

2018 Cooking Contest Recipes

Tomato and Bacon Jam

½ lb smoked bacon	1 ½ tsp. salt
2 lbs. ripe tomatoes, chopped	¼ tsp. black pepper
1 yellow sweet onion, finely chopped	1 dash Tabasco
1 cup white sugar	1 dash dried basil (optional)
2 ½ Tbsp. apple cider vinegar	

Cook bacon in a large skillet over medium-high heat until evenly browned, about 10 minutes. Drain on paper towels. Crumble when cool. Stir remaining ingredients together in a saucepan and bring to a boil, stirring constantly to dissolve sugar. Stir in crumbled bacon and cook over medium heat, stirring often, until spread is very thick, about 1 hour. Adjust salt and pepper to taste. Cool and spoon into 1 pint jar with a lid. Keep in refrigerator 1 week or freeze up to 2 months. If freezing, put into small jars. Let frozen spread thaw in fridge overnight before using.

To serve: pour over cream cheese block. Use on assorted crackers, biscuits, grilled cheese, etc. (use on almost anything) Enjoy!

Diane Sopr, Baldwin County

Sweet and Spicy Meatballs

1 lb. bacon	1 cup brown sugar
36 frozen meatballs	3 Tbsp. chili powder

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Mix brown sugar and chili powder in a bowl. Cut 1 lb. of bacon strips in half. Wrap strip of bacon around meatball, secure with a toothpick. Roll meatballs in sugar mixture and place on a greased broiler pan. Bake to 45 minutes. Enjoy!

Brandy Abel, Blount County

Bacon Bites

1 (16 oz.) package of bacon, cut into 3 ½ inch strips
1 (16 oz.) package of baby link sausage cut into 1-inch pieces
1 (16 oz.) box of light brown sugar

Wrap bacon strips around sausage piece and secure with toothpick. Line baking sheet with aluminum foil. Place bacon sausage pieces on baking sheet and sprinkle brown sugar over entire baking sheet. Bake in preheated 350-degree oven for 30-45 minutes or until bacon is done. Makes 45 bacon bites.

Linda Rogers, Butler County

Bacon Wrapped Date Surprises

1 lb. pork bacon, sliced in half
1 (8 oz.) package of pitted dates
1 (5.5 oz.) package of salted and roasted almonds
4 oz. cream cheese
Need: 32 toothpicks and a 9x13 inch baking sheet

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Slice bacon pieces in half. Split 32 pitted dates and spread open. Stuff each date with 2 almonds and spread with ½ tsp. cream cheese. Wrap each stuffed date with ½ slice of bacon, securing with toothpick. Bake in 375 degree oven for 25 minutes, or until bacon is crispy, turning halfway through cooking. Drain and serve. Remove toothpicks for serving. Makes approximately 32 appetizers.

Linda Findley, Calhoun County

Bacon-Wrapped Tater Tots

12 slices of maple bacon cut in half	1 tsp. Ranch dressing powder
24 tater tots	1 tsp. Parmesan cheese
1 tsp. garlic powder	Scant 1 tsp. black pepper

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Mix garlic, ranch powder, parmesan cheese and black pepper. Mix well. Coat one side of half bacon slice with mixture. Roll tater tot on coated side. Place on jelly-roll pan lined with parchment paper. Bake for 18-20 minutes. Remove from pan to paper towel. Enjoy!

Lillian Slay, Chambers County

White Cheddar and Bacon Dip

1 cup Vermont white cheddar cheese, shredded	1 Tbsp. jalapeno peppers, diced (optional)
1 ½ cup cheddar jack cheese (or your choice), shredded	1 Tbsp. fresh parsley, chopped
8 oz. cream cheese, softened	Red pepper jelly (optional)
8 slices bacon	1 round loaf of bread, hollowed out for serving (optional)
2 Tbsp. green onion, chopped	

