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### ***Eating in the Post-Prosperity World***

This week's report is a triple serving of food. We'll consider start by exploring how BLS covers up food price increases you might be seeing and government somehow doesn't, how to start seriously rethinking what you eat at what price points (including what should be a fine discussion of what I call *dim array (food)*, a systemic way of considering food's different values and then we'll get into ways to actually beat high food prices with a load of reader-supplied one pot recipes along with a couple of my own.

### ***Hiding Hedonics***

I've been looking for how the Bureau of Labor Statistics seems to continuously understate the actual (locally experienced) price increases for food that Elaine and I have notices since we moved here in 2003. What seemed to cost \$200 back then seems to cost \$300 now -- a phenomena with which you are no doubt familiar.

What's going on is a form of hedonic pricing. Which is? Well, [the answer attributed to Investopedia is:](#)

"The most common example of the hedonic pricing method is in the housing market: the price of a property is determined by the characteristics of the house (size, appearance, features, condition) as well as the characteristics of the surrounding neighborhood (accessibility to schools and shopping, level of water and air pollution, value of other homes, etc.) The hedonic pricing model would be used to estimate the extent to which each factor affects the price."

Knowing this, with a little thought, it's easy to see how a statistician - working to a bounded outcome (an acceptable rate of housing price change to facilitate continued employment) could jigger things just so to come up with almost anything desired, within a specific range. To be sure, the methodology used would need to be consistent, but again, with an unlimited number of statisticians, a range of economic outcomes ahead, a methodology could no doubt be created which within those bounds would give a politically acceptable price.

Let's look at how the Labor Department addresses the 'hedonic' issues related to food:

["When the cost of food rises, does the CPI assume that consumers switch to less desired foods, such as substituting hamburger for steak?"](#)

No. In January 1999, the BLS began using a geometric mean formula in the CPI that reflects the fact that consumers shift their purchases toward products that have fallen in relative price. Some critics charge that by reflecting consumer substitution the BLS is subtracting from the CPI a certain amount of inflation that consumers can "live with" by reducing their standard of living. This is incorrect: the CPI's objective is to calculate the change in the

amount consumers need to spend to maintain a constant level of satisfaction.

Specifically, in constructing the "headline" CPI-U and CPI-W, the BLS is not assuming that consumers substitute hamburgers for steak. Substitution is only assumed to occur within basic CPI index categories, such as among types of ground beef in Chicago. Hamburger and steak are in different CPI item categories, so no substitution between them is built into the CPI-U or CPI-W.

Furthermore, the CPI doesn't implicitly assume that consumers always substitute toward the less desirable good. Within the beef steaks item category, for example, the assumption is that consumers on average would move up from flank steak to filet mignon if the price of flank steak rose by a greater amount (or fell by less) than filet mignon prices. If both types of beef steak rose in price by the same amount, the geometric mean would assume no substitution. In using the geometric mean the BLS is following a recognized best practice for statistical agencies. The formula is widely used by statistical agencies around the world and is recommended by, for example, the International Monetary Fund and the Statistical Office of the European Communities.

We need to be extremely careful when reading this: For more than 10-years consumers have been "shifting their purchases toward products that have fallen in relative price" means to me a fairly sophisticated use of geometric mean adjustments will, over time hide major price movements and (deliberately?) understate them since the product switching behavior assumed behaves very much like compound interest accumulating over time.

Let's look at how five periods using the geometric mean versus an arithmetic mean for a carnivore who eats two kinds of steak and buys one pound in each period for a total of ten pounds of steaks, one of each type in each period:

#### 50/50 Consumption with No Price Bias

Period	NY Steak Price	Sirloin Price
1	4.79	5.25
2	6.29	4.79
3	5.75	5.22
4	5.63	6.35
5	7.25	7.75
Total (hard costs are...)	29.71	29.36
Average /pound	\$5.94	\$5.87
Geometric Meaning (GM)	\$5.89	\$5.78

G.M. Can Understate arithmetic mean by ~1%

OK, now let's see how good at statistical lipstick we can get, shall we? Let's assume that we purchase 100% of the lowest priced steak, how much distortion could we introduce?

With a 50-50 purchase we'd spend \$59.07 in the real world for 10 pounds (one each) at the stated prices. With the same pricing and 100% switching to the lower of the two costs, we could spend as little as \$55.36.

In other words, the context-switching lowers prices by about 7%. so, how low do you want food prices to go? Tell me the answer you want between 0 and 7% savings and be sure to save the Wednesday shopping specials, would you?

Statistics is a mean-spirited business, if you'll pardon the poor pun.

Is there anything actionable in all this?

Well, yes, there is. Want to make \$20/hour in your spare time? All you need to do is spend an hour a week comparing prices online between three or four major grocery stores to find the best price in a category. Need canned tomatoes? Ro-Tel or Dole, or... Odds are that you should be able to knock off your food bill maybe 10% per month by shopping the specials in each store.

I've noticed (among the three friends I have) that very few people do this anymore. They simply go to one superstore figuring that their time is worth something and this would be a (bad pun here) safe way to shop. Over time, however, shopping three or four stores and really stocking up on nonperishable goods, a major saving - perhaps 10-15% - can be had.

If your family grocery bill is \$800/month, that's \$80 a month in savings, or for the hour a week you'll spend, call it \$20/hour - which tax free is like working one hour a week for what, \$25-\$30/an hour pretax? Can't beat that with a stick. Care to bet 15 minutes a week can't save a few bucks?

### ***Food's Time/Cost Curve***

Few people consciously build price curves in their heads - most have something more going on in their lives, I reckon. But out here on the range, I have a little spare time now and then, so I tend to spend much noodle time pondering relationships like the price/time relationship under food.

Two examples to ponder here. Let's start with Pot Roast.

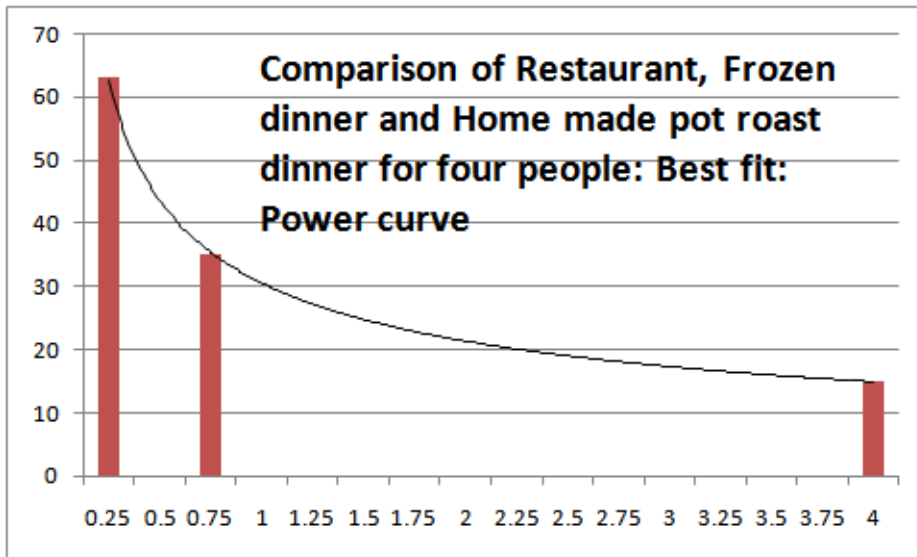
We assemble some data here (for a family of four):

Restaurant pricing of four pot roast dinners, no desert, no tax or tip: \$50. But taxes and tips are real so \$55 with tax and 63 with tip - depending on service and how cheap you really area. Time: 15-minutes.

Frozen food pot roast dinners (4) \$30? Time 40 minutes. We could quibble about this - costs, sales, etc, but remember there's time to go shopping, gas & oil and insurance for the car (you don't have a grocery cart or walk - so sayeth the numbers) and then there's the cost of refrigeration, electricity, yada, yada

Home made four person pot roast dinner: \$ 15.00. Time: 4-hours

Now we chart it out:



Vertical Axis: Cost in dollar, Horizontal: time in hours.

I know, if you're thinking "Hmmm...you seem to imply that if you have an infinite amount of time, then the cost of food could approach zero...how can that be?"

Well, suppose you're a land baron (sic) and happen to have 5 acres and no zoning laws to mess with. We'd give you \$60 and 7-months on the land. At the end, you'd have raised a 'milker calf' to a decent weight, and with the small investment in seeds, you'd have enough veggies to have some kinds (squashes in particular) running out your ears.

Sure, sure, the cost of a pot roast dinner for four could be viewed as \$60 which was our start-up costs, but assuming good rainfall, that \$60 could provide what...50 meals, so that we'd be down in a buck a head range?

My friend turned me onto this way of looking at things: If you have no money, food can be created with time. Or, if you have lots of money, then in a sense, you can create time by purchasing food outputs from others. Which is why farmers markets are so cool...but that's a different road.

