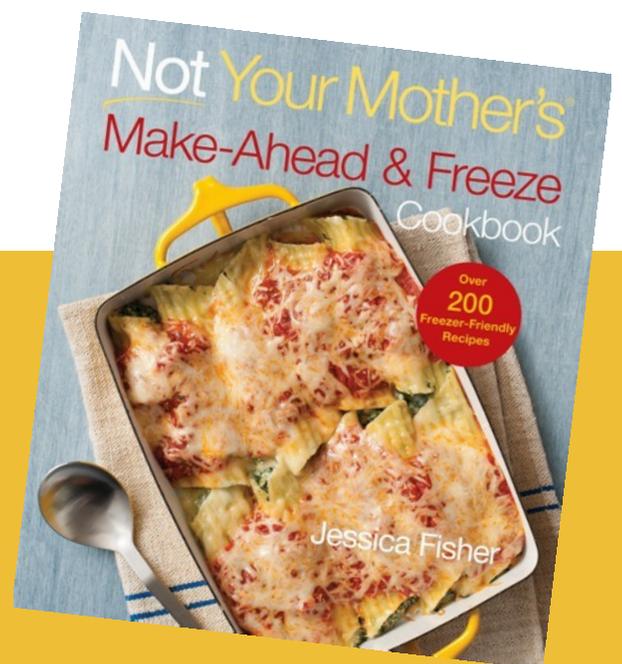


# Busy Holiday Nights Cooking Plan

focusing on recipes from  
***Not Your Mother's Make-Ahead & Freeze Cookbook*** by Jessica Fisher



# Busy Holiday Nights Cooking Plan

## 20-plus meals serving at least 4 people, day-long

Most of the recipes in this plan are for casseroles or “one-dish dinners”. These allow for quick and easy meals. These hearty dishes are perfect for busy nights during the holiday season.

Beefy Mushroom Gravy, page 81, 4 batches

Cream Cheese Mashed Potatoes, page 82, 1 batch

Shepherd’s Pie with Green Chile Mashed Potatoes, page 86, 2 batches

Taco Kit, using Chipotle Taco Seasoning Mix, page 89, 2 taco kits

Jamie’s Spice Mix, page 90, 1 batch

Sweet and Spicy Joes, page 91, 1 batch

Swedish Meatballs with Dill (with Meatloaf variation), page 100, 1 batch

Cooked Chicken, choose one of these methods in the book, pages 104 to 107, 11 cups are needed, you can package any extra for another meal

Chicken Enchilada Bake with Green Chiles and Jalapenos, page 120, 1 batch

Creamy Chicken Enchiladas, page 123, 2 batches

Bean and Cheese Nacho Bake, page 182, 2 batches

Cozy Cheese and Potato Casserole, page 184, 2 batches

Six-Layer Nachos, page 185, 2 batches

Potatoes Stuffed with Caramelized Onions and Dubliner Cheese, page 193, 1 batch

Split Pea Soup with Bacon and Thyme, page 214, 1 batch

Homemade Cream of Celery Soup for Cooking, page 223, 3 batches

Buttered French Toast Casserole with Almonds and Ginger, page 266, 2 batches

Cinnamon Bread, bonus recipe, 2 batches

# Grocery List

## FRESH PRODUCE:

- onions for 10 cups chopped
- 9 pounds potatoes (red or russet)
- 8 baking potatoes
- mushrooms, for 1 cup chopped
- 1 red bell pepper
- 2 jalapenos
- 7 garlic cloves
- carrots for 1 cup chopped
- celery for 6 tablespoons chopped
- fresh parsley
- fresh dill
- fresh cilantro
- fresh basil
- lemon for zesting

## DAIRY:

- 13 cups shredded cheddar cheese
- 8 cups shredded pepper jack cheese
- quart half and half
- quart milk
- dozen eggs

- 9 sticks butter
- three 8-ounce packages cream cheese
- 2 cups ricotta cheese
- 4 1/3 cup sour cream
- 1 cup shredded Dubliner or sharp cheddar cheese
- 3 tablespoons shredded parmesan cheese

## FROZEN:

- 8 ounces peas
- 2 32-ounce packages frozen shredded potatoes

## MEAT:

- 9 pounds ground beef
- 1 pound ground pork
- 4 to 5 pounds boneless, skinless chicken, for 11 cups chopped
- 4 slices bacon

