We used the Classic Meatloaf recipe from our sister site, Cook the Story, but molded them into mini meatloaf shapes on the pan. They are the perfect size for one serving each, and we

Mini Meatloaf

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think it's a great way to make meatloaf if you're entertaining. Everyone gets their share of the coveted crusty outside.

Yield: 8 servings

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 45 minutes

Total Time: 55 minutes

Ingredients:

1 Tbsp. cooking oil

1 small onion, chopped

2 lb. lean ground beef

1/2 cup dry breadcrumbs

2 Tbsp. ketchup, divided

1 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce

1 tsp. Italian seasoning

1/2 tsp. garlic powder

1 egg, lightly beaten

1 Tbsp. yellow mustard

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Heat the oil in a medium skillet over medium heat. Add the onion and sauté until softened, about 5 minutes. Transfer onion to a large bowl.
3. To the bowl add ground beef, breadcrumbs, 1 tablespoon of the ketchup, Worcestershire sauce, Italian seasoning, garlic powder and egg. Use your hands to evenly mix the spices into the meat, being careful not to overmix.
4. Line a large baking sheet with foil. Transfer meat to baking sheet and shape into 8 2×3-inch loaves. Bake for 25 minutes.
5. Meanwhile, in a small bowl combine the remaining tablespoon of ketchup and mustard. Remove meatloaf from oven after 25 minutes and spread with ketchup mixture.
6. Return meatloaf to oven and bake until internal temperature on an instant read thermometer is 160°F, approximately 10-15 more minutes. Remove meatloaf from oven and let rest for 10-15 minutes.



Meatloaf Cupcakes

By Brittany Poulson

Meatloaf Cupcakes are a fun way to serve meatloaf and mashed potatoes and make the perfect party dish too. Kids and adults alike are bound to love them.

Meatloaf is a classic American dish that sometimes gets a bad rap. We're not sure why when it can be so flavorful and is easily customized to your liking. And what better side to serve with this iconic dish than mashed potatoes? But not any mashed potatoes. Only the [Best Mashed Potatoes](#) will do.

In this case, we're serving our meatloaf topped with mashed potatoes to make meatloaf cupcakes. These cute little meatloaf cupcakes are a great way to serve individual meatloaf portions in a unique way. They are fun to make and even more fun to eat. Each individual cupcake has a nice brown crust around it with a good portion of sauce over the meat, making it very flavorful.

Meatloaf Cupcakes

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If you're like me the only downside to making anything in a cupcake tin is thinking about having to clean it afterward. Silicone cupcake wrappers are amazing and make it so much easier!

When preparing the mashed potatoes, you need to make sure they are creamy but not so creamy that they slide right off the meatloaf. They need to be stiff enough to hold their shape and place on top. Adding the milk a little at a time until you have the right texture will help with this. Also, if you're going to be piping it on top you'll need to make sure there are no big lumps that will get stuck in your piping tip. Smooth and creamy is the way to go with these potatoes.

After you've prepared these meatloaf cupcakes you might think they're too cute to eat – but don't be fooled. They are too delicious not to be eaten! This main dish/side dish combo won over our visual appeal and taste buds. We're sure it'll win yours over, too.

Meatloaf Cupcakes

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Yield: 6 servings

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 30 minutes

Total Time: 50 minutes

Ingredients:

For the meatloaf:

1/2 cup tomato sauce (basic marinara)

2 Tbsp. ketchup, divided

1 Tbsp. yellow mustard

1 Tbsp. honey

1 Tbsp. cooking oil

1/2 small onion, finely chopped

1 lb. lean ground beef

1/3 cup dry breadcrumbs

1/2 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce

1 tsp. Italian seasoning

1/4 tsp. garlic powder

1 egg, lightly beaten

For the potatoes:

2 lbs. Russet potatoes, peeled and diced into 1/2-3/4 inch cubes

1 Tbsp. salt

2 Tbsp. butter

1/4 cup milk, heated

For the meatloaf:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Prepare a 12-count muffin tin by spraying with nonstick cooking spray or lining with silicone cupcake wrappers. In a small bowl combine the tomato sauce, 1 tablespoon of ketchup, mustard and honey. Set aside.
2. Heat the oil in a medium skillet over medium heat. Add the onion and sauté until softened, about 5 minutes then transfer to a large bowl.
3. In the same bowl add the ground beef, breadcrumbs, the remaining tablespoon of the ketchup, Worcestershire sauce, Italian seasoning, garlic powder and egg. Using clean hands, mix and knead the meat until everything is mixed through. Do not overmix.
4. Transfer meat mixture into muffin cups, distributing the mixture evenly between the 12 cups (each cup will be about 1/2 full). Bake for 20 minutes.
5. While the meatloaf is baking, prepare the mashed potatoes (see below).
6. Remove meatloaf cupcakes from oven and spoon about 1 tablespoon of the tomato sauce mixture onto each 'cupcake'.
7. Return to oven and bake until internal temperature on an instant read thermometer is 160°F, about 10 more minutes. Remove from oven and let rest an additional 5-10 minutes.
8. Pipe the mashed potatoes onto each meatloaf cupcake. Garnish with parsley, if desired.

For the potatoes:

1. Fill a large pot 1/2 way with cold water then add in diced potatoes and salt. Turn heat to high and cover, allowing

Meatloaf Cupcakes

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to vent. Once it's boiling, remove the lid and reduce heat to a simmer. Continue cooking about 15 minutes or until the potatoes are soft and can easily be pierced with a fork.

2. Strain the potatoes and return to pot and cook on medium for 1-2 minutes or until they are dry. Remove from heat, add the butter and mash. Once the potatoes have reached your desired consistency stir in the heated milk. The potatoes need to be creamy, but thick enough to hold their shape when added as a topping onto the meatloaf. Add additional milk as needed.



Easy Vegan Meatloaf

By Tawnie Kroll

This Easy Vegan Meatloaf is made with a base of chickpeas and lentils and is a hearty and satisfying meal. It's so simple to make and is a comforting dinner everyone will enjoy.

When making vegan meatloaf, no one wants to end up with a mushy meatloaf – that's the worst! My tip to solving that issue is using a combination of both chickpeas and lentils to create a hearty, fiber-full and delicious vegan meatloaf.

While making meatloaf that turns out just right can be frustrating, this recipe is pretty hands off and easy to make for the home cook. All the ingredients are processed in a food processor and then formed into a loaf shape on a sheet pan.

Secrets to making the best vegan meatloaf with success.

GET THE PERFECT TASTE AND TEXTURE.

Easy Vegan Meatloaf

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Getting just the right texture in vegan meat substitutes can be tricky. Here's my secret to getting the perfect texture for vegan meatloaf. When pulsing the ingredients, you want to be sure not to blend for too long because you don't want it to form a paste. Pulse just enough so you can still see some texture from the chickpeas and lentils.

USE THE PROPER PROPORTION OF INGREDIENTS.

The proper proportion of ingredients is key to making a perfect meatloaf. We've already done the research and tested different methods out for you. You can read more on [the best formulas for vegetarian and vegan recipes here](#).

GIVE IT A REST!

Another important tip to making a successful vegan meatloaf is to let it rest. When you remove it from the oven, let it cool on the parchment paper for about 10 minutes. If you'd like to let it cool longer than this, transfer it to a wire cooling rack first. This cooling process allows it to firm up.

Easy Vegan Meatloaf

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Yield: 8 servings

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 1 hour

Total Time: 1 hour 20 minutes

Ingredients:

1 (14 oz.) can chickpeas,
drained and rinsed
1 cup cooked green lentils
1 cup diced yellow onion
4 stalks celery, diced
1 cup panko breadcrumbs
1 cup shredded and chopped
carrots
1/2 cup almond milk
3 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
2 Tbsp. soy sauce
2 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
2 Tbsp. ground flaxseed
2 Tbsp. tomato paste
1 Tbsp. dried parsley
2 cloves garlic, minced
1/2 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. pepper
Additional dried parsley for
garnish (optional)

Sauce on top:

1/3 cup ketchup
1 Tbsp. coconut sugar

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In a food processor, place all ingredients and blend. You can work in batches if the food processor seems too full. Most importantly, do not process the mixture too long because the meatloaf still needs some texture.
3. Place mixture on the parchment paper and form into a loaf. Bake for 35 minutes. After 35 minutes, spread ketchup on top and then sprinkle with coconut sugar to help the top caramelize. Bake for another 20 minutes.
4. Let rest for 10 minutes. Garnish with more dried parsley.