### ***Food Space (dim array {food})***

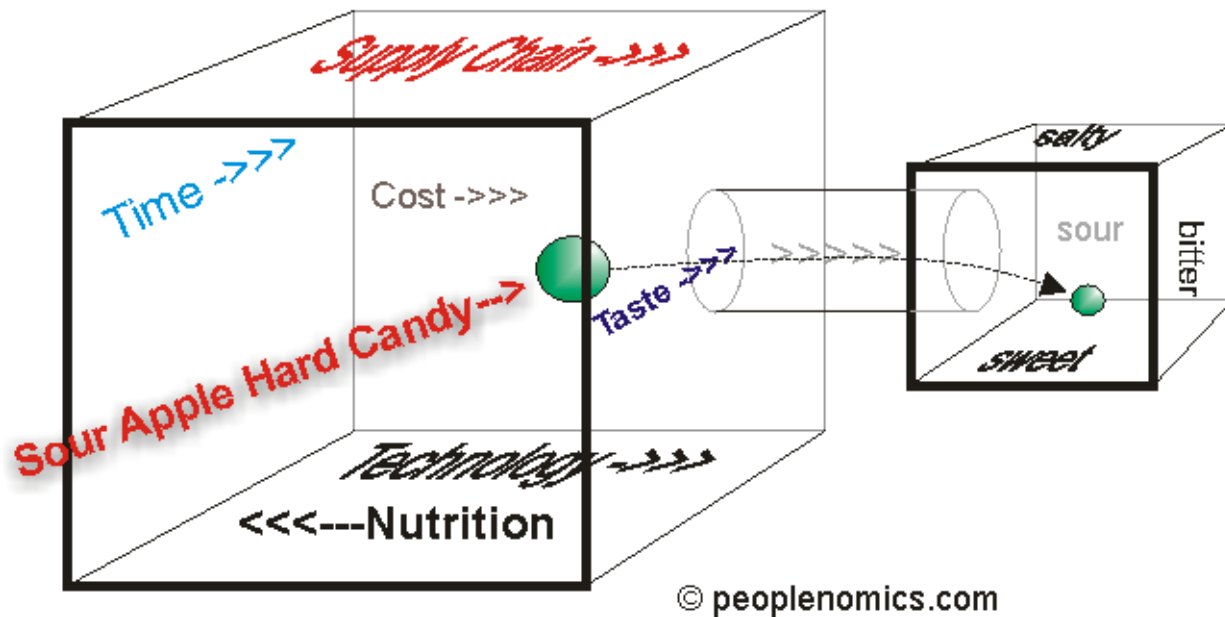
Another way to consider food is to look at the various 'aspects' and have different foods fit into the long your long-term outlook.

Every food has a unique combination of:

- A time axis: How much time to raise, transport (process?) deliver, waiting time for delivery, and overall perishability.
- A cost axis: Nothing's free - although it is in nature, with no permission or negotiation with Ma Nature, we have usurped the 'free' and one way or the other (either at gunpoint or lawyer-point) everything that springs from earth off our own land is tariffed in one way or another.
- A taste axis: This one is kinda neat because taste is itself a modelable space
- A nutritional axis: This is pretty simple, huh?
- A technical axis: Some foods are dirt simple, others are high tech in many ways and here we need to consider different energy and tech inputs.
- A supply-chain axis: Local carrots or 6-thousand mile oyster sauce?

Hmmm...a lot of thinking to put into foodstuffs, so let's simmer in the graphics processor and reduce by half....presto...we get how one's headspace might deal with food as a mental construct using something like a sour apple ball hard candy as our example:

## A Basic Foodspace Model



So by looking at this model we might infer that:

- Hard candies take a fair bit of time to make
- Their nutrition is low
- The technology involved is moderate
- Supply chain to make & distribute is long
- Cost is moderately high (do this on calories if you must)
- And their taste?

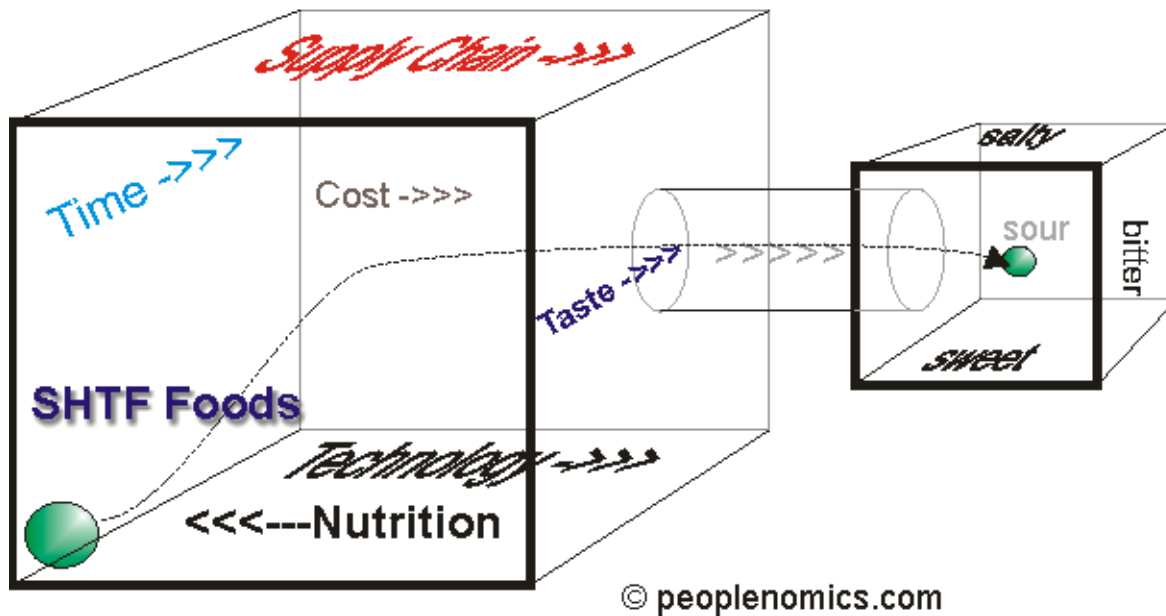
that taste rabbit hole leads into another model in headspace where things like sour, sweet, bitter, metallic, aromatics and so on live...but this one is mostly on the border between sweet/sour as you see in the taste box.

I know, I know... "George, do you always dissect everything this way?" Well, er....yeah...kinda...people that don't go into this level of detail and stop with really simple generalizations (food has a cost and a taste might be a simplification) can't really get creative in how they address food-related complexity. Sorry to report this, but in an ever more complex world, there's a need for correspondingly complex thinking to deal with things.

"And the point of the model is what?"

Gives us a checklist which we ought to be able to use to figure out what our food lifestyle will be like if the legendary 'smelly stuff hits the round rotating thingy'...which gets us to the:

# Bad Times Food Model



Which is a polite way of showing that what will be important will be foods with:

- Short production time
- High nutrition
- Low Cost
- Low Tech
- Short to no supply chain
- And with any luck, something of an acceptable taste over moving into that part of the expanded model of things...

## ***Gardens! The New Urban Landscaping***

Now, in order to get yourself in the mood for becoming an urban farmer, which is again, one of the points of this week's report, consider how much money people waste on landscaping.

To be sure, in some parts of the country (here at the ranch for one) mowing everything that grows within X feet of the house makes sense. If that looks like a lawn, then fine, so be it. But put any more effort or time on that task than what it takes to keep the snakes, butts, and ticks at bay? No thanks.

Once upon a time, I used to buy into the "my lawn looks more like a putting green than your lawn..." mentality common to the suburbs. But, in case you hadn't noticed, the 'burbs are being priced out of existence such that the only really logical choices on where to live are either right in a city where you can walk to a support system (like a farmer's market, etc) or far enough away that you don't need to go anywhere other than your own garden.

What's slowly been coming into view for me is a kind of family-centered-garden where at least part of the year you can work, exercise, hang-out, and eat. The first tentative steps in this direction came about two (or was it three?) years ago when I scrounged an old stainless steel sink from our remodel and built a gardening workstation where we could water, rinse, clean and even prep our food before popping it onto a grill with a spritz of olive oil, herbs, and whatever to grill 'em up.

Particularly good were the veggie combinations like a slice of mushroom, a slice of onion, a small cherry tomato or a big slice of whatever else floats your boatload of tomatoes, and then maybe a slice of green or red pepper. Repeat for as long a stick as you have and as much fire as you can handle.

This year, our cooking will likely be propane, but with a fair number of hardwood trees that fall down every year, I've been reading up on how to make charcoal in big quantities with the tractor and a saw. Dig pit, toss in wood, start fire, cover, com back in a few days when it cools off and dig our charcoal. Dry, store, and cook later. Hickory and oaks seem to fall over mostly, so that's fine.



May have to restring the electric fencing around it, since corn is on the menu and the raccoons don't know they're not welcome, but one of the great local tips I picked up this year was a practical use for anti-bacterial soap. Word is that you take a bar of soap, cut it into halves (or quarters) and put it around the garden and it keeps the deer away. We'll see - they've been able to leap the 6-foot fencing in past years, but don't want to come around when humans are in the garden which I'll take as a hint from Universe we oughta spend more time there.

