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Speedy Stovetop Unstuffed Peppers

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I may SEEM all tidy and put-together, organized and on top of it all. But let me tell you a little secret.... I am NOT! I do have some systems that work for me, but the truth is that I tango with time all day long as I watch the clock, constantly recalculating when I need to drive to my next destination and how I'll squeeze meal-making, exercise and, yes, blogging into my day. Oh, and did I mention my just-shy-of-obsessive-compulsive need for a clean, tidy home? (Yeah, gaining four to my family is putting that into a little better perspective!)

I am sure you're no different. Perhaps the items on your list differ from mine. But I don't know many woman who complain of too much time and too little to do. Exactly the opposite phenomenon plagues most of us!

So when there's too much to do and too little time, I've found planning and prepping nutritious meals near to a necessity. These stovetop, unstuffed peppers can be prepped ahead and simply reheated, sprinkled with some cheese and served hot. I brown the beef, sauté the veggies and put it all together in the afternoon (or it can be done the night before) and pop the pan into the fridge. Then, I take the pan out a little while before the evening eating shifts and activities begin and reheat it on the stove. Each of us can eat when we're ready and I can rest-assured everyone has had a healthy meal on those days we don't get to enjoy a meal together.

Now, one more thing. Please don't misunderstand me. I believe in the value of slowing the schedule and eating together as a family. Feeding the family all at once is not only an act of love and a tradition I aim to keep, it's helpful in fostering open communication, bonding and building family values. But sometimes sanity and schedules simply do not allow for this togetherness at the table. So, we do our best to share mealtimes together, but when it won't work we can still ensure each of us ends our day in a healthy, nourishing way.

Recipe category

Delightful Dinners [1]

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Ingredients

- 1 pound lean ground beef. I use and recommend grassfed whenever possible
- 2 tablespoons butter, ghee or olive oil (whatever you want to saute in)
- 1 small yellow onion
- 4 cloves of garlic, minced
- 4 small or 3 medium bell peppers. I use all the colors! *
- 1 can or 1 ½ cups soaked black beans (drained and rinsed if you use canned)
- 1 8 ounce can tomato paste
- 1 14.5 ounce can diced tomatoes (WITH the liquid) OR I like to chop fresh tomatoes and use about 1 ½ cups
- 2 teaspoons oregano
- 1 teaspoon parsley
- 1 teaspoon basil
- 1 cup quinoa
- 2 cups vegetable or chicken broth**
- 2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce. I love using Annie's organic version.
- Optional: Cheese to sprinkle on top. We love a sharp white cheddar, organic and grassfed when possible

Recipe Instructions

- In a medium sized skillet, sauté the onion, garlic and peppers in the butter/ghee/olive oil. Let cook, stirring occasionally until the vegetables are slightly soft and onion is opaque.
- In a large sized skillet, brown and crumble the beef. Once browned, you can drain off any excess grease if you desire.
- Add the tomato paste and diced tomatoes to the beef and stir. Add the spices and broth to the mixture and slowly stir to combine. Finally, add the quinoa and stir. Cover the large skillet and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and cook on the stove for about 18 to 20 minutes, until the quinoa is fully cooked. Stir occasionally.
- Add the pepper and onion mixture to the beef mixture and stir to combine. Serve immediately in bowls and sprinkle the top with cheese (if desired). Or, if you are prepping ahead, once the meal is slightly cooled in the pan, you can put the pan into the fridge covered. Then, remove about 30 minutes before you want to eat. Cook on a low to medium heat and then serve with or without cheese.

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Recipe Description

While this rendition of stuffed peppers may be not-so-stuffed, it is packed with nutrition

and protein! You'll find vitamin C in the peppers, multiple minerals in the quinoa, fiber rich beans and lycopene laced tomatoes. Plus grassfed beef, quinoa (a complete protein from the plant world) and black beans create a super high protein, low starch version of traditionally rice-stuffed peppers.

Recipe Notes

*I love using all the different colors of peppers. Not only does it look prettier but God gave different nutrients different colors. So, each pepper has a slightly different nutrient profile. Oh, and peppers are on the 'dirty dozen' list, so make sure to buy them organic when you can.

**When I don't have broth handy, I use water and Rapunzel cubes (1 cube per cup).

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