## CANNED/BOTTLED/DRY GOODS:

- 9 cups refried beans (about 5 15-ounce cans)
- 64 ounces beef broth

## Grocery List *(continued)*

- 32 oz. tomato sauce
- 2 cups flour
- 16 oz. favorite salsa
- 1 pound dried split peas
- 13 oz. package tortilla chips
- two 16-ounce jars salsa verde
- 8 oz. enchilada sauce
- 8 oz. can chopped green chiles
- 8 oz. sliced black olives
- 3/4 cup sugar
- brown sugar
- olive oil
- 1/2 cup raisins
- 1/4 cup dried cranberries
- 1/4 cup sliced almonds
- 1/4 cup crystallized ginger
- allspice
- paprika
- chili powder
- dried oregano
- onion flakes
- garlic powder
- ground cumin
- ground cinnamon
- dried basil
- celery seed
- lemon zest, if not using fresh
- cayenne pepper
- chipotle chili powder
- bay leaf
- marjoram
- thyme

### **SEASONINGS:**

- dried dill, if not using fresh
- dried parsley flakes, if not using fresh
- dried basil, if not using fresh
- kosher and fine salt
- freshly ground black pepper

### **BAKERY:**

- bread for 3 cups crumbs\*
- 4 loaves Italian bread\*
- 2 packages soft taco size flour tortillas
- 3 dozen corn tortillas

\*depending on the size of your Italian bread, you may be able to use the ends

## Packaging

- aluminum foil
- 6 sandwich-size zip-top bags, labeled Taco Cheese (2), Enchilada Cheese (2), Chipotle Taco Seasoning (1), and Jamie's Spice Mix (1)
- 8 quart-size zip-top freezer bags, labeled Sweet and Spicy Joe's (2), Swedish Meatballs (2), Taco Meat (2) Gravy (2)
- 6 gallon-size zip-top freezer bags, labeled Meatloaf (2), Taco Kit (2), and Stuffed Potatoes (2)
- ten 9x13 baking dishes with lids, labeled French Toast Casserole (2), Bean and Cheese Nacho Bake (2), Creamy Chicken Enchiladas (2), Cheesy Potatoes (2), Shepherd's Pie (2)
- four 8-inch square baking dishes with lids, labeled Mashed Potatoes (2) and Chicken Enchilada Bake (2)
- two 8-inch pie plates, labeled Six Layer Nacho
- plastic containers with lids for Split Pea Soup

## Prep List

- Chop onions, bell pepper, jalapeno, celery, carrot, parsley, dill, cilantro, mushrooms, and garlic.
- Soften butter for Cinnamon Bread and French Toast Casserole.
- Soften cream cheese.
- Cook chicken and chop.
- Make Beefy Gravy (x4), cool, and chill.
- Grind bread for crumbs.\*
- Make Cream of Celery Soup for Cooking (x3), cool, and chill.
- Make Chipotle Taco Seasoning and Jamie's Spice Mix.
- Shred cheese if not purchased shredded.

\*depending on the size of your Italian bread for the French Toast, you may be able to use the ends for crumbs. If you'd like, wait until you make the French Toast to grind crumbs.

## Cooking Plan

1. Start baking the 8 potatoes in the oven. Be sure to set the timer. Continue with steps until timer rings, then remove from oven and allow to cool slightly.
2. Start remainder of potatoes to boil for mashed potatoes. This is a lot of potatoes. If you do not have a very large kettle, split it into two pots, 4 pounds of potatoes in one and 5 in the other.
3. Slice 2 loaves of bread lengthwise for Cinnamon Bread. Slice 2 loaves in 1 1/2" slices for French Toast Casserole. Grind the ends for crumbs. (See previous note in prep list.)
4. Prepare Cinnamon Bread. Wrap, label, and freeze. [CINNAMON BREADS DONE]
5. Prepare French Toast Casserole. Wrap, label, and chill freeze. [FRENCH TOAST CASSEROLE DONE]
6. In a large skillet, cook two pounds of the ground beef for Shepherd's Pie. Follow recipe for filling. Divide into prepared pans. Package remaining gravy in labeled bags.
7. In same skillet, cook 2 more pounds of the ground beef. Season for taco meat. Drain and divide into labeled bags. Cool to room temperature. Chill in refrigerator before freezing.
8. Drain potatoes. If all in one pot, divide in two portions, with one portion being slightly larger. Use the larger portion to make Cream Cheese Mashed Potatoes and the slightly smaller portion for the Shepherd's Pie. Finish assembling Shepherd's Pies. Cool and chill before freezing. [SHEPHERD'S PIES DONE]
9. Divide mashed potatoes into prepared pans. Cool and chill before freezing. [CREAM CHEESE MASHED POTATOES DONE]
10. Baked potatoes should be done baking. Remove from oven if you haven't done so already. Allow to cool slightly. Prepare filling and stuff potatoes. Cool and chill before freezing. [STUFFED POTATOES DONE]
11. Start Split Pea Soup in large