No doubt, a fancy sunshade of some kind would be nice - night even prevent some of the weeds from growing up through the gravel in the cleaning station area. We'll see.

Similarly, with any luck this week, I will get the piping in from the well so we should be able to do water directly with well water. Again, local lore, but seems that plants grow noticeably better on well water with no chlorine, fluoride, or whatever else (asbestos from concrete pipes, etc) that happens to be in city water.

Bottom line for me is that the more time I spend outside of air conditioned spaces) the less bothersome an absence of some assumed condition of modern life will be missed should it go missing. Things like city water and electricity.

Also going in this week will be a couple of acres of sugar beets which will be mixed in with a name or other items in my 'wild garden'. One of the things I've been studying is the idea of growing things in the wild. Just find a place where it looks like this, or that, might grow, pop a few seeds in and come back in 90 days. I figure a few squash plants and melons down on the creek-bottom part of the property might do pretty well and with any luck (meaning the deer don't get a taste for soap or sugar beets, we might be able to make some kind of passable sweetener this year.

My goal, naturally, is to have at least some rudimentary rum-making capability, but I'd certainly never do anything more than collect the necessary equipment. And, should I get a few gallons of sweet-juice, then I might experiment around with home-brewed ethanol...but only once the crop is in hand. No point pouring money into those kinds of endeavors, there are much more important things to be concerned with.

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The PowersThatBe have made it abundantly clear that food really is a big deal, what with an expanded organic garden at the White House this year. While you presumably don't have the kind of labor available as seems to float around inside the Beltway, there's still every reason to at least stick your head a little ways out of the comfort zone and do some real food-production gardening.

Elaine happens to like Gardenias. Frankly, I don't see much use in them most of the time, but since we have several plants right outside windows that are opened (once the pine pollen stops snowing green on everything out here in the woods) the ought to bloom again and when they do, the scent of the Gardenias coming into the house is really marvelous. No need for plug-in house-smeller-uppers...

You are following, right? Plant things which can either provide nourishment OR give you something that you'd otherwise have to pay for. If a flower doesn't do anything than 'look pretty' I frankly don't have much use for it. Clover for bees? A five pound box of wildflowers over a half acre for birds...that's a different deal. Brings in (politely here, since we try to at least nod in the direction of political correctness now and then) food and potential food like wild game.

Exotic orchids? Nope. Gingers, ginsengs, spices of all type? Fine. Roses? Hack 'em all down, says I, ("arghhh") t'ain't nothing about roses I can't do with half a dozen alternative plants, save perhaps rose hip tea.

If it takes any labor, that goes into George's Simplified Living Plan: No labor into plants that contribute nothing to my life. Gone. Whack.

Sometimes a plant is a blessing and a curse like the wild grapes. Muscatine grapes make a delicious wine. But, given half a chance they will choke a big tree to death and the goats can't reach up more than 5½ to 6-feet to much 'em back. I didn't come up with the sugar beet experiment without a reason. But it will be a simple scaring of the earth, drop in seeds, cover with feet and get way from it all. If it's meant to be, there will be sugar beats 120-days out. If not, sobriety isn't the worst thing, and besides, I hear there are other plantings for that, and we ain't talking rose hips.

"Yeah, fine, George if you have a 30-acres spread, goat pooh, two tillers and all that, but pointless in the city! You are sooo out of touch!"

Well, no. Check out [The Backyard Homestead: Produce all the food you need on just a quarter acre!](#)

Who's out of touch here?

Putting up veggies will mean some canning, so a basics kit would be a [Granite Ware 21-1/2-Quart Covered Preserving Canner with Rack](#) although some people prefer pressure cookers. Matter of trade offs. (Cliff like pressure cooker canning).

As I see it, that's a matter of trade-offs. \$25, or so for the unpressurized version and nearly \$200 (so close it doesn't matter) for something like a [All-American 21-1/2-Quart Pressure Cooker/Canner](#). I grew up with the unpressurized kind, and while it takes longer, if the crap hits the fan, who won't have time? besides, with \$175 in savings, I can buy, oh, 120 canning jars like these: [Ball Wide-Mouth Mason Canning Jar 1 Qt., Case of 12](#) for about \$14.00.

Don't forget extra rings and lids - and don't store the lids where they will get hot or where you have an ozone generator/negative ion generator since that tends to deteriorate rubber over time.

I won't try to tell you how to get things done, just that I anticipate a much different schedule this year, compared with last, getting up in the wee hours of the morning to do more gardening while it's cool out. Working in 100-degree weather ain't my cuppa rose hips.

Only one thing to keep in mind here: a kind of overarching food rule: Work on balance nutrition, most bang for the buck in your particular soil, saving something for tomorrow, and having fun. A complicated rule, but with a glass of red wine while gardening, it makes sense. Or two.

### ***Why One Potters?***

One potters have always been a kind of Holy Grail of cooking to me. First, because I hate dishes almost as much as taxes. Secondly, the one pot can store leftovers. Thirdly, they are usually price efficient as all get out. In other words, I have yet to find a good one pot recipe for a steak. Stews? Sure, all day long. But a good steak (and not Swiss, obviously)...no.

One potters are widely practiced as a high art at:

- Fire stations
- Some military places
- Boy Scout gatherings
- Lazy bachelors and bachelorettes
- Starving dads trying to make child support
- Starving moms trying to get through till child support
- Anyone who is unemployed and has gotten sick of eating cornflakes and needs a change-up
- And the incurably cheap

Near as I can tell, since Pappy was a fire fighter, I've been in every one of these categories at one time, or another, except for the starving mom role...but when it was my weekend for the kids...one-potters were high art then, too...

Let me start off with my own favorite:

### ***George's One Pot Meal***

The basics of this are really simple:

Boil 8-12 ounces of whatever noodles are handy for 8-11 minutes (89¢)  
Drain 30-seconds  
Dash of olive oil to keep them from getting to gluey.

I get yelled at by purists that this is too long to cook a noodle which should never get past al dente (still firm) but with 50+ years of experimenting, I can assure you that al dente means that whatever you put on in the way of sauce is going to get sucked up so fast it will make your head spin. The idea is to have a somewhat chewy, but somewhat moist so you don't fill up too much on liquids.

One can Cream of Mushroom Soup. (?? varies by brand)

1/2 cup milk, skim milk, heavy cream, sour cream, or whatever moves you

One to three cans of kind of protein. I've had good results with:

- 2-3 cans (small) of canned minced clams (dash of white wine optional)
- 2-3 cans (small) or shrimp, drained, rinsed
- One large can water packed fish (tuna, salmon, mackerel, etc)
- Hand-picked crab meat
- Large can of boned white chicken meat
- ...try everything you can think of... even fresh mushrooms work fine if sautéed (in the same pan ahead of time)

Season to your heart's content. Favorites include:

- White wine or cooking sherry
- Worcestershire sauce
- Tons of tarragon (1 tbs)
- Garlic powder, oil, salt (go lite on the garlic salt)
- Cayenne pepper
- White pepper
- Mayonnaise

There's almost no end to the variables on this. one combination I like (couple of times per month) is Chinese eggs noodles (Rose Brand if you can find them), a large can of water-packed albacore, a dash of Worcestershire (or 5) the tarragon and a tablespoon of mayo and a dash of cayenne. Stir till well blended. If it starts to look mushy, you're probably an obsessive compulsive. If you get a mouth full of Worcestershire, you are even lazier than me.

Others are easily done. Got the idea for the several cans of clams and a splash of cooking sherry (heavier on the garlic on this one) from the Old Spaghetti Factory up in Seattle. [They make a 'to-die-for' white clam sauce with hints of wine, garlic and parsley for \\$9.50.](#) My home-made stuff was under \$5 at the time and sometimes got two meals out of it.

### ***George's One Pot and a Microwave***

As long as I'm laying out recipe thievery as a high art... 13 Coins Restaurant in Seattle used to make a wonderful sandwich they called the SST Sandwich.

Before I tell you about that one, [go check out their 24-hour menu because it is some of the best cooking I've ever had](#) and I never tire of going there.... order an SST Sandwich (which I hear they still make by request) and an orders of 13 Coins Fries. No surprise here, there are 13-fries and each is about 1½ times the size of your thumb and 6-8" long.

So, here we go with the cheapskate version:

Begin with the appetizer - which I think they still wheel out as soon as you sit down:

Fresh french bread - home made and light/crusty is about right  
Fresh carrots  
Sweet pickles  
Hard salami slices very very thin  
Large serving of your favorite beverage

My old news chasing pal Zippo Deluxe who was the other rock & roll news director of good repute in the city back then preferred a light Chardonnay with buttery finish. Gale, the daytime bar tender at 13 coins down by the Seattle Times building on Fairview (since retired) just asked "Usual?" and a nod & "How's the family?" got that part going. Then I'd watch what was going on in the kitchen - the cooking is done right in full view of the counter.

This is not going to be as good as the real thing (worth a trip to Seattle just for the food at 13 Coins and [Ivar's Acres of Clams](#) next to Engine 5 (fire station #5 where the fireboats are parked to non-Seattle types), but that's another day's tale).