Cook bacon on stove top, once cooked, place bacon on paper towel-lined plate to drain. Once cooled, chop bacon into small pieces. Reserve 1/3 of the bacon pieces for topping. Mix white cheddar, cream cheese, sour cream, green onions and 2/3 of crumbled bacon. Then place in an oven safe casserole dish. Bake at 400 degrees for approximately 15 minutes or until heated through and edges start to bubble. You can also do this on your grill by placing the oven safe dish directly on the grill over medium high heat. If cooking over grill, make sure to give the dip a stir every 2 minutes or so to evenly melt all the cheeses. Once the cheese in the dip is fully melted and the dip begins to bubble, remove and (transfer to bread bowl, optional) top with remaining bacon and cheddar jack cheeses. Finish with fresh parsley and red pepper jelly drizzle if desired. Serve with your favorite crackers or flatbread.

Shirley Lumsden, Cherokee County

Bacon Pimento Cheese Bites

2 packages 15 count Athens mini filo shells
15 bacon slices cooked crispy and crumbled

¾ cup prepared pimento cheese
½ cup Captain Rodney's Boucan Glaze

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Fill each mini filo shell with 1 teaspoon pimento cheese. Make a well in each filled shell and add ½ teaspoon Captain Rodney's Boucan Glaze. Top with bacon crumbles. Transfer to baking sheet and bake 5-8 minutes. Serve warm. Makes 30 appetizers. Tip: the filo shells are easier to work with if left in package while adding filling and then remove from package and place on baking sheet.

Anne Lanier, Choctaw County

Bacon Tomato Cups

1 (10 oz.) can Hungry Jack flaky biscuits
1 tomato, chopped
½-1 bunch green onions, chopped
6-7 slices bacon, cooked and crumbled

½ cup mozzarella cheese
½ cup mayonnaise
Salt and pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Spray mini muffin pans with pam. Divide biscuits into 3 equal parts. Press dough into muffin tins. Mix all other ingredients together and season to taste. Spoon cups 2/3 full. Bake at 375 for 8-10 minutes or until golden brown.

Ann Harrison, Clarke County

Sweet and Savory Bacon Wrapped Meatballs

1 ½ lbs. ground beef
1 onion, chopped fine
1 cup Saltine cracker crumbs
1 ½ tsp. salt
¼ tsp. pepper
4 Tbsp. ketchup
1 egg
¼ cup milk
1 lb. bacon

Sauce:
6 tsp. vinegar
3 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
¾ cup ketchup
6 Tbsp. brown sugar

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Mix ground beef with chopped onion, cracker crumbs, salt, pepper, ketchup, egg, and milk in a bowl. Roll mixture into 2" balls. Wrap each ball with a strip of bacon. Place meatballs in a casserole dish. In a separate bowl, whisk together the vinegar, Worcestershire sauce, ketchup and brown sugar. Pour mixture over meatballs. Cook uncovered for 45 minutes. Drain after cooking for about 20 minutes and place back in oven until done. Yields approximately 20.

Lori McGill, Clay County

Mini BLTs

2 packages mini fillo shells (Athens with 15 shells per package)
10 slices crisp applewood bacon, chopped
10 grape tomatoes, diced
1 ½ cup finely chopped Fresh Express lettuce trio
Scant ¼ cup Blue Plate sandwich spread
2 Tbsp. chopped chives

Combine bacon, tomatoes and lettuce in a bowl. Slowly add sandwich spread and stir until coated. Spoon mixture into shells and sprinkle chives over the tops.

Beatrice Reichert, Coosa County

Maple Caramel Bacon Crack

1 lb. bacon
1 package crescent rolls
½ cup maple syrup
¾ cup brown sugar

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Line 15x10 inch baking sheet with parchment paper. Lightly grease with cooking spray. Stretch dough with hands to fit pan. Prick with fork. Set aside. Cook bacon until medium pink. Drizzle dough with ¼ cup syrup. Sprinkle with ¼ cup brown sugar. Top with bacon pieces. Drizzle with remaining syrup and sugar. Bake 25 minutes until bubbly. Let cool. Break or cut into pieces.