12 Ways to Use Leftover Meatloaf

By Kevin Kessler

If you don't know what to do with your meatloaf leftovers (aside from eating them as, well, leftovers) we have just the thing for you – twelve fantastic ways to use those meatloaf leftovers.

Meatloaf might be one of the world's best "next day meals," meaning it's fantastic both when eaten fresh and when reheated as leftovers. But there are many different ways one can use leftover meatloaf. Some are simple and obvious, but others require some outside-the-box thinking.

Here is our list of the top twelve ways to use leftover meatloaf.

MEATLOAF SANDWICH

I'm starting us off with the most obvious one, which is also my personal favorite. When I was a kid, I looked forward to meatloaf just for sandwiches the next day. I found that a meatloaf sandwich is great either hot or cold. Add some ketchup, mayonnaise and maybe a little cheese and you've got a perfect quick lunch.

MEATLOAF BURGER

No, this isn't the same thing as a meatloaf sandwich. I got this idea from a restaurant in Orlando, Florida, which makes one of the best burgers I've ever tasted. Since then, I've made this a regular leftover meatloaf recipe. Take a regular burger patty and cook it to your desired pinkness, then place it on a large Kaiser roll and top it with a piece of leftover meatloaf. Top that with a scoop of mashed potatoes, and even some corn if you'd like, and you've got an amazing and unique burger that can serve as the perfect lunch or dinner.

BREAKFAST HASH

Crumble up some of your leftover meatloaf in a skillet with diced onions, potatoes and bell peppers, then add a fried egg on top. This is a great breakfast the whole family can enjoy and is a fun outside-the-box way to enjoy your meatloaf the following day.

STUFFED PEPPERS

Mmmm, stuffed peppers are a personal favorite, but did you know that you can make them using day-old meatloaf? Dice the meatloaf up and load it into some cored bell peppers along with some tomato sauce, cooked rice, onion and shredded cheese. This is a great way to prepare a second entrée with yesterday's dinner.

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MEAT SAUCE

While this would likely make my Italian grandmother roll over in her grave, I love adding leftover meatloaf into a nice tomato sauce, or Sunday Gravy if you're one of my people. Throw it into the pot with some basil, hot sauce, balsamic vinegar, sautéed onion and Italian seasoning. Then toss it with some spaghetti to make a great Bolognese.

TACOS

Ok, so we blasphemed the Italian cooking traditions, now let's mess with a Mexican dish. Leftover meatloaf is great in a taco. Load some up into a hard shell with some jalapeno peppers, shredded cheddar, lettuce and sour cream, or make a burrito and add some rice and black beans. Finish with some sweet chili sauce as well to really make the flavors pop.

SOUP

You can turn leftover meatloaf into a nice hearty soup or stew. If you add it into a minestrone it's fantastic, and perfect for a cold winter night. You can also use it in place of meatballs in Italian Wedding Soup.

SHEPHERD'S PIE

My all-time favorite Irish dish tastes great with a little leftover meatloaf thrown in. Traditionally this is made with lamb, but I won't tell if you won't. Mix it up with sautéed onion, garlic, peas, carrots and tomato paste. Pour in some beef stock and top it off with mashed potatoes.

FRIED RICE

Meatloaf fried rice. Get on the train before every Chinese food restaurant is doing it. Add some diced veggies, hard boiled egg, cooked rice and soy sauce and toss it all up in a wok for a perfect Asian inspired meal.