Best I could figure, here's what went on in the kitchen:

Hot frying pan with tbs of butter and a splash of olive oil  
Big handful of sliced fresh mushrooms  
Splash of cooking wine - flame it if on gas stove with some flourish  
Sprinkle dash of salt with flourish and more pan flipping  
When these seem to be nearing done...add...  
One can of well drained white chicken (turkey works even better) They use fresh, but this was being ripped off at home...  
More wine, more flames, more tossing about. If the flames were more than 2-feet high, that was especially good. Do not try this at home, leastwise indoors.  
Toss in 3/4 can of Cream of Mushroom soup when no one is looking (maybe it was white sauce base, but I never got behind the counter and I knew where the cream of mushroom soup was at the local market)  
Toss around till it bubbles - remove from heat.

Nuke four -8 strips of lean bacon in the microwave till crispy  
Toast 3 slices of bread

Place toast on huge broiler-proof plate: The toast and then pour the creamy turkey or chicken and mushrooms over that...Now toss on a good handful of real (not fake!) parmesan cheese over the whole thing and put under the broiler till just browned.

Arrange the bacon just so. Serve with french fries if you had some under the broiler, or not, depending on how much thought you put into this.

13-coins did two pieces of toast and cut the crusts off then quartered so as to make it toast points, but that got to be too much work for me. Besides, at home I didn't have a daytime or nighttime bartender, so I couldn't just nod and have a refreshed you know what show up...

Granted, this is cheating...13 Coins used fresh-roasted turkey breast cut up, as I seem to recall. But when single or lazy and it's a 2,200, or currently 1,790 mile commute, you improvise.

The second thing of any consequence to get dirty was the broiler proof plate) but Corel dishes and I are fast friends, although Elaine insists on buying crafty-made stuff that is not as nuke-proof or each to clean and is definitely easier to scratch. Small trade-off... I still have some Corel around for my favorites.

If you ever see a picture of me and think "Hmmm...looks like he doesn't miss many dinners..." You'd be right!

Best philosophy of management I ever developed was this: "Try not to put yourself in too many positions where you have to ask people to do things you can't do yourself." Self reliance is a wonderful thing.

So whether it's plumbing, welding, electrical, carpentry, sewing, gardening, flying, cooking, or (add whatever here) the fun in life with the Recipe Approach to Learning that I explained a week ago is endlessly adaptable to cooking, from which the concept arose in the first place.

### ***Reader Recipes and Such***

I'll put a directory in here for Peoplenomics subscribers - don't know if this will translate into the the .PDF file which as promised will be out as a freebie on UrbanSurvival and Independence Journal this week, but here goes:

#### Directory of Additional Sources

1. [Kalamata-Lemon Chicken](#)
2. [Indian Apricot Chicken](#)
3. [OSU Build A Pyramid Meal](#)
4. [Dehydrated One Pots](#)
5. [5-way Black Bean Soup](#)
6. [Stuffed Green Bell Pepper Soup](#)
7. [No Knead Bread](#)
8. [Quick One Pot Dinner \(It. Sausage\)](#)
9. [Pete's Amazing Lamb One Potter](#)
10. [Lee's Bean Soup](#)
11. [Baked Bean Casserole](#)
12. [Shepherd's Pie - Douglas](#)
13. [Batch o'Lore Casserole](#)
14. [Easy Cheesy Ramen](#)
15. [Fabulous Turkey Soup](#)
16. [Coke Chicken](#)
17. [One Pot Egg](#)
18. [African Bird Pepper Soup](#)
19. [Green Curry Chicken](#)
20. [Massaman Yellow Curry chicken](#)
21. [Secret of Better Beans](#)
22. [Texas All-In](#)
23. [Thigh High](#)
24. [Turtle Soup](#)
25. [Veggies and ...Whatever](#)
26. [Disaster Cat Chicken](#)
27. [Mexican Casserole - Easy](#)
28. [Mama's Goulash & Burgers](#)
29. [Lentil & Cauliflower Soup](#)

### **Directory of Resources**

If you have the bandwidth, a great starting point is to watch the [Depression Era Cooking show with Clara on YouTube if you haven't already](#). Clara has a website (in addition to being hip enough to be on YouTube) and well worth the visit to

<http://www.greatdepressioncooking.com/Welcome.html> Zillions of hints which gets me around to a long rap on "Lost Knowledge" which we will just have to save for another day...

A couple of readers sent in the [Hill Billy Housewife as a good source](#). I've spied a couple that might be interesting and I'll have to pass them along to Ellie-May...er... I mean Elaine...

[About.com has a piece on southern Food which has a lot of one-pot links](#), but no reason a few Yankees can't borrow a cup of this or that. Also, not to be missed says Tony - who admits to not being much of a cook, but what he lacks in the kitchen he makes up for in research - [is Busy Cooks](#). Casserole world, but yummy...their Creamy corned beef and noodles caught my eye...better go look at the scale to see if I can keep reading...

An extremely comprehensive collection of recipes of [the one-pot genre can be found at the 50+ Friends Club Cookbook located here](#). Scroll down a ways and click around to your heart's content.

The verbose URL is:

<http://www.50plusfriends.com/cookbook/crockpot/index-5b.html>

Another place to get ideas is to look at sailing publications and RV magazines. Often you can find gems in there. A sailing reader sent this:

"Aloha George ~ Lived onboard for over 20 years and [this was one of my favorite ways of making bread with limited energy resources](#). I haven't done it in years but found this recipe for you. Only thing is that it doesn't get the nice brown baked crust as you would in an oven.

And, as one of my ham radio buddies here in East Texas (who is active in scouting) points out, no survey of one-pot or camp-type cooking could be complete without a copy of [The Scout's Outdoor Cookbook \(Falcon Guide\)](#).

## Kalamata-Lemon Chicken

Easy, different and Delicious!

prep:10 min Bake:35 min Oven:400 F

1 to 1.25 lb skinless,boneless chicken thighs  
 1 Tbs olive oil  
 2/3 cup dried orzo (orzo is quick-cooking pasta, sells in small box)  
 1/2 cup drained, pitted kalamata olives  
 1 14-oz can broth  
 1/2 of a lemon, cut into wedges or chunks  
 1 Tbsp lemon juice  
 1 tsp-dried Greek seasoning  
 Hot chicken broth (optional)  
 Snipped fresh oregano (optional)

1. Preheat oven to 400F. In a 4-qt Dutch oven(or heavy pan), brown chicken in hot oil over medium-high heat for 5 minutes, turning once. Stir in orzo, olives, the can of broth, lemon wedges, lemon juice, Greek Seasoning, 1/4 tsp salt, and 1/4 tsp ground

pepper. Cover, bake for 35 minutes or until chicken is tender and no longer pink.

Tips from my experience: you can make this without browning the chicken and putting it in a 2-qt baking dish and covering with foil. However you do it, sometimes the orzo base will be soupy when you first take it out of the oven. Just let it sit for 10 minutes.

## **Indian Apricot Chicken**

(From Gluten-Free Family to give proper credit)

Serves 4 to 6 (or with leftovers)

2 cans chicken, drained  
 1/2 can chicken broth  
 1 medium onion, diced  
 3-4 cloves garlic, minced  
 1/2 c dried apricots, diced  
 1/4 c apricot jam  
 2 tsp turmeric  
 1 tsp cumin  
 2 cinnomon sticks, broken in half

Splash olive oil in small stew pot. Put all but chicken in pot and lightly cook till dried apricots are soft. Add chicken and heat through and for flavoring. Add more broth if too dry. Use cornstarch/water mix if too much liquid. Remove from stove and serve over rice. Leftovers make great chicken salad.

## **OSU Build A Pyramid Meal**

This is the OSU Build a pyramid meal #CFS 5058. The skillet meal master recipe.

Bread Group: 1 cup uncooked: rice, bulgur, pasta (macaroni, broken lasagna noodles, shels, rotini, spaghetti).

Vegetable Group: 1 1/2 - 2 cups bite sized, canned, cooked or raw: broccoli, spinach, peas, celery, carrots, green beans, corn, lima beans, onions, peppers, zucchini, potatoes, okra, frozen veggies.

Protein Group: 1 cup bite sized, cooked: hamburger, canned tuna or salmon, roast beef, ham, chicken, turkey, egg, beans, tofu, TVP, crab, shrimp, hot links, .

Sauce: 2 1/4 cups liquid: tomato sauce, spaghetti sauce, white sauce, canned tomatoes, canned soup and 1 1/4 can water or milk, chicken or beek broth.

Spices: 1/2 tsp (or to taste), choose 2: oregano, thyme, onion powder, garlic powder, salt & pepper, chili powder soy sauce, splash of tabasco.

Topping: 3 - 4 Tbsp: grated or sliced cheese, bread crumbs, cereal crumbs, crushed crackers, corn chips, fruits: canned, fresh or forzen.

Choose one food from each column (may use 2 or more). All foods should be bite sized. Then:  
 In a skillet:

1. Stir foods together in a skillet.
2. Bring to a boil.
3. Bring heat to lowest setting. Cover pan and simmer 30 minutes until pasta, rice or bulgur is tender. Stir occasionally.
4. Add more liquid if it becomes too dry.

