

Cheap Chicken Cooking

So... you're on a strict food budget until next payday? Or, do you just like a challenge, and like to see how little you can spend to feed your family? Here are some ideas for cheap chicken meals. I spent about \$40 on this weeks groceries (but I had a pantry full of stuff too - I stock up when things go on sale - like pastas, soups, etc.), and I went to a very Hispanic market that has AWESOME sales. ;) Your costs will vary depending on what you have on hand (i.e. if you already have green beans in your pantry, sub those in for corn or something else!)

Shopping list - Wherever possible, buy the cheapest brand - store brand, national brand on sale, use coupons, whatever - and always double check unit pricing too!

- 2 10lb. bags of chicken leg quarters (usually 39c-49c per lb., sometimes on sale for 19c-29c per lb.)
- 1 bunch of celery
- 3 medium brown onions
- 1 1lb bag of carrots
- 1 medium zucchini (Italian squash)
- 1 16oz box of mushrooms
- 1 jar Spaghetti sauce (stock up when the jars go on sale for <\$1, or use the cheap cans)
- 1lb pasta of choice (spaghetti, rotini, wheels, variety bag, whatever - keep it under \$1)
- 8oz of pasta for soup (elbow, shells, egg noodles, again, your preference, keep the cost low)
- 1 can cream of chicken soup
- 1 box of stuffing mix
- 1 pack of American cheese slices (24 slices)
- 1 can of biscuits (the cheap store brand, the ones that are like 2 or 3 for \$1.00!)
- Bag of frozen peas
- 3 cans of whole kernel corn
- 1 bottle of your favorite (or the cheapest!) BBQ sauce
- 1 5lb bag of rice
- 1 box of Saltine crackers
- 1 box Macaroni and cheese
- Milk (w, soy, rice)
- Butter
- Olive oil
- 1 can refried beans
- 1 packet of tortillas (10 or 12)
- 1 bunch cilantro

1.) PREPARING THE BIRD.

You now have 20 pounds of chicken sitting in your kitchen. Since it was previously frozen and probably partially defrosted right now it's time to cook it. I hope you have a couple of big stock pots. ;)

Cut a hole in the bag of chicken and rinse it out with cold water, flushing away all the nasty bloody water and little loose bits of skin and fat. Place the chicken into your biggest pots, and cover with water. I was able to fit all of my chicken into just two pots, you may have to use more depending on your pot size. For 20lbs of chicken, I used 5 stalks of celery (coarse).