

Robert W. Bruner presents:



MONTHLY LIFESTYLE BUZZ, TRENDS, TIPS, AND INSIGHT



**SMART TIP:**

Want to learn how to save energy in your own home? Check out this informative, tip-filled Energy Saver guide from Energy.gov: [\[CLICK HERE TO VIEW\]](#)

**WHO SAID IT?**

"It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it." [\[GET THE ANSWER\]](#)

**TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE:**

Last year, a survey asked more than 1,000 Americans if they knew what a 529 plan was. What percentage of the respondents did not?

- A) 41%
- B) 57%
- C) 72%
- D) 85%

[\[GET THE ANSWER\]](#)

**March, 2017**

**The multi-cooker phenomenon**

These electronic pressure cookers have people talking.

[\[CLICK TO READ\]](#)

**Options for old, unwanted gift cards**

How easy is it to exchange them for cash or something else?

[\[CLICK TO READ\]](#)

**Another great benefit of eating breakfast**

A morning meal may help regulate the body's biological clock.

[\[CLICK TO READ\]](#)

**Recipe of the Month**

Fresh and Healthy / Sweet and Savory  
Multi-Cooker Chicken Salad

[\[CLICK TO READ\]](#)



**The multi-cooker phenomenon**

Seldom does a product become a phenomenon, but such is the case with the Instant Pot® and similar multi-function, electronic pressure cookers. There are entire Pinterest pinboards devoted to recipes for them and a Facebook group that has over 375,000 members. Fans rave about versatility and convenience in page after page of Amazon reviews.

**What is it?** Take slow cooker architecture and improve it with pressure cooking (and other functions). Cooks familiar with the slow cooker experience (throw in some raw food and stock, turn it on, let it simmer on low for hours) are wowed when they realize that these ‘multipot’ appliances can turn frozen-solid chicken breasts into moist, shredded chicken in less than a half-hour. It’s a great tool for busy folks who aren’t always able to plan meals in advance or spend hours preparing dinner.

These multi-feature electronic pots can function as a slow cooker, steamer, rice cooker, electric pressure cooker, warming pot, browning pan, and yogurt maker. Therefore, cooks are able to use them in ways tailored to their lifestyles and tastes. Users are not only impressed with the potential time savings it offers, but also the space savings – it can perform the work of several kitchen tools within one countertop footprint.<sup>1,2</sup>

*\* Interested in trying out one of these multi-function cookers? Check out this month’s recipe below!*



## Options for old, unwanted gift cards

The situation: you have an old gift card, in a drawer or a box, for some store or service you never found yourself visiting or needing. Can you redeem it for its face value? Can you trade it for something more appealing?

You can sell unwanted cards (and buy other cards) at numerous, reputable gift card exchange websites. The downside is that you will probably end up selling your card for 70-75% of its face value. You could use the card to purchase a gift for someone else (and effectively save money that you would have ordinarily spent). You could donate the card to a charity, particularly one that routinely buys food and other consumer items for the people it serves. Lastly, there is no shame in regifting a gift card (in 2014, an American Express poll found that more than 75% of Americans approved of regifting).

If you have comparatively ancient gift certificates from a merchant, chances are you can exchange them for a newer gift card from that retailer. The sooner you use or exchange a gift card, the better. Some retailers archive old gift cards and render them dormant to stave off fraud.<sup>3,4</sup>



## Another great benefit of eating breakfast

Why should you start the day with a full meal or an attempt at one? Breakfast revs up the metabolism and provides us with energy. It may also reduce our chances of craving snacks in the afternoon. Plus, according to a new study published in *Circulation*, the journal of the American Heart Association, a good breakfast may lower your risk of a stroke or heart attack.

A research team based at Columbia University gathered 39 years of data on the nutritional components of the American diet as well as how they schedule their meals. Analyzing all this information, they determined that Americans who consistently started their days with breakfast tended to have good overall health – with a low type 2 diabetes risk, lower blood pressure and bad cholesterol levels, and less prevalence of obesity.