In the oven:

1. Stir foods together in a casserole dish and cover tightly.
2. Bake in a 350 degree oven for about one hour. (Rice needs one hour, egg noodles may be cooked in 45 minutes).

In the microwave:

1. Stir foods together in a 1 1/2 or 2 quart microwave safe baking dish. Cover tightly.
2. Microwave 10 to 15 minutes.
3. Stir, then add cheese if desired. Cover and microwave for 5 to 10 minutes.
4. Let stand, covered, 5 - 10 minutes before lifting lid.
5. If rice or pasta isn't tender, recover and cook 1 - 3 minutes longer. Then let stand 5 minutes.
6. Add crisp or cruncy toppings just before serving.

Also - bean flour can be added to wheat flour when baking - creates a whole protein. Or beans and rice, beans and bread, etc. And, the make-a-mix books are really good - great low cost recipes with great control over ingredients. Also EFNEP - this gov. program has good recipes. Substitute eggs, dry cream soup recipe, etc.

Have a great day. Give a holler if you or Elaine want the cream soup recipe - it keeps for about 6 mos or so in a cool dry place. Then the powdered milk starts to have a hard time reconstituting. Unless you buy powdered milk from Bob's Red Mill here in Oregon. Good stuff. Keeps a long time.

## Dehydrated One Pots

Something to add into your thinking. You can dehydrate cooked one pot meals for your own version of freeze dried camp food, only cheaper and better. It isn't as tricky dangerous as canning. You can go really ethnic gourmet. Experiment. Keep in mind that flavors mute some. If you are gluten-free like me, it may be your only choice in the camp food realm. NESCO makes good dehydrators for this. Not terribly expensive. Basically, anything cooked can be dehydrated as long as it isn't really fatty. Pasta does well. You dice meat and veggies to a 1/4 inch dice so rehydrating is fairly quick. You cut parchment to size to spread the stuff on. Dehydrate it, put separate portions in smaller baggies and all into a large baggie with a slip of paper saying what it is. If you pop it in the freezer, it lasts about 2 years. Perfect for whatever is coming up in November and the EQ threat. Rehydrating is generally pouring boiling water over to cover and cover with a towel or pot cozy for maybe an hour to rehydrate. I use a small wide mouth Thermos. Timing varies, but this isn't rocket science. When it is rehydrated, it is done. Light weight and compact for a quick getaway. If things are moving, it probably won't be motorized very long. You can't personally carry many cans and bottles. They are really only good if you are able to stay put. Thinking about carrying, you might consider putting in a collapsible game cart hunters use to lug that big deer out of the wilds. (unless they are moneyed and GPS the location to a service that does the heavy stuff) A cart may be a good backup if 60 pound backpacks are not within the realm of your carrying capacity.

## 5 Ways Black Bean Soup

A reader sent in this note, which sounded great - as did the recipe, but it was a copyrighted article from the [Boston Globe \(boston.com\)](http://www.boston.com) so [click this line to get to the source](#) which prompted this reader

comment:

"made the black bean soup with bourbon & bacon -- wowza! (wondered what we were going to do with that 20 yr old bottle of Old Granddad that Bob's father isn't around to finish.) "

## Stuffed Green Bell Pepper Soup

50 min | 10 min prep

SERVES 16

- 2 lbs ground beef
- 2 quarts [water](#)
- 1 (28 ounce) can [diced tomatoes](#) (undrained)
- 1 (29 ounce) can [tomato sauce](#)
- 2 cups [cooked long-grain rice](#) (1/2 cup uncooked)
- 2 cups chopped [green bell peppers](#) (about 2 large peppers)
- 2 [beef bouillon cubes](#)
- 2 tablespoons packed [brown sugar](#)
- 2 teaspoons [salt](#)
- 1 teaspoon [pepper](#)

In 6-quart saucepan or Dutch oven, brown beef; drain.

Add remaining ingredients; bring to boil.

Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 30 to 40 minutes or until tender.

Makes about 16 servings.

## No Knead Bread

Probably a bit out of the scope of the book but I think it will be welcomed if the book is ever needed by someone ...

3 cups all-purpose or bread flour, more for dusting

¼ teaspoon active dried yeast

1¼ teaspoons salt

Cornmeal or wheat bran as needed.

1. In a large bowl combine flour, yeast and salt. Add 1 5/8 cups water, and stir until blended; dough will be shaggy and sticky. Cover bowl with plastic wrap. Let dough rest at least 12 hours, preferably about 18, at warm room temperature, about 70 degrees.

2. Dough is ready when its surface is dotted with bubbles. Lightly flour a work surface and place dough on it; sprinkle it with a little more flour and fold it over on itself once or twice. Cover loosely with plastic wrap and let rest about 15 minutes.

3. Using just enough flour to keep dough from sticking to work surface or to your fingers, gently and quickly shape dough into a ball. Generously coat a cotton towel (not terry cloth) with flour, wheat bran or cornmeal; put dough seam side down on towel and dust with more flour, bran or cornmeal. Cover with another cotton towel and let rise for about 2 hours. When it is ready, dough will be more than double in size and will not readily spring back when poked with a finger.

4. At least a half-hour before dough is ready, heat oven to 450 degrees. Put a 6- to 8-quart heavy covered pot (cast iron, enamel, Pyrex or ceramic) in oven as it heats. When dough is ready, carefully remove pot from oven. Slide your hand under towel and turn dough over into pot, seam side up; it may look like a mess, but that is O.K. Shake pan once or twice if dough is unevenly distributed; it will straighten out as it bakes. Cover with lid and bake 30 minutes, then remove lid and bake another 15 to 30 minutes, until loaf is beautifully browned. Cool on a rack.

## Quick One Pot Dinner

1 PACKAGE OF fresh hot Italian sausage  
 1 onion  
 1 cup rice  
 1 can tomatoes  
 ½ green pepper

Cup sausage into rounds, brown with onion in heavy pan add rice tomatoes and ½ cup water ( or slightly more if you like your rice really soft) cover and simmer for ½ hour. 5 minutes before it is done add in the diced green pepper.

This is the fastest and tastiest meal out there.. doesn't even need ANY salt and pepper seasonings!

## Pete's Amazing One Potter

(Note: Normally I don't leave names in, but how many Petes are there is So. Oz?)

I thought you might like to peruse this recipe, which is a favourite with friends and family on weekends and lazy holidays.

All the best

Pete

South Australia

Pete's wobbly Aussie lamb shanks with garlic dumplings.

This is a delightfully entertaining recipe, which can be cooked in a single pot in almost any location – my preference being out camping in the bush. Serves 4 people. Cooking time 2 – 4 hours.

Ingredients

1 x Mate (Close friend).

2 x Bottles red wine of choice. (This might vary, depending on item 1 above.)

4 x Medium sized lamb shanks. Use machete or hatchet to cut through the joint of the shank.

2 x Onions, chopped into big chunks.

2 x Carrots. Remove ends, chop into 1" pieces.

3 x Cloves garlic. Chop 2 cloves into coarse chunks. Chop 1 clove finely for the dumplings.

2 x Coffee mugs of chopped & peeled locally available pumpkin.

4 x Medium washed potatoes.

1 x Litre chicken stock.

3 x Sprigs fresh rosemary.

1 x Lemon.

Flour

Suet (any hard white fat will do really)

Salt & pepper.

Water.

Method

Stage 1.

Crack open one bottle of wine & fill two generously sized wine glasses almost to the brim. Set remainder of wine aside.

Solemnly toast your mate, wishing yourselves both health, wealth & happiness.

Drink deeply from your glass (DDFYG), savouring all the finer aspects of your chosen tittle.

## Stage 2.

Take a heavy bottomed saucepan and place on campfire grid. Ensure fire is briskly burning below saucepan. Not too hot mind.

Put half a cup of fat in the pan with the chopped onions.

Whilst onions fry, quaff once again from your glass. Repeat if necessary.

Once onions are turning glassy, build up the fire and brown one lamb shank at a time with the onions, removing to a plate whilst the next one is being browned. (This will ensure fat stays hot & each shank browns nicely.) Try not to burn the onions. Remove them to the plate if they start to get dark brown.

DDFYG. Admire & discuss the surroundings, taking particular note of scenery, air quality and any fellow campers.

## Stage 3.

With your left hand, casually toss the carrots, pumpkin & garlic into the pot. Using your right hand, DDFYG and top up your glasses as needed.

Stir veggies around in the pot, frying lightly for a couple of minutes. If this inhibits your right hand in any way, temporarily lay the spoon aside and DDFYG.

Slowly add half the chicken stock. Slowly, because you don't want to cool the pan contents rapidly.

Slowly pour approximately half a glass of red wine into the pan. Check your glasses and adjust the levels as required.

Holding hand roughly 12 inches above pan, gently drop the sprigs of Rosemary onto the meat and veggies.

Squeeze half a lemon's juice into the pan.

Add salt & pepper to your liking.

## Stage 4.

Whilst it is difficult to be exact, it is normally about this point that the second bottle of wine should be opened, your glasses filled and the appropriate salutations & expressions of mutual admiration of one's culinary skills shared.

