Onion Bacon Jam

Make-ahead · Makes about 2 cups

Ken's note: TBD

Bacon and deeply browned onions, simmered with maple, brown sugar, balsamic, and bourbon until syrupy. Spoon it on burgers, steak, grilled chicken, crostini, toast, or a cheese board.

Ingredients

- 1 lb thick-cut bacon, cut into ¼-inch pieces
- 2 large onions, finely minced
- 2–4 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tsp red chili flakes (more for heat)
- 1 tsp smoked paprika
- 1 Tbsp fresh thyme, chopped (or 2 tsp dried)
- ½ cup packed brown sugar
- ¼ cup pure maple syrup
- ½ cup maple balsamic vinegar (see note)
- ¼ cup bourbon (maple-flavored, or plain)
- 2 Tbsp flat-leaf parsley, chopped, divided
- ½ tsp black pepper
- Salt

Method

1. Cook the bacon in a heavy pan or Dutch oven over low to medium heat, stirring now and then, until the fat renders and the bacon is lightly crisp. Lift it out with a slotted spoon and pour off all but 2 Tbsp of the fat.
2. Cook the onions in the reserved fat over medium heat, stirring often, until deeply golden and very soft, 12–15 minutes. Return the bacon to the pan. Add the garlic, chili flakes, paprika, thyme, brown sugar, maple syrup, vinegar, half the parsley, and the pepper. Simmer, uncovered, 5–10 minutes, stirring now and then, until glossy and syrupy but not dry.
3. Add the bourbon and simmer 2 minutes more to cook off the alcohol. Stir in the rest of the parsley. Taste and salt at the end; the bacon is salty. Cool; it thickens as it rests.

Notes

Note. if your balsamic is sharp, start with ¼ cup vinegar and add to taste, or use regular balsamic plus an extra tablespoon of maple syrup. For a finer jam, pulse a few times in a food processor without puréeing.

Keeps 10 days in the fridge, or 3 months frozen (thaw in the fridge). Reheat gently before using. See also Bacon Jalapeño Jam in Appetizers, Steak Crostini, and Charcuterie Board.