- kettle.
12. Cook two pounds of beef and season for Sweet and Spicy Joe's. Cool and chill before freezing. [SWEET AND SPICY JOES DONE]
  13. Use remaining three pounds of beef and pork to make Swedish Meatballs and Meatloaf (meatloaf instructions are on page 99). Divide mixture into 2 parts. Make 2 meatloaves from ONE portion. Wrap, label, and freeze. [MEATLOAVES DONE]
  14. Form meatballs from remaining portion and bake. When done, divide into labeled bags. Chill before freezing. [SWEDISH MEATBALLS DONE]
  15. Prepare Cozy Cheese and Potato Bake quickly, using 4 cups of Cream of Celery Soup, and freeze immediately. [COZY CHEESE AND POTATO BAKE DONE]
  16. Prepare Chicken Enchilada Bake, using 2 cups Cream of Celery Soup and 3 cups cooked chicken. Wrap, label, and chill before freezing. [CHICKEN ENCHILADA BAKE DONE]
  17. Prepare Creamy Chicken Enchiladas. Wrap, label, and chill before freezing. [CREAMY CHICKEN ENCHILADAS DONE]
  18. Prepare Six Layer Nachos and Bean and Cheese Nacho Bake. Wrap, label, and chill before freezing. [SIX LAYER NACHOS AND BEAN AND CHEESE NACHO BAKE DONE]
  19. Package cheese for taco kits. Assemble taco kits in larger freezer bags and freeze. [TACO KITS DONE]
  20. Clean up the workspace. Wipe down the counters. Once the items in the refrigerator have chilled for several hours, transfer the packages to the freezer.

## Bonus Recipe: Cinnamon Bread

Cinnamon toast is pretty simple to make. Toast sliced bread, slather it with butter, sprinkle on cinnamon sugar. But, like its savory counterpart, Easy Make-Ahead Garlic Bread, page 322, this Cinnamon Bread is so convenient. Pull a loaf out of the freezer to thaw overnight. Bake in its foil wrappings, then unwrap during the last minute or two to crisp the top.

**Packaging:** Heavy-duty aluminum foil

1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened

2 tablespoons sugar

2 teaspoons ground cinnamon

1 large loaf French or Italian bread, sliced lengthwise

1. In a small bowl, combine the butter, sugar, and cinnamon.
2. Spread the butter in a thick layer over the surface of each bread half.

**Freezing instructions:**

Put the two bread halves back together and wrap with foil. Freeze.

**To thaw and serve:**

Thaw the bread in the refrigerator. Bake, still wrapped in foil, at 375°F for 25 minutes. Or bake the frozen bread for 35 to 40 minutes. Open the halves and bake for 1-2 minutes more, allowing the top to crisp. Slice into portions and serve immediately.

# Freezer Checklist for Busy Holiday Nights Cooking Plan

Frozen Entrée or Side Dish	X	X
<p><b>Swedish Meatballs, Cream Cheese Mashed Potatoes &amp; Beefy Mushroom Gravy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thaw overnight in the refrigerator. Reheat meatballs and gravy on the stovetop. Bake mashed potatoes at 375° for 30-45 minutes or until hot.</li> <li>• For serving, you'll need a vegetable side dish and cranberry sauce.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Swedish Meatloaf</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thaw overnight in the refrigerator. Bake at 350° for 45-60 minutes.</li> <li>• For serving, you'll need a vegetable and/or other side dish, such as Stuffed Potatoes or Cozy Cheese and Potato Casserole.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Taco Kit</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thaw overnight in the refrigerator. Reheat meat mixture on the stovetop.</li> <li>• For serving, you'll need fresh toppings such as lettuce, tomatoes, salsa and sour cream.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Shepherd's Pie</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thaw overnight in the refrigerator. Bake for 1 hour at 350° degrees.</li> <li>• For serving, you'll need a vegetable side dish.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Sweet and Spicy Joes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thaw overnight.</li> <li>• For serving, you'll need hamburger buns, shredded cheddar cheese, and sliced dill pickles. You'll also need side dishes.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Chicken Enchilada Bake</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thaw overnight in the refrigerator. Bake at 350 for 1 hour.</li> <li>• For serving, you'll need salsa and sour cream, beans and rice, and a vegetable side dish.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Creamy Chicken Enchiladas</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thaw overnight in the refrigerator. Top with salsa and cheese, and bake at 350° for 20 minutes.</li> <li>• To finish preparation, you'll need the salsa of your choice. For serving, you'll need a vegetable side dish, beans, rice, salsa and sour cream.</li> </ul>		