Allow stock to come to a brisk boil and then let the fire burn back. Hold the stock at a gentle simmer & place the lid on the pan.

Stir occasionally, topping up the stock as required. Replace lid on pan after stirring.

After approximately an hour, chop the potatoes into eight pieces each & stir into pan. Leave the skins on. It is permissible & normally essential to sit during this stage of the proceedings.

## Stage 5.

Make 8 dumplings as follows:-

Pour 250g flour into a mixing bowl.

Add 100g of finely chopped or grated white fat/suet.

Sprinkle in some chopped garlic to suit your strength of flavour.

Drop a generous pinch of both salt and pepper into the bowl.

Slowly add cold water to make a soft dough. It should not be too sticky.

Make dumpling balls about the size of a grown wallaby's gonads.

Wipe hands roughly on the seat of your pants & DDFYG. (Please note this can be done at any time that the urge is felt. I've always believed in playing freely with any recipe & hope you will too.)

Stage 6.

In the warm glow of the fire & the best of Bacchus, test the meat of the lamb shanks. When the meat starts to break apart with a twisted fork, add the dumplings to the gravy in the pan.

Allow dumplings to cook in the simmering gravy for about twenty minutes or until cooked through. In extreme cases, whilst waiting for the dumplings to cook, it might be necessary to open another bottle. This is, of course, entirely at the chef's discretion.

Serve with red wine.

## Lee's Bean Soup

1/2 lb. bacon, cut into pieces

1 c. chopped onion

shredded or cubed cooked ham (optional)

2 cans (10-14 oz. ea.) chicken broth

2 cans (14-16 oz. ea.) pinto beans, undrained

1 tbs. sugar

2-4 jalapenos, chopped (to taste - start with 2 and work from there)

salt and pepper, to taste

In soup-pot or dutch oven cook bacon pieces with onion (and ham if using) till bacon is rendered but not quite-crisp, stirring occasionally. Drain most of the grease, but leave a little for flavor. Add rest of ingredients to pot. Bring to boil, then reduce heat and simmer at least 2 hours, stirring occasionally (6 hours won't hurt it a bit - it seems to just get better the longer it cooks). Makes 4-6 servings. Recipe doubles and freezes well. And of course is excellent with cornbread on the side.

## Baked Bean Casserole

1/2 lb. any ground meat

1/2 lb. bacon, chopped

1 c. chopped onion

2 cans (14-16 oz. ea.) pork-and-beans, drained

1 can (14-16 oz.) lima beans, drained

1 can (14-16 oz.) red beans, drained

2 tsp. dry mustard

1 tsp. vinegar

3/4 c. brown sugar

1/2 c. ketchup

In dutch oven on stovetop brown meats along with onions, over medium heat, till done. Drain grease. Add rest of ingredients and stir all together. Bake, uncovered, in 350 degree oven for 45 minutes (or may place in crock-pot - on low 2-3 hours, or high 1-2 hours). Makes 4-6 servings. (Note: may substitute any beans for those listed. Use whatever you have on hand.)

## Shepherd's Pie - Douglas

1 pound lean beef chunks

1 Onion (chopped)

1 tsp. Italian Seasoning

Salt and Pepper

1 can corn (drained)  
2 cups mashed Potatoes (leftovers work fine)  
2 Tbsp butter

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Using a small cast iron skillet over medium heat, put in the Beef and chopped onion. Sprinkle on the Salt, Pepper and Italian Seasoning and cook until the beef is brown. Pour in the drained corn over the cooked beef and spread the mashed Potatoes evenly over the top. Dot with the butter. Put the Cast Iron Skillet into the oven and Bake for 30-35 minutes. Yum!

## Batch o' Lore Casserole

1 box Mac & Cheese  
1 can or pkg (u pick) tuna/salmon/chicken/beef/tofu or meat substitute  
1-2 cups canned veggie mix

Prepare mac & cheese as directed. While waiting, drain canned meat and veggies. Once mac is done, add cheese, meat, and veggies to mac and mix thoroughly, seasoning to taste (garlic a good choice, as is lemon pepper!) Time: 10 mins Feeds: 2-3 adults

## Easy Cheesy Ramen

1 Pkg Ramen Noodles  
1 Jar (u pick) marinara/asian stirfry/buffalo/mexican cheese sauce  
1 can or pkg (u pick) tuna/salmon/chicken/beef/tofu or meat substitute  
1-2 slices cheese of choice

Prepare ramen as directed. While waiting, drain canned meat & tear up cheese slices. Once ramen is cooked & drained, first add cheese, then meat, then sauce of choice, seasoning to taste. Time: 10 mins Feeds 2-3 adults

## Fabulous Turkey Soup

-- a meditation on the Stone Soup principle

We eat a lot of turkey, but since there's only two of us, we sometimes have bones left over with some meat on them after two nights of eating it straight. This is when I get to make my "never the same twice" turkey soup.

It starts when cleaning up after the 2nd night of turkey meat. Put the bones, skin, and any scraps into a storage container. It's always best if you can make the soup in the pan that the turkey originally cooked in, but if you have to start the soup with a clean pot, try this: Put a cup or two of boiling water in the roasting pan, soaking and scraping out all the turkey 'essence' from the bottom and sides of the pot. If there's a roasted onion or two left, so much the better. All these go together in a holding vessel to wait in the fridge till tomorrow's follow-through. Any other leftover veggies can go into a separate container in the fridge till the next stage is done.

Stage two is gentle boiling of the bones, onions, skin, and scraps (along with a bay leaf or two if you've got 'em) for a couple of hours, till the scraps fall from the bones and the whole thing is in pieces. If you're not recycling the roasting pan, and especially if you don't have leftover onions from the roasting process, you can start by frying onions and garlic to the transparent stage at the bottom of your soup pot, before you throw in the bones and etc. to boil. You'll need to add at least a quart of water to the pot,

likely even more. Some people go so far as to include broccoli stems, cabbage and celery butts, potato peels, pea pods, corn cobs, onion butts and skin at this stage-- stuff you might not want to look at face-to-face, but which will all add flavors to the broth, and will be strained out after this stage.

Sometimes the broth won't be very dark, sometimes it will (depending on the way you cooked the meat in the first place, and also depending on which other veggies get included). If you like it dark every time, then you can break the bones and bake them at 400 degrees for 45 minutes to an hour before boiling them, so they are ready to give up all their marrow and make you a very rich broth. (I never do this, but I read about it at a "depression-era cooking site", and it sounds right -- just keep an extra-sharp eye out for bone slivers when you sort through the boiled matter later.)

Once the bones are boiled (2-3 hours), get a slotted spoon and fish out all the 'stuff', or else pour the mix through a colander, then put the broth back in the soup pot. Set the 'stuff' aside in the colander to cool (put a lid or dish cloth over it, in case of flies). This is the point where you use your genius to make up the special character of the soup.

Here are some suggestions:

\*beans -- the fastest cooking are ones called "soup beans", like small white navy beans. Any \*small\* bean can be soaked during the time the bones are boiling, including peas, small reds or blacks, lentils, or mung beans (old beans take longer). Canned pre-cooked beans are fine too. Big dried beans (favas, limas, pinto, kidney) will have to be soaked starting the night before. Some people like to include the soaking water in the soup, some throw it away because they think it adds to the flatulence factor. Your call! (there's flavor in that water, just so you know...) Two soups ago I used yellow soup peas in a lighter-colored broth, and the soup came out so sweet and golden that we thought it was our best ever. Then last soup I used navy beans in a much darker broth, and it mellowed into a real "stew", causing us to wonder whether this wasn't, in fact, the best. Using beans ensures that even if there's not much meat left on the bones, there's plenty of protein in the soup. One cup of dried beans or two cups of canned beans should be plenty, whatever you go with.

\*starch (potatoes; rice or any other grain; squash; sweet potatoes or yams) -- any soup will do fine with one or more of these, but they make very different effects depending on how you use them. If you have enough leftover potatoes, I'd say mash most of them into the broth and cut the firmest few into bite-sized cubes. Mashed potatoes in quantity will thicken the soup almost as well as split peas do, so you can skip the beans entirely, especially if there's lots of turkey meat. Cooked mashed winter squash, yams, or sweet potatoes will do the same, and will also add more flavor than the potatoes, which can be a plus.

Fully cooked grains will soak up a little broth too. Note: If you decide to throw in a cup of raw rice, barley, millet, or other dry grain, make sure you have at least an hour to fully cook the grains (and/or beans) before you add back any other ingredients. You might need to add more water to keep the soup from over-thickening.

