FOOD BANK
OF NORTHEAST GEORGIA

CRISPY BRUSSEL SPROUTS WITH SWEET & SMOKY BACON JAM

Serves: **8–10**
Prep Time: **20 minutes**
Cook Time: **35 minutes**
Oven: **425°F**

Ingredients



For the Brussel Sprouts

- **2 pounds** Brussels sprouts, trimmed and halved
- **4 tablespoons** olive oil
- **1 teaspoon** kosher salt
- **½ teaspoon** freshly ground black pepper

For the Bacon Jam

- **1 pound** thick-cut bacon, finely chopped
- **1** large sweet onion, finely diced
- **3** cloves garlic, minced
- **¼ cup** packed brown sugar
- **¼ cup** apple cider vinegar
- **1 tablespoon** maple syrup
- **¼ teaspoon** freshly ground black pepper

Instructions

Step 1: Prepare the Brussels sprouts. Preheat the oven to 425°F. Trim the stem ends from the Brussels sprouts and cut them in half. Toss with olive oil, salt, and pepper.

Step 2: Roast until crisp. Arrange the sprouts cut-side down on a large sheet pan, leaving space between them. Roast for 25 minutes, or until deeply browned and crispy around the edges.

Step 3: Cook the bacon. While the sprouts roast, place the chopped bacon in a large skillet over medium heat. Cook until the bacon is crisp and the fat has rendered. Transfer the bacon to a paper-towel-lined plate, leaving about 2 tablespoons of bacon fat in the skillet.

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Instructions (Cont.)

Step 4: Caramelize the onions. Add the onion to the skillet and cook over medium-low heat, stirring occasionally, for 10–15 minutes. The onions should become very soft, golden, and sweet. Add the garlic and cook for another minute.

Step 5: Make the bacon jam. Return the cooked bacon to the skillet. Add the brown sugar, apple cider vinegar, maple syrup, and black pepper. Stir well and simmer gently for about 8–10 minutes, until the mixture becomes thick and glossy.

Step 6: Finish the dish. Transfer the hot Brussels sprouts to a serving bowl. Add several generous spoonfuls of warm bacon jam and toss gently. Serve immediately.

Chef's Tips

- Don't crowd the pan: Brussels sprouts roast rather than steam when they have room around them.
- Cut-side down: Placing the cut side directly against the hot sheet pan encourages deep browning.
- Take your time with the onions: The flavor of the bacon jam depends on slowly developing their sweetness.
- Balance is key: The sweet jam should complement—not overwhelm—the slightly bitter, charred Brussels sprouts.
- Serve immediately: The sprouts are at their crispiest straight from the oven.

Teaching Point: Rending, Carmelization & Balance

Bacon does more than add flavor—it provides the cooking fat for the onions. Slowly cooking the onions allows their natural sugars to develop, creating a rich, sweet foundation for the jam. The vinegar provides acidity, while the sugar and maple syrup add sweetness. Together, these flavors balance the bitterness and char of the roasted Brussels sprouts.