Janice Lindsay, Crenshaw County

Bacon Cream Cheese Bites

1 lb. bacon (regular thickness)
1 loaf Pepperidge Farm original white bread, crusts cut off
1 (12 oz.) tub cream cheese spread
½ cup chopped fresh chives

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Line a baking sheet with aluminum foil. Set aside. Spread a thin layer of cream cheese on each slice of bread. Sprinkle ½ tsp. of chives on top of cream cheese. Starting at one end, roll each slice of bread into a tight cylinder. Wrap a slice of bacon around each cylinder, spiraling to cover the whole piece of bread. Cut each cylinder in half (I use my kitchen shears). Place on baking sheet and bake until crispy and bacon is cooked through, about 20-30 minutes. Garnish with chives. Serve warm.

Amy Veal, Cullman County

Zesty Bacon Knots

2 lbs. thick cut bacon
1 ¼ cups brown sugar

1 Tbsp. ground mustard
2 pouches of Zesty Italian dressing mix

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Cut each piece of bacon in half, tie in a knot and place on a 9x13" casserole dish. Mix the 3 dry ingredients together and sprinkle on top. Cover dish with foil and cook for 30 minutes. Uncover and cook dish for 10 more minutes. Turn oven to broil and cook for 5 more minutes.

Lyn McDaniel, Dale County

Bacon Wrapped Pretzels

2 cups light brown sugar
3 Tbsp. Greek seasoning

1 lb. package regular cut bacon
1lb. package pretzel rods

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Mix brown sugar and Greek seasoning together. Cut bacon in half evenly and coat each strip of bacon on both sides with brown sugar mixture. Cut pretzel rods in half, wrap each pretzel with a strip of bacon. Place each bacon pretzel on a wire baking rack. Bake for 20 minutes or until bacon is crisp. Let cool and serve.

Melissa Palmer, Elmore County

Canapes of Bacon and Chicken Liver

1 lb. double smoked bacon
1 lb. whole chicken livers
½ tsp of Emeril's Essence
½ tsp. garlic powder

1 cup of Panko bread crumbs
3 Tbsp. capers
1 small can of sliced water chestnuts
Toothpicks as needed

Wrap each liver, a slice of water chestnut, and 3 capers with bacon. Use toothpicks to hold the wrap together. Mix the dry ingredients well and coat the bacon wrapped livers with the dry ingredients. Cook at 350 degrees until done, approximately 45 minutes. Yields about 16.

Sue Walters, Etowah County

Bacon Wrapped Pineapple

1 lb. bacon
1 can pineapple chunks

Cut bacon slices in half. Wrap each pineapple chunk with bacon slice and secure with a toothpick. Broil in oven, flipping halfway through the 8-minute cook time or until crisp.

Karan Tucker, Fayette County

Bacon-Wrapped Dates

35-40 Pitted dates
35-40 salted, roasted almonds
1 lb. thinly sliced bacon, strips cut in half

Sauce:
2 Tbsp. grape jelly
1 Tbsp. clear corn syrup
1 tsp. vinegar-based barbeque sauce

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Stuff each date with one salted almond. Wrap each date with one half-strip of bacon and secure with a toothpick. Place stuffed dates on a baking rack placed inside a cookie sheet. Drizzle with prepared sauce. Bake, turning halfway through to ensure even cooking, 15-18 minutes. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Shirley Ezzell Franklin County

Jalapeno Bacon Wrapped Cocktails

2 cups brown sugar
2 packages cream cheese
2 packages cocktail sausage

13 jalapeno peppers
2 packages bacon

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Wash, cut in half and seed peppers. Boil peppers in water until they start to turn color. Drain and let cool. Spread a small amount of cream cheese on the inside of each pepper. Put 1 or 2 cocktail sausage(s) on each pepper and wrap a whole slice of bacon around each one. Put bacon wrapped peppers on a roaster pan. Sprinkle brown sugar over each one. Place in oven until bacon is brown, about 30-40 minutes (depends on the size of the pepper). Take out and put on your favorite dish. Can be served with Ranch dressing if desired.