\*leftovers (this includes any veggies saved from previous meals, whether raw or cooked). About an hour before dinner, go through the fridge and gather every wilted, old, unsightly scrap of veggies you find, trimming away all bad parts first of course. Leftover salad is a brilliant addition, as long as it hasn't been dressed (though you can rinse off the salad), and cabbage or any mix of greens is great too. This is your chance to get your family to eat their vegetables! Cut up small or shredded, your veggies will cook down to nothing and nobody will be the wiser. Also you can go out into the garden and find things that might have been overlooked -- the last few unripe tomatos, a few stalks of celery or parsley, misshapen carrots, a beet including all of its top leaves, whatever attracts. You control how long these take to cook down by how small you chop them. Just make sure you have roughly an hour to simmer the whole thing after the last ingredients go in, so the flavors blend and you can tell how much salt, pepper,

tamari, herbs, garlic powder or whatever-else it needs. Consider adding a spoonful of "stuffing mix herbs" or "poultry seasoning" that can be bought as a blend at the grocery store to include that taste of tradition and help the flavors to blend.

\*the "mush" you strained out of the broth -- Not everybody likes to paw through this stuff, so if you are not going to do it, then be honest with yourself. If you know in advance you can't face it, then make every effort to strip all meat off the bones before they are boiled, and add it back at the one-hour-before-serving point. But what I have noticed is, even bones I think have been picked clean end up yielding more meat once they are boiled, so refraining from picking through the mush means you will be throwing out part of the soup (including your seasonings and those original onions). I'm cheap and I ~really~ like turkey, so I go the extra mile and pick through. The soup is richer for the effort. My kittys thank me for doing so, too, since there's usually skin, veins, joints, tendons and other turkey parts that I don't want but they are thrilled to eat once the bones are removed. They won't eat the onions or vegetables, though, so those go in the compost.

Voila! Ten soups in one! Serve with some kind of bread, chips or crackers on the side. You should end up with dinner for four and a lunch, at least. To stretch it further, ladle hot soup over a medly of fresh shredded veggies of your choice, either raw or very lightly steamed. This makes the soup into a luscious 'hot salad', adding color and crunch to the mix. A final treat comes with the very last bowl of soup, which I will ladle over buttered toast for lunch.

## Coke Chicken

Here is my favorite 1 pot recipe. To make this really decadent, use a whole bottle of white wine and cook down in a sauté pan.

1½ hours | 20 min prep

SERVES 6-8

- \* 1.5-2 lbs chicken thighs, cubed
- \* 5 garlic cloves, minced
- \* 1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger
- \* 2-3 leeks, sliced into rounds, including the green tops
- \* 1 jalapeno or serrano pepper, sliced
- \* 1 cup Coca-Cola
- \* 1 cup dry white wine
- \* 1/3 cup reduced salt soy sauce
- \* 2 salt-free chicken bouillon packets

1. Put in the pot: the garlic, ginger, chicken, bouillon, and white parts of the leeks. Add wine, soy sauce, and coke.
2. Bring to a boil, stirring to keep chicken from sticking to the pot and burning, and when it starts to foam, reduce heat to a simmer.
3. Simmer uncovered for 45 minutes.
4. Then add the green parts of the leeks and jalapeno and cook uncovered for another 15 minutes.
5. Serve over rice or with hot crusty bread.

## One Pot Egg

(G: This is novel...)

Crack one or two fresh eggs into a coffee mug. Add salt, pepper, touch of cilantro or parsley, a tablespoon or less of olive oil, and a couple tablespoons of milk or water, stir vigorously.

Put in microwave on medium high for about three minutes or less.

Comes out a puffy soufflé type thing you eat right out of the mug, not at all what you would expect.

## African Bird Pepper Soup

In a large pot sauté onions, chicken chunks and par boiled potatoes until brown. Add 1 can of rotel tomatoes, 2 cans of chicken broth, soy salt and African bird pepper to taste (you can use cayenne pepper as a substitute) and additional water to cover the mix. Cook on a low heat until ingredients are cooked. Remove from heat and add a quarter of a cup of peanut butter. Mix until thickened and serve with french bread.

## Green Curry Chicken

Ingredients for 2 people (Medium Hot)

200 gms. Chicken Mince  
 50 gms. Green Curry Paste  
 400 ml Coconut Milk  
 2 Tablespoons Fish Sauce  
 1 Teaspoon Salt  
 2 Teaspoons Sugar  
 50 gms. Small Green Aubergine  
 5 gms Basil  
 2 Red Chillies  
 2 Kaffir (Citrus) Leaves or lime zest

Serve With

Hot Rice  
 or Rice Noodle

Preparation

1. Put a medium sized pan on the heat, add the coconut milk and cook for 1 minute.
2. Add the green curry to the pan and stir it until mixed, bring to the boil.
3. When the curry is boiling, add the chicken mince using a teaspoon.  
 The aim is to make round ball shaped mince balls.
4. Cook for 10 minutes until the chicken is thoroughly cooked.
5. Add the fish sauce, salt, sugar, red chillis, aubergines, citrus leaves, basil (basically all the other ingredients) and stir it for a few seconds over the heat to warm them through.
6. Turn the heat off and serve it warm with hot rice or rice noodle

## Massaman Yellow Curry Chicken

A George Note: [Massaman curry is a southern Thai style.](#) We'll stay with their sticks, thanks. (Just seeing if you're paying attention, LOL)

Ingredient For 6 People ( Medium Spicy )

2 Tablespoons Yellow Curry Paste  
 500 gms Chicken Legs  
 300 ml Coconut Milk  
 400 ml Water  
 250 gms Potato  
 5 Tablespoons Fish Sauce  
 1 Tablespoon Salt

100 gms Sugar  
10 gms Coriander Leaves for Garnish

#### Preparation

1. Put the coconut milk into the pan and bring to the boil.
2. When the coconut milk is boiling add the curry paste and mix it into the coconut milk.
3. Clean the chicken legs and score with a knife, then put into pan.
4. When the curry is boiling again add the water into pan.
5. Add the fish sauce, sugar, and salt and cook for 30 minutes.
6. Chop the potatoes into 5 cm cubes and put into the curry pan.
7. Cook for 30 minutes.
8. Serve it when it warm, garnish with a little chopped coriander leaf.

Serve With  
Hot Rice  
Garlic Bread

## Secret of Better Beans

I came across this method on one of the America's Test Kitchen shows, a great learn to cook from scratch show. They test methods and tell you which one works best. This was new to me and I highly recommend it.

Soak dried beans in cold water 8 hours to overnight, in water which has been salted with about 3 Tablespoons salt. Stir to dissolve salt for a few minutes. There is an old belief, somewhat justified, that you should not cook beans with salted water. This method seems to pre-soften the dried skins. When ready to cook, pour beans into strainer and rinse very, very well. Put in fresh water and bring to high heat for about 5 minutes, turn to relatively low and cook for up to an hour and a half or until done. They sometimes finish cooking much sooner. The beans cook evenly, there is less splitting and have a very nice texture, and the skins will not be tough.

## Texas All-In

I put 2 lbs of mixed beans in a pot this morning.

Onions, bell peppers, celery, mushrooms, parsley, garlic, and what ever I could find. Oh, and a can of mild Ro-Tel.

The left-over Easter ham just went in. Some Tex-mati rice and we will have a meal fit for... just about anyone. Tex-Mati rice is a Basmati rice grown in Tx, very good.

#### *Stove-top one pot suggestions.*

Brown the meat if raw, any kind; round, roast, loin pork/beef,  
less expensive meats are usually tough, ie, round roast, but less fat and takes longer to cook till tender

add water, onions, potatoes, garlic, tomatoes... et al  
cook on low heat for ... hours

## Thigh High

(OK, the reader didn't call it that, but I figured with a little marketing pa-zaz...you know?)

George, my husband and I have been reading your site for a little over two years, and we are deeply appreciative of the knowledge and insight you've given us! We now have a great vegetable/herb garden, rain barrels, and just this summer installed a solar-powered freezer in our garage. We are in our late seventies and have vivid memories of the great first depression! We still use it up, wear it out, make it

do or do without.

So I am happy to "give back" with one of my many one-pot recipes. This is for chicken thighs. I prefer them boned for this recipe.

Take four, five or six thighs, (whatever) and sauté them in olive oil until one side is a nice brown. Use a large pot that has a cover. Chop an onion and two or three cloves of garlic (plus a jalapeno if you like a little heat.)

When your meat is brown add the onions and continue cooking until they are soft and transparent. Add salt at this point. We prefer Kosher salt. While this is going on, take some fresh thyme and scraping off the leaves add about a half tablespoon of these. When your onion is transparent, throw in a 14 ounce can of diced tomatoes. Cover the pot and let it simmer for another 4 - 5 minutes until the chicken is cooked through. If there isn't enough liquid to prevent burning, add a glug of white wine. Serve with a side salad.

## **Turtle Soup**(call it "turtle on the half-shell" if you're feeling rather French!)

(G:The reader credits this one to tracker and legendary outdoorsman Tom Brown, Jr.)

Trap, persuade, tease or otherwise "obtain and kill" one cantaloupe-diameter-sized turtle from meadows (box turtle), ponds and streams (common terrapin, etc.) or the like. The more spherical the shell the better/easier it is to prepare this dish in, well, its own dish.