Frozen Entrée or Side Dish	X	X
<p><b>Six-Layer Nachos</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thaw overnight in the refrigerator. Bake at 350° for 25-40 minutes.</li> <li>• For serving, you'll need tortilla chips and fresh toppings such as salsa, sour cream, and guacamole.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Bean and Cheese Nacho Bake</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thaw overnight in the refrigerator. Bake at 350° for 40 minutes.</li> <li>• For serving as an appetizer, you'll need tortilla chips. For serving as a main dish, you'll need salad and rice as side dishes and salsa for topping.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Split Pea Soup</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thaw overnight in the refrigerator. Reheat in a saucepan.</li> <li>• For serving, you'll need fresh bread and vegetable side dishes such as Stuffed Potatoes and a green salad.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Cozy Cheese and Potato Casserole</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thaw overnight in the refrigerator. Bake at 375° for 1 hour.</li> <li>• For serving, you'll need a main dish or several side dishes if you want to go meatless.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Potatoes Stuffed with Caramelized Onions and Dubliner Cheese</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thaw overnight in the refrigerator. Reheat at 375° for 15-20 minutes.</li> <li>• For serving, you'll need a main dish or several side dishes if you want to go meatless.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Cream Cheese Mashed Potatoes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thaw the potatoes in the refrigerator. Preheat the oven to 375° Bake, covered, for 30 to 45 minutes or until hot. Stir the potatoes before serving.</li> <li>• For serving, you'll need a main dish or several side dishes if you want to go meatless.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Buttered French Toast Casserole with Almonds and Ginger</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thaw overnight in the refrigerator. Bake at 350° for 20 minutes covered and then 20 minutes more uncovered.</li> <li>• For serving, you'll need a fruit side dish. Serve with maple syrup if desired.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Cinnamon Bread</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thaw overnight in the refrigerator, and bake at 375° for 25 minutes. If frozen, bake for 35-40 minutes.</li> <li>• Can be served as a side dish, snack, or dessert</li> </ul>		

## Swedish Meatballs

Thaw the meatballs and gravy in the refrigerator. Reheat the gravy in a large saucepan on the stovetop, whisking to recombine. Add the meatballs and simmer until heated through.

Date prepared:

## Meatloaf

Thaw the meatloaf completely in the refrigerator. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Unwrap the meatloaf, place it on a rimmed baking sheet, and bake for 45 to 60 minutes or until cooked through.

Date prepared:

## Taco Kit

Thaw the meat in the refrigerator and reheat in the microwave or in a pan on the stovetop. Serve with tortillas and cheese as well as fresh toppings like lettuce, tomatoes, salsa, and sour cream.

Date prepared:

## Shepherd's Pie

Thaw the casserole in the refrigerator. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Bake for 1 hour, until the filling is bubbly and the mashed potatoes are golden brown.

Date prepared:

## Chicken Enchilada Bake

Thaw completely in the refrigerator. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Bake for 1 hour, or until hot and bubbly.

Date prepared:

## Swedish Meatballs

Thaw the meatballs and gravy in the refrigerator. Reheat the gravy in a large saucepan on the stovetop, whisking to recombine. Add the meatballs and simmer until heated through.

Date prepared:

## Meatloaf

Thaw the meatloaf completely in the refrigerator. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Unwrap the meatloaf, place it on a rimmed baking sheet, and bake for 45 to 60 minutes or until cooked through.

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## Shepherd's Pie

Thaw the casserole in the refrigerator. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Bake for 1 hour, until the filling is bubbly and the mashed potatoes are golden brown.

Date prepared:

## Chicken Enchilada Bake

Thaw completely in the refrigerator. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Bake for 1 hour, or until hot and bubbly.