Teresa Revels, Geneva County

Bacon Ranch Cheese Ball

12 oz. package cream cheese
8 oz. shredded cheddar cheese
1 package ranch seasoning

1 cup finely chopped bacon (1 lb.)
1 Tbsp. parsley
Pretzel sticks

Add the softened cream cheese to a medium bowl and smooth with a spatula or a hand mixer. Add the cheddar cheese and ranch seasoning. Mix until combined. In a small bowl, combine the bacon and parsley. Use a melon baller to scoop out a ball of the cheese mixture. Use your hands to make sure it is in a ball and then roll it in the bacon mixture. Repeat until all of the cheese balls are made. Place a pretzel stick in the top of each cheese ball.

Kathy Harrell, Houston County

Maple Bacon-Wrapped Carrot Appetizers

2 lbs. fresh carrots, peeled and boiled
Paper towels
1 lb. pork maple bacon
Nonstick aluminum foil
Cooking spray

5 Tbsp. maple syrup
½ tsp. salt
Toothpicks
Fresh parsley for garnish

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Peel carrots and cook in boiling water for 5 minutes. Remove from water and lay carrots on paper towels. Wrap one slice of maple bacon tightly around each carrot. Place carrots on a foil-lined baking sheet that has been coated with cooking spray. Bake 20 minutes; brush with maple syrup. Bake 8-10 more minutes or until bacon is crispy and carrots are tender. Remove from oven and cut into bite size pieces, using toothpicks to secure bacon to carrots. Sprinkle with salt and place on serving platter. Garnish platter with fresh parsley.

Joann Wissinger, Jefferson County

Brown Sugar and Bacon Boneless Pork

2/3 cup brown sugar
3 Tbsp. garlic, minced
¾ tsp. kosher salt

½ Tbsp. black pepper
6 boneless pork chops
12 slices of bacon

In a large bowl, add brown sugar, garlic, salt and pepper. Mix until combined. Coat pork chop with mixture. Cut pork chops into bite size pieces. Cut bacon into pieces to fit around pork. Place in a 2-inch high baking pan. Top with remaining mixture. Cook at 375 degrees for 30-40 minutes. Be careful to not let brown sugar burn. Remove from oven, add toothpicks and serve.

Donna Buckley, Lamar County

Sweet Bacon Pork Shots

1 lb. bacon
2 packages kielbasa pork

2/3 cup packed brown sugar
2 tsp. chili powder

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Line a cookie sheet with foil. Cut the Kielbasa into 1-inch pieces and cut each slice of bacon in half. Wrap each piece of bacon around Kielbasa leaving a little room on top so it can be filled. Place on baking sheet. Combine the brown sugar and chili powder and mix well. Place about 1 teaspoon on top of each piece. Bake 20-25 minutes until bacon is brown and crispy. Allow to cool a few minutes or your mouth will burn.

Melissa Brooks, Lauderdale County

Cheese and Bacon Cracker Spread

1 (8 oz.) package shredded sharp cheddar cheese
3-4 chopped green onions

2 ½ oz. crumbled real bacon
Miracle Whip

Mix all ingredients together with just enough Miracle Whip to blend. Spread on crackers.

Daphane Oliver, Lawrence County

Bacon Wrapped Cheese Straws

1 package frozen puff pastry
½ honey Dijon mustard
1 cup sharp white cheddar cheese (grated, divided)
1 Tbsp. sweet paprika (divided)
2 Tbsp. thyme leaves (finely chopped, divided)

2 Tbsp. chives (finely chopped, divided)
12 slices bacon (cut in half lengthwise)
¼ cup all-purpose flour (for dusting)
Dijonaise:
½ cup Honey Dijon mustard
½ cup mayonnaise

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper and grease with nonstick cooking spray. Set aside. Using a pastry brush, spread ¼ cup of Honey Dijon mustard onto one of the puff pastry sheets. Sprinkle ½ cup of white cheddar cheese on top and using a lightly floured rolling pin, press the cheese lightly into the puff pastry. Sprinkle half of the paprika and half of the thyme & chives evenly over the cheese and cut the sheet of pastry into 12 even strips. Repeat with remaining sheet of puff pastry so you end up with 24 strips. Top each strip with a bacon half and twist each strip 3-4 times. Remove the twists to the prepared baking sheets and transfer to the preheated oven. Bake until the bacon is cooked through and the puff pastry is golden brown about 15-18 minutes. Remove from the oven, allow to cool slightly and serve with Dijonaise for dipping!