Coltsfoot leaves (if you know how to roast and dry them), or a pinch of ash from the fire

Cattail shoots and tubers

Fresh wild onions

Fresh or dried wild mushrooms (only if you know what you're doing, here ; )

Remove belly-shell from turtle, cut off head, feet and tail and remove belly and leg skin, exposing entrails and flesh. Entrails may be eaten but this is an acquired taste (I remove entrails; were I truly trying to survive, I wouldn't even bother cooking this guy).

Sprinkle exposed belly flesh with salty coltsfoot or ash, add some water and place "shell-bowl" on medium campfire coals. Do Not nestle shell in hot coals; shell will heat to rapidly and crack, thus ruining your "pot."

Refresh coals underneath as needed to allow water to begin simmering. Not looking for a rolling boil here.

After perhaps 30-40 min., you should have a nice simmer and as you continue, the turtle will begin to loosen it's hold from the inside of your shell...I mean, pot. As meat separates, you can begin to increase your heat a bit to allow for some fresh peeled cattail tubers to be added in (nature's finest potato-wannabe, second to yucca). Go ahead and top him off with a little more water (all you can fit in the shell at this point), and toss in your chopped onion (white bulbs whole and chopped "chives"), and some nice mushrooms. If you're so lucky to be deserted in the right location, you've perhaps located nature's finest gem of all; the truffle!

The rest is gravy, man – tubers will soften just like your Yukon Gold's before you mash them, your turtle meat is succulent and aromatic (yes, tastes wonderfully like chicken, with a slight fishiness, but not an unappealing one), and you have a wonderful stock/gravy that is loaded with nutrients (too many to name).

Tubers, mushrooms and turtle meat can be eaten with your fingers - turtle right off the bone like buffalo chicken wings – and drink (try not to gulp) the juice right from the bowl.

Recipe Serves One

Absolutely some of the finest eating you'll ever do. Thanks to Tom Brown, Jr. for inspiring this one... you'll end up tweaking the ingredients to your personal preference.

Bon appetite – so good, you'll hope they never find you.

## **Veggies and...Whatever**

I did this the other night, hadn't done it for a while but it fits your requirement perfectly. Any stir fry would, here's mine:

Chopped celery  
Chopped summer squash  
Zucchini squash  
Carrots  
Broccoli

You can add bell peppers, mushrooms and I think just about any other veggie

I did it with chunks of chicken breast but have also done it with chunks of beef and with shrimp. Just let it all simmer, you can add salt or salt with soy sauce when you serve, you can serve by itself or on top of white rice

You can also make it into a soup, fill pot with water then add the veggies + chopped tomatoes and onions for the soup I also add spinach

## **Disaster Cat's Chicken**

Greetings from the Kingdom of Dracawald (Europe), Shire of Eppliheimer (Shirone Ireland); I know you and you lady play SCA when you get the chance, so I thought I'd let you know we do here as well.

Anyway, you asked for one pot recipes and here's a very simple one I learned after we moved here (I was born in California and move to Europe 15 years ago when I got married), DH mostly grew up in California, but his family is from East Texas and now lives in Dallas.

In the old days, most Irish people did not have stoves, just a simple turf fire place and a large covered pot called a "Baker" (Dutch Oven, often with legs), a similar cast iron skillet for scones and a hanging crane if they were lucky to cook stew and soups. Some of these Bakers are very large, I have an old one that holds an entire goose, but a much simpler version of the old "goose, chicken or rabbit in a pot" can be done on a modern stove but also works well on a wood or turf one.

### *Irish Chicken in a Pot*

1 whole chicken that fits the size of your pot (I use medium to small)  
1 onion  
Enough cloves to decorate the Onion  
1 tsp salt (apx)

Make sure chicken is clean, has an empty cavity (remove giblets if any) and trussed (tied up or held together with pins)

Place chicken in a cast iron dutch oven or other good heavy pan.

You can either simply place it in the pot or lift it up a bit with a Jar lid, fitted trivet or other metal object

(I use two metal measure cups) This step is needed more if you decide to do this while camping over coals or a turf fire.

Fill pot with water until it just covers the chicken, now take the cloves and stick them into the onion. Place the onion in the pot.

Bring water to a boil then turn down to a simmer right away (this is important boiling will make the meat tough)

After about an hour, check the bird and if it appears almost done, add the salt for flavor.

When bird has simmered between one and three hours (depends on size of bird, your fire or stove etc) take out of water BEFORE it reaches the stage of falling apart off the bone.

Place on a plate and pour a bit of the flavored water over it and/or use the broth as the base for a good stock gravy.

Some families added flour dumplings the last half hour or so of cooking and would serve the bird on a tray with a bed of dumplings.

Other common side dishes might be roasted or boiled carrots (cooked with the bird or in another pan), cabbage, boiled or roasted potatoes. Basic foods that could be made in another pan over the fire or in a skillet. (*I'm thinking 'stick bread from the Boyu Scout books...since we're at one pot here- G*)

The secret of this dish is to keep it simple. The real version has no other flavoring besides the onion, clove and salt. Of course it is possible to vary the taste by adding things like garlic, lemon, carrots, sage, or other herbs but it will no longer be classic Irish one pot chicken. However, the cooking method is pretty much the same, and many places in Europe have variations of this dish using more herbs or spices.

To cook in an old fashioned fire place, you need either a pot with legs or a trivet (a fire proof metal ring or openwork table with legs) to set the chicken on. You may also want to make a "paste" of flour and water to cover the top of the chicken and water (this will be discarded but will keep down the chances of burning). You heat the pot by placing turf (or coals) under the pot and on top of the pot at the SIDE of the fire place or fire pit. Once pot is boiling hard, you remove some of them and you have to pay attention to keep adding more turf as needed, brushing off the burned stuff from on top and underneath.

A chicken takes between 1 and 2 hours done this way a whole goose about 3 hours. The results are out of this world! If the top part burns a bit, you just remove it and you may need to open and add more water during the cooking. It is better to just start out with extra water, because the pot and the flour "paste" will trap the steam and help cook the dish better if you don't break the seal. But it is better to break it than have the dish burn.

Hope you like this one, if you want more let me know. I also have recipes for griddle breads and other types of "depression" or "prepper" cooking.

(Oh yum!!! Griddle breads...but for another time...-G)

## **Mexican Casserole - Easy**

This is a weekly favorite in our house. We call it Mexican Casserole.

1 can Mexican style chicken tortilla soup. (We prefer the Campbell's Select version, but really any can of similar soup will work)

1 can chilli beans.  
 1 can Rotel or similar. (or plain diced tomatoes for those who can't take the heat).  
 1 cup rice. (instant, regular, brown, or white, whatever you have on hand)

Throw it all in the pot, bring to boil, and then simmer until rice is done.

While times are good and we have refrigeration, cheese and/or sour cream can be added. In times of crisis, the above recipe does quite nicely all by itself.

## Mama's Goulash (& Burgers)

Mama's Goulash

1 lb hamburger, fried up, then add;  
 1 can Tomato soup  
 1 15oz can tomato sauce  
 3 15oz cans water (rinsing both cans)

Bring to boil for 5 minutes,

Add 5-6 handfuls of your favorite pasta or even precooked rice, cook till done.

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**Mama's burgers n' sauce.** (1 lb hamburger, 4/5 burgers)

Fry hamburgers, then add  
 1 15oz can tomato sauce  
 1 15oz can water  
 1 slice cheese per burger, plus 1

cook till sauce thickens,  
 great w/mashed potato's

## Lentil & Cauliflower Soup

This is one of those weird combinations that just clicks, fast and easy, the lentils and cauliflower seem to cook to the right texture at the same time.

*Red Lentil and Cauliflower Soup*

You can always tell I think when either someone is skint or trying to use up things lurking in cupboards before going on holiday...hence last night's invention of lentil and cauliflower soup!! It was actually quite good and almost 'nursery food' in texture.

Serves 2:

Easy:

1/2 a cauliflower  
 4 tbsp approx of red lentils  
 1 pint light veg stock (I used 1 heaped tsp of marigold boullion)  
 1 onion finely diced  
 1 clove garlic finely chopped  
 1 pinch of chili powder  
 1 pinch cumin seeds  
 1 tsp butter

2 tsp olive oil  
Black pepper to taste  
1 tbsp cream cheese (optional)

- 1) Cut off all the cauliflower florets and reserve, with the remaining stalks and any good leaves finely chop, then heat the butter and olive oil together and add the chopped stalky bits, onion garlic, cumin and chili powder, simmer for about 5 mins gently being careful not to burn anything.
- 2) Add the florets and mix well, pour in stock until veg is about 1 cm over the liquid, cover and simmer for 15 minutes or until soft and the lentils are cooked through
- 3) Remove from heat and blitz with your tool of choice, stir in the cream cheese and season to taste.

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### ***To Sum Up***

Remind me never to do another cookbook. Fair bit of work and leaves me...hungry!!!

Seems an odd thing to get into for an economics web site and newsletter, but no, not really: makes more and more sense every time we go shopping. Then the whole model and all the recipes make a lot more sense. So does gardening.

Or, just go a few days broke and without eating. Suddenly, one pot meals will become the most important thing in your world. Hope it never comes to that, but an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of body weight.

Off to the kitchen now. Need to do a bit of prevention.

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George Ure

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