Date prepared:

## Sweet and Spicy Joes

Thaw in the refrigerator. Reheat the mixture in a large saucepan on the stovetop. Spoon the hot mixture onto hamburger buns and top with cheese and pickles. Serve immediately.

Date prepared:

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Thaw in the refrigerator. Reheat the mixture in a large saucepan on the stovetop. Spoon the hot mixture onto hamburger buns and top with cheese and pickles. Serve immediately.

Date prepared:

## Creamy Chicken Enchiladas

Thaw completely in the refrigerator. Remove the bag of cheese. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Pour 16 oz salsa over enchiladas and sprinkle with cheese. Bake for 20 minutes or until heated through and cheese is melted.

Date prepared:

## Creamy Chicken Enchiladas

Thaw completely in the refrigerator. Remove the bag of cheese. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Pour 16 oz salsa over enchiladas and sprinkle with cheese. Bake for 20 minutes or until heated through and cheese is melted.

Date prepared:

## Beefy Mushroom Gravy

Thaw in the refrigerator and reheat in the microwave or in a pan on the stovetop.

Date prepared:

## Beefy Mushroom Gravy

Thaw in the refrigerator and reheat in the microwave or in a pan on the stovetop.

Date prepared:

## Six Layer Nachos

Thaw the nachos in the refrigerator. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes, until hot and bubbly. Serve with chips and toppings.

Date prepared:

## Six Layer Nachos

Thaw the nachos in the refrigerator. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes, until hot and bubbly. Serve with chips and toppings.

Date prepared:

## Bean and Cheese Nacho Bake

Thaw completely in the refrigerator. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Bake for 40 minutes, or until hot and bubbly.

Date prepared:

## Bean and Cheese Nacho Bake

Thaw completely in the refrigerator. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Bake for 40 minutes, or until hot and bubbly.

Date prepared:

## Cinnamon Bread

Thaw in the refrigerator. Bake, still wrapped in foil, at 375° for 25 minutes. Or bake the frozen bread for 35 to 40 minutes. Open the halves and bake for 1-2 minutes more, allowing the top to crisp. Slice into portions and serve.

Date prepared:

## Buttered French Toast Casserole

Thaw completely in the refrigerator. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Bake, covered for 25 minutes, then remove the cover and bake 20 minutes more.

Date prepared:

## Split Pea Soup with Bacon and Thyme

Thaw in the refrigerator and reheat in the microwave or in a pan on the stovetop.

Date prepared:

## Potatoes Stuffed with Caramelized Onions and Dubliner Cheese

Thaw the potatoes in the refrigerator. Preheat the oven to 375°F. Unwrap potatoes and place on a baking sheet. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes, until heated through. Date prepared:

## Cozy Cheese and Potato Bake

Thaw completely in the refrigerator. Preheat the oven to 375°F. Bake for 1 hour or until hot and bubbly.

Date prepared:

## Cinnamon Bread

Thaw in the refrigerator. Bake, still wrapped in foil, at 375° for 25 minutes. Or bake the frozen bread for 35 to 40 minutes. Open the halves and bake for 1-2 minutes more, allowing the top to crisp. Slice into portions and serve.

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## Potatoes Stuffed with Caramelized Onions and Dubliner Cheese

Thaw the potatoes in the refrigerator. Preheat the oven to 375°F. Unwrap potatoes and place on a baking sheet. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes, until heated through. Date prepared:

## Cozy Cheese and Potato Bake

Thaw completely in the refrigerator. Preheat the oven to 375°F. Bake for 1 hour or until hot and bubbly.

Date prepared:

## Chipotle Taco Seasoning Mix

Date prepared:

## Jamie's Spice Mix

Date prepared:

## Cream Cheese Mashed Potatoes

Thaw the potatoes in the refrigerator. Preheat the oven to 375° Bake, covered, for 30 to 45 minutes or until hot. Stir the potatoes before serving.

Date prepared:

## Cream Cheese Mashed Potatoes

Thaw the potatoes in the refrigerator. Preheat the oven to 375° Bake, covered, for 30 to 45 minutes or until hot. Stir the potatoes before serving.

Date prepared:

## Taco Meat

Thaw in the refrigerator and reheat in the microwave or in a pan on the stovetop.

Date prepared:

## Taco Meat

Thaw in the refrigerator and reheat in the microwave or in a pan on the stovetop.

Date prepared:

## Taco Cheese

## Taco Cheese