As to why, Columbia University professor Marie-Pierre St-Onge sees a clue within animal studies: “It appears that when animals receive food while in an inactive phase, such as when they are sleeping, their internal clocks are reset in a way that can alter nutrient metabolism, resulting in greater weight gain, insulin resistance, and inflammation.” When humans eat in an inactive phase, the same negatives may be occurring. So, get something to eat right after you get up. Don’t dismiss a cup of dry cereal: a meal distinguished by complex carbs, natural sugars, and adequate fiber is better than a donut or a toaster pastry.<sup>5</sup>



## **Recipe of the Month**

### **Fresh and Healthy / Sweet and Savory Multi-Cooker\* Chicken Salad**

#### ***Multi-Cooker Chicken\* Preparation...***

**3 Large Chicken Breasts (Approx. 1.5–2 lbs.)**

**1 Box Chicken Broth (32 oz.)**

**1 Tbsp. Lemon Juice**

**1 tsp Sea Salt**

**1 tsp Dill Weed**

**1/2 tsp Ground Ginger**  
**1/2 tsp Ground Black Pepper**  
**1/2 tsp Parsley**

***Chicken Salad Preparation...***

**3 Moist, Cooked Chicken Breasts**  
**4 Large Celery Stalks**  
**1 Large Honeycrisp Apple**  
**1 Cup Green Grapes**  
**1 Cup Olive Oil Mayonnaise**  
**2 Tbsp. Lemon Juice**  
**1 Tbsp. Deli Mustard**  
**1/4 Tsp Sea Salt**  
**1/4 Tsp Ground Ginger**  
**1/4 Tsp Ground Black Pepper**  
**1/4 Tsp Dill Weed**  
**1/4 Tsp Parsley**

***Multi-Cooker Chicken\* Preparation...***

Pour chicken broth into multi-cooker, add lemon juice and herbs, stir. Trim chicken breasts and place in mixture. Close lid tightly and cook on “poultry” setting plus 2 minutes. (Add 10 minutes if chicken breasts are frozen.) When finished, let sit for 3-5 minutes before releasing pressure.

***Chicken Salad Preparation...***

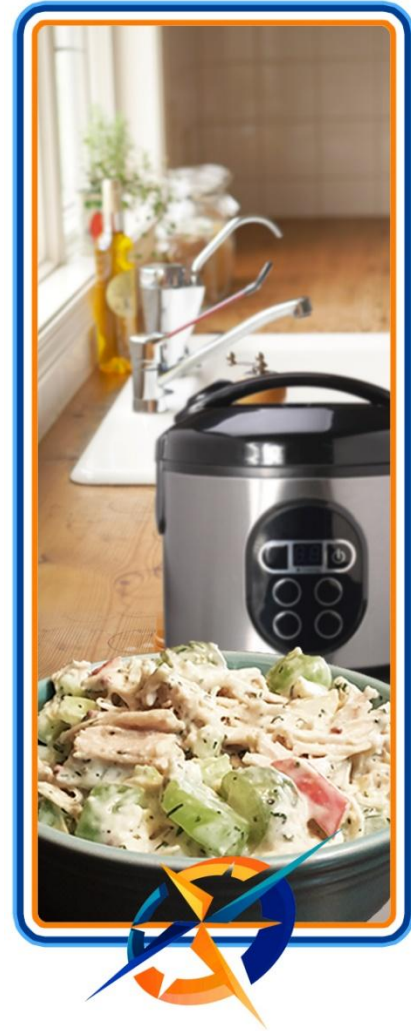
While chicken is cooking, dice celery, mince apple, and slice grapes in thirds (or quarters if grapes are particularly large). Place in large mixing bowl and add mayonnaise, lemon juice, and herbs/spices.

When chicken is done, remove carefully and use two forks to break into small, shredded chunks (it should come apart very easily). Once shredded, place into mixing bowl and mix all ingredients together.

That’s in! Enjoy as-is or with your favorite bread.

Optional: Add 1/4 cup diced red onion if you’d like a little more ‘zip.’

*\* No multi-cooker? No problem! Place thawed chicken breasts in a pan with broth and spices, bring to a boil, then let simmer (covered) for*



*approximately 10 minutes, turning occasionally. Reduce heat to medium and let cook (covered) for another 60 minutes (or until chicken shreds easily with a fork).*



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### WHO SAID IT?

Aristotle

### TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE ANSWER:

A: 72% of respondents could not identify that a 529 plan was a tax-advantaged vehicle for college savings.<sup>6</sup>



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### Citations.

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