Dijonaise:

In a medium bowl, whisk together the Honey Dijon mustard and mayonnaise. Put in a serving bowl.

Tip: Use your favorite cheese and spice mixture to make this recipe your own!

Carole Clements, Lee County

Bacon Stuffed Pastry

Bacon Filling:

1 lb. cooked and chopped bacon
8 oz. cream cheese
16 oz. sour cream
2 cups shredded cheese
¾ cup chopped green onion

¼ tsp. garlic powder
¼ tsp. black pepper
¼ tsp. salt
¾ cup chopped tomato
1 Tbsp. dry Ranch dressing

Mix the cream cheese with sour cream. Blend in remaining ingredients. **Optional: ½ cup chopped yellow pepper to add color**

Puff Pastry:

1 cup flour
1 cup water
1 stick butter
4 eggs

Bring water and butter to boil. Stir in flour. Remove from heat. Stir until it forms a ball. Beat in eggs one at a time. Beat for 2 minutes. Place by spoonful on cookie sheet. Bake for 20 minutes at 400 degrees. Slice open center to stuff with bacon filling.

April Lewis, Limestone County

Bacon, Lettuce, and Tomato Pinwheels

1 (16 oz.) package bacon
1 (8 oz.) block of cream cheese
1 (8 oz.) tub sour cream
1 package dry Ranch dressing mix

6-7 large Roma tomatoes
2 cups shredded cheese
Salt and pepper to taste
8 count 10" flour tortillas

Cook bacon until crisp. Cool, then chop into small pieces. Mix together the cream cheese, sour cream, and dry Ranch dressing mix in a large mixing bowl. Cut tomatoes in half and remove seeds and juice. Chop into small (about 1/4") pieces. Add shredded lettuce, tomatoes, and bacon to cream cheese mixture by hand with a spoon. Salt and pepper to taste. Place equal amounts of mixture on the flour tortillas. Roll tightly and wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate at least 2 hours or overnight. Using a sharp knife, slice into 1/2" slices, discarding the end pieces.

Teresa Ellis, Marshall County

Bacon Cheeseburger Tailgate Toasts

1 lb. ground beef
1 lb. ground sausage (hot or mild)
½-¾ cup bacon crumbles
1 lb. Velveeta cheese, cubed
3 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce

3 Tbsp. ketchup
1 tsp. garlic salt
1 ½ tsp. Oregano
Salt and pepper to taste
1 loaf party rye bread

Brown ground beef and sausage; drain. Add bacon crumbles and cheese. Add the remaining ingredients and stir over medium heat until cheese is melted. Spread hot mixture on each bread slice. Bake on ungreased baking sheet at 350 degrees for 10-15 minutes. *To Freeze Unbaked: place baking sheet in freezer for 10 minutes. Transfer toasts to a Ziploc bag and store in freezer. From Frozen: Bake at 350 degrees for 15-20 minutes.

Janice Fort, Mobile County

Sweet and Savory Bacon Crackers

36 country club-styled crackers
¾ cup brown sugar

¾ grated Parmesan cheese
1 lb. bacon (not thick sliced)

Preheat oven to 250 degrees. Put the crackers flat on two wire baking racks (leave a little space between the crackers), then set the racks on two rimmed 13x11 baking sheets. Place a tablespoon of grated Parmesan cheese on half of the crackers. Place a tablespoon of brown sugar on the other half. Slice the bacon in half. Wrap each cracker with a half-piece of bacon, tucking the end of the bacon underneath the crackers. Bake the crackers for about 2 hours. The bacon will cook slowly and start to wrap tightly around the crackers, the excess grease will drip onto the baking sheets. Serve warm and enjoy.