PIZZA

Put some crumbled meatloaf on top of the cheese when you're making a homemade pizza and you've got a pretty unique offering to serve your guests. I'd pair it with some pepperoni, onion and mushrooms to give it that extra bit of familiar flavor.

CHILI

Using leftover meatloaf crumbled up in a chili is one of the best ways to spend a snowy winter evening. Pour it into the pot with some crushed tomatoes, kidney beans, jalapenos,

12 Ways to Use Leftover Meatloaf

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chili powder, paprika and any other spices you love. Top it off with shredded Mexican Blend cheese and a dollop of sour cream for that extra bit of creamy goodness.

MAC AND CHEESE

This one is a little decadent, but you deserve it. Crumble up your leftover meatloaf and mix it in with a nice creamy mac and cheese. It adds an extra special protein flavor to an otherwise meatless meal.

So there you have it. Twelve delicious ways to use meatloaf leftovers. Which one will you try first?

Contributors

Many thanks to our writers for this edition of *The Cookful*.



Christine Pittman, editor

» cookthestory.com

Christine is the Founder and Senior Editor of The Cookful. She also blogs at COOKtheSTORY where she specializes in easy healthy homemade recipes. Healthiness aside, she has been known to shred cheese onto a dinner plate, microwave it for 30 seconds, and then eat the messy goop with a spoon.



Emily Dingmann

» myeverydaytable.com

Emily is a nutritionist and mom who wants to help families eat real food! She is the creator of My Everyday Eats, where she shares simple and nutritious, family-friendly recipes ready in 30 minutes or less. She drinks coffee in the morning, wine at night, and sometimes a green juice in between.



Kasey Goins

» well-fedsoul.com

Kasey is the 20-something Physician Assistant and Functional Medicine Practitioner behind the blog Well-Fed Soul. She believes food is medicine and loves to show busy women how healthy eating can be exciting, easy, and still involve chocolate. She loves to bake, and when she isn't creating messes in the kitchen, you can find her exploring Kalamazoo with her husband. As long as she's home in time to roast up sweet potatoes with peanut butter before bed!



Kevin Kessler

Kevin J. Kessler is an experienced professional writer and published author living in Orlando Florida. With a lifelong passion for food, this sandwich loving Italian boy enjoys exploring unanswered questions about the foods we all know and love so well. Kevin's foodie lifestyle was born through his love of Walt Disney World and the Epcot International Food and Wine Festival. A lover of stories, he enjoys trying new dishes from all over the world and learning everything there is to know about where food comes from, how it's prepared, and what variations on it exist.

Contributors

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Tawnie Kroll

» krollscorner.com

Tawnie Kroll is a California based food blogger and healthy recipe developer. She is a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist and a lover of cooking and baking! Follow her blog for recipes, healthy living tips and practical scientific evidenced based advice to help you improve your health and wellbeing.



Brittany Poulson

» yourchoicenutrition.com

As a self-proclaimed foodie, Brittany loves to cook, bake and of course, eat! This love of food led her to become a registered dietitian and food blogger at Your Choice Nutrition, where she encourages you to live a healthy life in your unique way. For Brittany, this often includes her favorite foods, such as fresh strawberries or a square of dark chocolate!



Georgina Walker

» thehomecookskitchen.com

Georgie is an Australian expat and the creator behind The Home Cook's Kitchen, a blog dedicated to great food and recipes for home entertaining. Georgie is a passionate foodie, with a love for fine wine, cheese and chocolate. She believes there is nothing better than sitting down to a home cooked meal with good friends. When she's not in the kitchen cooking, she's out and about hiking, biking or snowboarding in Oregon with her husband and golden retriever Archie.

About The Cookful

Do you love to geek-out over food and cooking? Then The Cookful is where you need to be.

We cook and write about one topic at a time, diving in deep to help you cook (and eat!) better than ever. Each topic comes with how-tos, innovative recipes and a bunch of interesting tidbits so that you can learn all about it. Some topics we've covered are Margaritas, Quick Soups and Popcorn. Head over to [The Cookful](#) to find out what our next topic is and then get ready to go off the deep end with us.



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