

# FAST & SLOW



Stephen Murello, *Grand Central*

Prep:  
10 minutes  
Cooking time:  
15 minutes

## Brussels Sprouts Gratin

From "Five Ingredient Fix," by Claire Robinson  
(*Grand Central*). Serves 4 as a main course, 6-8 as  
a side dish.

### Ingredients

2 pints Brussels sprouts (about 1½ pounds), trimmed  
3 tablespoons unsalted butter  
3 tablespoons unbleached all-purpose flour  
2 cups milk, at room temperature  
5 ounces Gruyère cheese, grated (about 1 cup grated)  
Kosher salt and freshly cracked black pepper, to taste

### Directions

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the Brussels sprouts and cook 5 to 7 minutes, until bright green and beginning to soften; drop into a bowl of ice water to stop the cooking process.

Make the sauce by melting the butter and flour together in a saucepan over medium heat. Cook, stirring, until smooth and bubbling, about 1 minute; slowly whisk in the milk and continue to cook, whisking frequently, until thick and creamy, 2 to 3 minutes. Add ¾ of the cheese, and stir until melted and smooth. Season the sauce well with salt and heavily with pepper.

Halve the Brussels sprouts through the core, and put them in an even layer in a 2-quart baking dish. Pour the sauce over the sprouts, and evenly top with the remaining cheese. Bake in the center of the oven 10 to 15 minutes, until golden and bubbling on top.



Keller + Keller, America's Test Kitchen

**Prep:**

**30 minutes**

**Cooking time:**

**4 hours**

## Spinach and Mushroom Lasagna

*From "Slow Cooker Revolution," by the editors of Cook's Illustrated (America's Test Kitchen). Do not use no-boil noodles, they will turn too soft. And do not use homemade cream sauce, or it will curdle. Store-bought Alfredo sauce will stay intact. Serves 6 to 8.*

### Ingredients

Vegetable oil spray  
8 curly-edged lasagna noodles (7 ounces), broken in half  
1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil  
1½ pounds white mushrooms, trimmed and sliced thin  
2 garlic cloves, minced  
20 ounces frozen spinach, thawed, squeezed dry and chopped coarse  
1 jar (15 ounces) Alfredo sauce  
1¾ cups ricotta cheese (15 ounces)  
1¼ cups grated Parmesan cheese (2½ ounces)  
½ cup minced fresh basil  
1 large egg  
4 cups shredded mozzarella cheese (1 pound)

### Directions

Line slow cooker with aluminum foil collar: Layer and fold sheets of heavy-duty foil until you have a six-layered rectangle that measures 16 by 4 inches. Press the collar into the back side of the slow cooker insert. Fit two more large sheets of foil into the slow cooker, perpendicular to each other, with the extra hanging over the edges of the cooker for a sling to help remove the lasagna later.

Bring 4 quarts water to boil in large pot. Add broken lasagna noodles and 1 tablespoon salt and cook, stirring often, until al dente. Drain noodles, rinse under cold water until cool, then spread out in single layer over clean kitchen towels and let dry. (Do not use paper towels; they will stick to noodles.)

Heat oil in pot over medium-high heat until shimmering. Add mushrooms, garlic, and ¼ teaspoon salt, cover, and cook until mushrooms are softened, about 5 minutes. Uncover, and continue to cook until mushrooms are dry and browned, 5 to 10 minutes longer. Stir in spinach and Alfredo sauce, scraping up any browned bits, and season with salt and pepper to taste.

In bowl, mix ricotta, 1 cup Parmesan, basil, egg, ½ teaspoon salt, and ½ teaspoon pepper together. Spread ½ cup mushroom-spinach sauce into prepared slow cooker.

Arrange 4 lasagna noodle pieces in slow cooker, overlapping if necessary, then dollop 9 rounded tablespoons of ricotta mixture over noodles. Sprinkle with 1 cup mozzarella, then spoon 1 cup more mushroom-spinach sauce over top. Repeat layering of lasagna noodles, ricotta mixture, mozzarella and mushroom-spinach sauce twice more.

For final layer, arrange remaining 4 noodles in slow cooker, then top with remaining mushroom-spinach sauce and sprinkle with remaining mozzarella and remaining Parmesan. Cover and cook until lasagna is heated through, about 4 hours on low.

Let lasagna cool for 20 minutes. Using sling, transfer lasagna to serving platter and serve.



**Prep:**  
5 minutes  
**Cooking time:**  
8 minutes

## Toasted Cumin and Rosemary-Rubbed Lamb Chops

From "High Flavor, Low Labor,"  
by J.M. Hirsch (Ballantine). Serves 4.

### Ingredients

2 tablespoons cumin seeds  
1 teaspoon kosher salt  
¼ teaspoon whole black peppercorns  
2 sprigs fresh rosemary, leaves only,  
finely minced  
8 lamb chops  
2 tablespoons vegetable or canola oil

### Directions

In a small, dry skillet over medium-low heat, combine the cumin seeds, salt and peppercorns. Toast, stirring constantly, until fragrant, about 1 minute. Transfer the spice mix to a mortar and pestle or spice grinder. Pound or grind into a coarse powder.

In a small bowl, combine cumin mixture and minced rosemary.

Matthew Mead, Ballantine Books

Use paper towels to pat the lamb chops dry. Rub a bit of the cumin-rosemary mixture over both sides of each chop.

In a large skillet over medium-high, heat the oil. Add the lamb chops and cook until browned on the bottom, 3 to 4 minutes. Flip the meat and cook for another 3 to 4 minutes.