Dora Rider, Monroe County

Sweet Bacon Pork Shots

1 lb. bacon
2 packages of Kielbasa cut into 1" pieces
2/3 cup packed brown sugar
2 Tbsp. chili powder

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Line a cookie sheet with foil and place a cooling rack on top of the pan. Spray rack with cooking spray. Cut the Kielbasa into 1" pieces. Cut each slice of bacon in half. Wrap each piece of bacon around the Kielbasa, leaving a little room at top to be filled. Secure with a toothpick and place on baking sheet. Combine brown sugar and chili powder. Place a half teaspoon on top of each piece of Kielbasa. Bake for 20-25 minutes or until bacon is brown and crispy. Allow to cool.

Sharon Hataway, Montgomery County

Pepper Poppers

14 jalapenos, deeded	1 cup grated sharp cheese
1 (16 oz.) package pork bacon	1 Tbsp. seasoned salt
8 oz. cream cheese	2 Tbsp. hot sauce
½ red bell pepper, diced	

Mix all ingredients, except peppers and bacon. Spoon into peppers and wrap with bacon. Bake in oven at 400 degrees for 1 hour.

Pat Norred, Randolph County

Bacon Wrapped Clubs

2 tubs Club Crackers	1 (12 oz.) package bacon
1 (8 oz.) package cream cheese, softened	

Spread half of the crackers with cream cheese then top them with the remaining crackers. Cut bacon in half. Wrap bacon around length of crackers. Bake in shallow pan after spraying with some non-stick cooking spray. Bake at 400 degrees for 20 minutes or until brown.

JoAnne C Laney, Russell County

Bacon Mushroom Tartlets

Pastry:

3 oz. cream cheese, softened
½ cup unsalted butter, softened
1 cup flour

Mix together and refrigerate 30 minutes to overnight.

Filling:

1 package cream cheese, softened
½ cup bacon bits
1 Tbsp. chopped green onion
¼ tsp. garlic salt
3 Tbsp. chopped mushrooms

Mix together.

Place a teaspoon of dough into each mini muffin cup. Add a teaspoon of filling in each. Place in a 350-degree oven for 15 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove from oven. Let cool on wire rack briefly. Lift pastries out with a sharp knife. Serve or freeze. Makes 30-36 mini muffin sized tartlets.

Emily Taylor, St. Clair County

Bacon Wrapped Pepper Poppers

1 block cream cheese, softened
½ cup grated Pepper Jack cheese
4 strips of cooked bacon, crumbled

6 seeded/halved jalapenos (makes 12 halves)
6 slices pork bacon, cut into halves

Combine cream cheese, pepper jack cheese and crumbled bacon until blended well. Spoon mixture into jalapeno halves. Wrap bacon slices around each pepper and place a toothpick in to secure. Grill or bake at 350 degrees until bacon is crisp. I prefer grilled as it cooks the jalapenos better. You can also substitute the jalapenos with sweet peppers if you don't like it too hot. If baking in oven, spray foil lined pan with oil.

Vickie Watkins, Tallapoosa County

Brown Sugar Bacon and Shrimp Bites

Bacon:

12 slices pork bacon, cut in half lengthwise
¾ cup Domino light brown sugar
1 tsp. ground black pepper
¾ tsp. salt

Mix brown sugar, pepper, and salt in a rectangular glass bowl with a wire whisk. Turn bacon to coat both sides; set coated slices aside on large cookie sheet.

Shrimp:

12 large (US wild caught) shrimp, uncooked, peeled, de-veined, tail removed & cut in half
3 Tbsp. olive oil
1 Tbsp. fresh lime juice
1 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
1 tsp. minced garlic
½ tsp. salt
½ tsp. paprika

Mix olive oil, lime juice, lemon juice, garlic, salt, and paprika in a rectangular glass bowl with a wire whisk. Turn shrimp to coat. Let marinate in refrigerator for 15 minutes.

Line a large rimmed baking sheet with foil; place a greased cooling rack on the baking pan. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. While oven is heating, put a half-shrimp and a half-bacon slice and roll up; secure each bite with a wooden toothpick. Place each bite on the rack with space between. Bake in a preheated 400-degree oven for 20 minutes. Remove with tongs and place on serving platter. A perfect bite-size appetizer for your next family get-together!

Donna Anders, Tuscaloosa County