

6 surprising things you can make in your Instant Pot

If you regard your Instant Pot as just a quick way to make stew and rice, these other uses may surprise you.

If the Instant Pot or another pressure cooker like it has become your favorite kitchen tool, you're in good company. The Instant Pot's popularity over the last several years has caused a boom in the market for electric pressure cookers, and a family of spin offs for countertop appliances, including an Air Fry Lid that puts the appliance into direct competition with other popular air fryers.



But the handy Instant Pot is good at much more than making quick work of pulled meat and dried beans. You may be surprised at all the ingenious things you can make from your countertop.

Read on for six unusual uses for your Instant Pot. Also, here's what all those buttons on your Instant Pot mean and 10 foods you should never try to make.



Wine

Yep, you read that right. You can use your electric pressure cooker to make your very own wine at home. You'll need a few extra ingredients, including wine yeast, and some patience while the wine ferments and does its thing. But the overall process is easy, and the Instant Pot provides all the muscle. Here's our step by step guide to making wine in your Instant Pot.

Single-serve desserts

Maybe you knew that the Instant Pot excels at desserts. You can make cheesecake, pound cake, arroz con leche, cake and more. But what you might not have known is that you can also cook up single-serve desserts with ease.

For example, you can make a lava mug cake by mixing the batter directly in the mug, placing it on a trivet or in a steamer basket, adding two cups of water to the pot and cooking on high pressure for 10 minutes. The same goes for individual servings of crème brûlée. Add a cup of water to the pot, fill ramekins with the mix and place them on a trivet inside the pot. You can stack them if you need to fit more in. Then, cook on high for five minutes.

Move the ramekins to the refrigerator to chill and torch them before serving.

Jam

Making your own jam on the stove isn't exactly difficult. In short, just mash up some fruit or berries with sugar (and often lemon juice) and bring it to a boil to reach the right consistency. But you can also do this with an Instant Pot.

There are countless recipes to choose from, but the gist is that you chop the fruit (or process the berries) and add them to the Instant Pot along with lemon juice and sugar. Cook on high for just one minute. Then sauté the ingredients for another 15 while adding any additional ingredients or flavorings.

Dog food

We get it. You're so hyped about all those awesome Instant Pot meals for your family that you didn't realize it was also the perfect tool to make food for your pooch.

There are tons of recipes available, most of which sound like human food recipes. Load up the Instant Pot with your preferred protein source, veggies (like carrots, green beans or sweet potatoes), throw in some rice and add some water.

While not all recipes provide all the nutrients your dogs need, it's a great way to treat your pups with a healthy and affordable meal a couple times per week.

Lotion and lip balm

Not everything you make in the Instant Pot has to be edible. You can make hard lotion bars in the Instant Pot quite easily -- it even removes the need for a double boiler.

Melt cacao butter and beeswax in the Instant Pot using the **Keep Warm** feature and stir in olive oil. Next, move the melted mixture to a glass measuring cup and stir in vitamin E and essential oils. Pour that mixture in to a mold (like a muffin tin).

Once the mixture has had time to cool, you'll have individual hard lotion bars. The best part is the whole process (minus the cooling) should take less than 20 minutes. This same or similar recipes can be used for lip balm, too.

Popcorn

If you have an Instant Pot, you can go ahead and toss your popcorn maker, because it can make popcorn, too.

First, turn the Instant Pot on to sauté on high. Once hot, add a cooking oil like coconut oil. Once the oil is hot, add popcorn kernels to the bottom of the pot and stir to coat the kernels in oil. Next, cover with a lid and let the kernels do what they do best. The total cook time of the kernels should be around three to five minutes.

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