

## Clark's Smoked Blue Cheese Wedge Salad with Candied Bacon

Prep time: 30 minutes

Cook time: 20 minutes

Serves: 4

### **Ingredients:**

- 4 oz. block smoked blue cheese, divided
- 3 tbsp. buttermilk
- 3 tbsp. sour cream
- 2 tbsp. mayonnaise
- 2 tsp. white wine vinegar
- ¼ tsp. granulated sugar
- 1/8 tsp. granulated garlic
- 1/8 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 1 head iceberg lettuce, quartered
- 1 pint assorted cherry tomatoes, diced
- 1 bunch green onion, chopped
- 4 slices thick cut bacon, diced
- 2 tbsp. Unicoi Preserves Apple Cider Pepper Spread

Kosher salt

Freshly ground black pepper

1. In a mixing bowl, mash 2 ½ oz. smoked blue cheese and buttermilk with a fork until mixture is combined and resembles large curd cottage cheese.
2. Stir in sour cream, mayonnaise, white wine vinegar, sugar, granulated garlic, and Worcestershire sauce using a spatula. Season to taste with kosher salt and black pepper.
3. In a sauce pan over medium heat, cook the diced bacon, stirring occasionally, until the bacon is crisp and the fat is rendered. Remove from pan and drain on a plate lined with a paper towel. Drain rendered fat from pan and discard.
4. Reduce heat to medium low and return bacon to the pan. Stir in the Unicoi Preserves Apple Cider Pepper Spread and stir to coat the bacon. Continue to cook the mixture until the spread has reduced and thickened, approximately 5 minutes. Remove candied bacon to a sheet pan lined with parchment paper and allow to cool completely. Optional tip, place the sheet pan in the freezer to help the glaze set on the bacon pieces.

5. To assemble the salad, place an iceberg lettuce wedge on a plate and spoon over  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the prepared dressing. Top each wedge with diced tomatoes, sliced green onions, and candied bacon pieces. Crumble the remaining blue cheese and evenly divide among the salads. Season with kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper and serve immediately.

Optional tip: I like to make the dressing the day before and store it in a covered container in the refrigerator to allow the flavors to fully develop. The bacon can also be prepared the day before and kept refrigerated.