**Prep:**  
10 minutes  
**Cooking time:**  
10 minutes

## Flat Iron Steaks With Roasted Red Pepper Butter

For instructions on roasting peppers, see recipe on Page 3D for "Roasted Red Pepper and Feta Dip." You will have extra butter; it will keep, covered, in the refrigerator for a week. From "Lobel's Meat Bible," by Stanley, Evan, Mark and David Lobel (Chronicle). Serves 2.

### Ingredients

12 tablespoons unsalted butter (1½ sticks), 8 of the tablespoons well-chilled and cut into pieces  
2 tablespoons minced shallot  
2 large cloves garlic, minced  
½ teaspoon finely chopped fresh thyme  
2 roasted red bell peppers (or 1 small jar)  
1¼ teaspoons smoked sweet Spanish paprika or regular sweet paprika  
1¼ teaspoons kosher salt  
Freshly ground black pepper  
4 chuck blade steaks (flat iron steaks), about 4 ounces each, cut ¼-inch thick  
2 tablespoons vegetable oil

### Directions

Melt 4 tablespoons of the butter (not chilled) in a small skillet over medium-low heat. Add the shallot and garlic, and cook until softened but not browned, about 3 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in the thyme, remove from heat, and let cook 3 or 4 minutes.

Put the 8 tablespoons chilled butter, the roasted peppers, paprika and salt in the bowl of a food processor. Scrape the contents of the skillet with the shallot-garlic butter into the processor, and blend, pulsing at first, until smooth and well-incorporated, scraping down the sides of the bowl as needed. Pack the flavored butter in a ramekin and set aside.

Generously salt and pepper the steaks. Preheat a large, heavy skillet over medium-high heat until almost smoking. Add the oil, swirling to coat the skillet. Add the steaks and reduce heat to medium. Cook for 3½-4 minutes per side for medium-rare. Transfer the steaks to warmed plates. Top with flavored butter and serve.





Edward Park, Phaidon

**Prep:**  
30 minutes  
**Cooking time:**  
3 hours

## Lamb Baked With Orzo

Adapted from "Vefa's Kitchen," by Vefa Alexiadou (Phaidon). Serves 6.

### Ingredients

½ cup olive oil	½ teaspoon sugar
3¼ pounds stewing lamb, trimmed and cut into chunks	4 tablespoons butter
3 cups puréed peeled fresh tomatoes or puréed canned tomatoes	1 pound orzo pasta
4 garlic cloves, sliced	3 cups hot water
	1 tomato, thinly sliced
	½ cup grated Greek kefalotiri cheese or Parmesan cheese, plus extra to garnish
	Salt and pepper

### Directions

Heat the oil in a large pan. Add the meat and cook over medium heat, turning occasionally, for 8 to 10 minutes, until lightly browned all over. Add the puréed tomatoes, garlic and sugar, season with salt and pepper, cover and simmer for 1 hour.

Meanwhile, melt the butter in a nonstick skillet. Add the orzo and cook over high heat, stirring constantly, for 5 minutes until lightly golden. Transfer orzo to a large oven-proof dish. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Put the lamb pieces on top of orzo, and pour tomato sauce over them. Carefully add the water and cover the dish with aluminum foil. Bake for 1½ hours. Remove

from oven, and put the tomato slices on top of the lamb, sprinkle with the cheese and season with pepper. Return to the oven and bake, adding a little more water if necessary, for 30 minutes more, until almost all of the liquid has been absorbed and pasta is al dente. Serve immediately with extra grated cheese.

**Prep:**  
30 minutes  
**Cooking time:**  
3¾ hours

## Korean Beef Stew With Napa Cabbage and Pickles

Recipe by Marcia Kiesel, from "Food & Wine: Reinventing the Classics," edited by Dana Cowin (Food & Wine Books). Makes 6 servings.

### Ingredients

1 tablespoon vegetable oil  
3 pounds trimmed beef chuck, cut into 3-inch pieces  
Salt and freshly ground pepper  
¼ cup soy sauce  
¼ cup sugar  
¼ cup dry white wine  
1 quart beef stock or low-sodium broth  
2 medium red onions, quartered through the core  
6 large garlic cloves, coarsely chopped  
2 large jalapeños — halved, seeded and sliced ½-inch thick  
2 cups mung bean sprouts  
1 tablespoon cornstarch  
4 cups coarsely chopped Napa cabbage  
½ cup thinly sliced sour pickles  
Steamed short-grain rice, toasted sesame oil and 3 thinly sliced scallions, for serving

### Directions

In a very large skillet, heat the oil. Season the meat with salt and pepper and sear the pieces over moderately high heat until richly browned all over. Transfer the meat to a large slow cooker, turn it to high and cover.

Wipe out the skillet and return it to the burner. Add the soy sauce, sugar, wine and stock, and bring to a boil. Pour the mixture into the slow cooker. Add the onions, cover and cook for 2 hours. Add the garlic and jalapeños to the stew, cover and cook for 1 hour longer, until the meat is very tender.

Meanwhile, bring a medium saucepan of water to a boil. Add the bean sprouts and blanch for 30 seconds; drain. Put the cornstarch in a bowl and whisk in ½ cup of the liquid from the cooker.

With a slotted spoon, pick out and discard the onions. Transfer the meat to a large bowl. Whisk the cornstarch mixture, then whisk it into the stew, cover, and let simmer for 2 minutes. With 2 forks, very coarsely shred the meat. Return the meat to the cooker. Add the Napa cabbage and pickles to the cooker, cover and cook until the cabbage is just wilted, about 5 minutes. Turn the cooker off.

Spoon steamed rice into bowls. Ladle stew over and around rice. Top with bean sprouts, a drizzle of sesame oil and sliced scallions, and serve.