



Pan Roasted Pear and Walnut Holiday Salad

The Bacon Secret

We start with bacon. It is the secret hug in this salad. Cook it slow until it is crispy. That smell fills the whole kitchen.

Save the crispy bits for later. We wipe the pan clean. The bacon flavor stays in our memory, not on the pears. This matters. We want sweet pears next, not greasy ones.

Sweet, Golden Pears

Now for the pears. Use ones that are just firm. Toss them with a little sugar. This helps them turn golden in the pan.

Let them cook, cut side down. Do not move them too soon. We want a good brown color. Then let them cool completely. I know, waiting is hard! But a warm pear wilts the lettuce. Patience makes the salad crisp.

My Favorite Dressing

The dressing is simple. Cider vinegar, maple syrup, and olive oil. Whisk it in the big bowl. The smell is sweet and tangy.

I use the same bowl for dressing and tossing. One less dish to wash! My grandson taught me that. I still laugh at that smart boy. What is your favorite kitchen shortcut? I would love to know.

Putting It All Together

Now, the fun part. Toss the lettuce and chives in that dressing. Be gentle. Lay it all on a big platter. It looks like a garden.

Top it with the cool pears, blue cheese, and our bacon. *Fun fact:* The blue cheese and sweet pear are best friends. They have been for centuries! Do you prefer strong cheese or mild cheese in salads?

Why This Salad Feels Special

This is not just a salad. It is a mix of textures and tastes. Crispy, creamy, sweet, and salty. Every bite is different.

That is why it matters. Food should be a little adventure. It should make you smile. This salad is perfect for sharing with people you love. What dish always makes you think of the holidays?

Ingredients:

Ingredient	Amount	Notes
Thick-cut bacon	4 slices	Cut into ½-inch-wide strips
Bosc pears	3	Slightly underripe, quartered and cored
Sugar	2 teaspoons	
Extra-virgin olive oil	5 tablespoons	
Cider vinegar	¼ cup	
Maple syrup	3 tablespoons	
Salt and pepper	To taste	
Romaine lettuce hearts	2 (12 ounces)	Cut into 2-inch pieces
Chives	¼ cup	Cut into 1-inch pieces
Blue cheese	4 ounces (1 cup)	Crumble



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Hello, dear. Come sit a moment. This salad is a story on a plate. It has sweet pears, salty bacon, and tangy cheese. I make it every holiday for my family. The kitchen fills with the most wonderful smells. Doesn't that sound cozy?

See also [Hazelnut Holiday Scone Delights](#)

Instructions

Step 1: Let's start with the bacon. Cook those strips in your big skillet. We want them nice and crispy. Move them to a paper towel to drain. (Save that tasty fat for another day, like frying potatoes!). Wipe the pan clean when done.

Step 2: Now, the pears get a sprinkle of sugar. Cook them in a little oil, cut-side down. Watch them turn a beautiful golden brown. Let them cool completely on a plate. **Why do we let the pears cool? Share below!** I still laugh at how I burned my tongue once.

Step 3: Time for the dressing. Whisk vinegar, maple syrup, oil, salt, and pepper. It will be glossy and sweet. Pour it over your chopped lettuce and chives. Toss it all gently with your hands. Feel the crisp leaves, just like my garden in the morning.

Step 4: The best part is assembly. Spread your dressed greens on a pretty platter. Scatter the blue cheese, crispy bacon, and cooled pears on top. It looks like a holiday masterpiece. Serve it right away with a big

smile.

Creative Twists

Swap blue cheese for sharp cheddar. It's milder but still delicious.

Use toasted walnuts instead of bacon. A lovely crunch for my vegetarian friends.

Drizzle with a little honey at the end. An extra touch of sweetness. Which one would you try first? Comment below!

Serving & Pairing Ideas

This salad is a meal by itself. But it loves company. Try it with a warm bowl of soup. Or some crusty bread for dipping. For a drink, a glass of apple cider is perfect. Grown-ups might like a crisp white wine. Both are so refreshing with the salty cheese. Which would you choose tonight?

See also [Holiday Roasted Fennel with Crispy Parmesan Crust](#)



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Keeping Your Salad Happy

This salad is best eaten right away. But life gets busy. You can prep parts ahead. Cook the bacon and pears. Let them cool completely. Store them separately in the fridge for two days.

Do not dress the greens until you serve. Wet lettuce gets sad and soggy. I learned this the hard way. I once dressed a whole bowl for a party early. We ate a wilted mess! Batch cooking the toppings saves time. It makes a fancy salad feel easy on a weeknight.

Having ready toppings matters. It turns cooking from a chore into a gift for your future self. **Have you ever tried storing it this way? Share below!**

Simple Fixes for Common Hiccups

Is your dressing too sharp? The vinegar can be strong. Add a tiny bit more maple syrup. This sweet balance is key. It makes the flavors sing together.

Are the pears not browning? Your pan might not be hot enough. Wait for the oil to shimmer. I remember when I rushed this. My pears just steamed. Good browning gives a lovely caramel flavor.

Is the blue cheese too strong? You can use less. Or try feta or goat cheese instead. Fixing small problems builds your cooking confidence. It also makes your food taste exactly how you like. **Which of these problems have you run into before?**

Your Quick Questions, Answered

Q: Is this salad gluten-free?

A: Yes, it is naturally gluten-free. Just check your bacon label.

Q: Can I make any of it ahead?

A: Yes! Cook pears and bacon a day or two before. Keep them chilled.

Q: I don't like blue cheese. What can I use?

A: Goat cheese or shaved parmesan are lovely, gentle swaps.

Q: Can I double this for a crowd?

A: Absolutely. Use two big skillets for the pears. It cooks faster.

See also Cinnamon Swirl Christmas Cookie Spirals

Q: Any optional add-ins?

A: A handful of dried cranberries adds a nice chewy, tart pop. *A fun fact: Bosc pears hold their shape when cooked because of their dense flesh.*

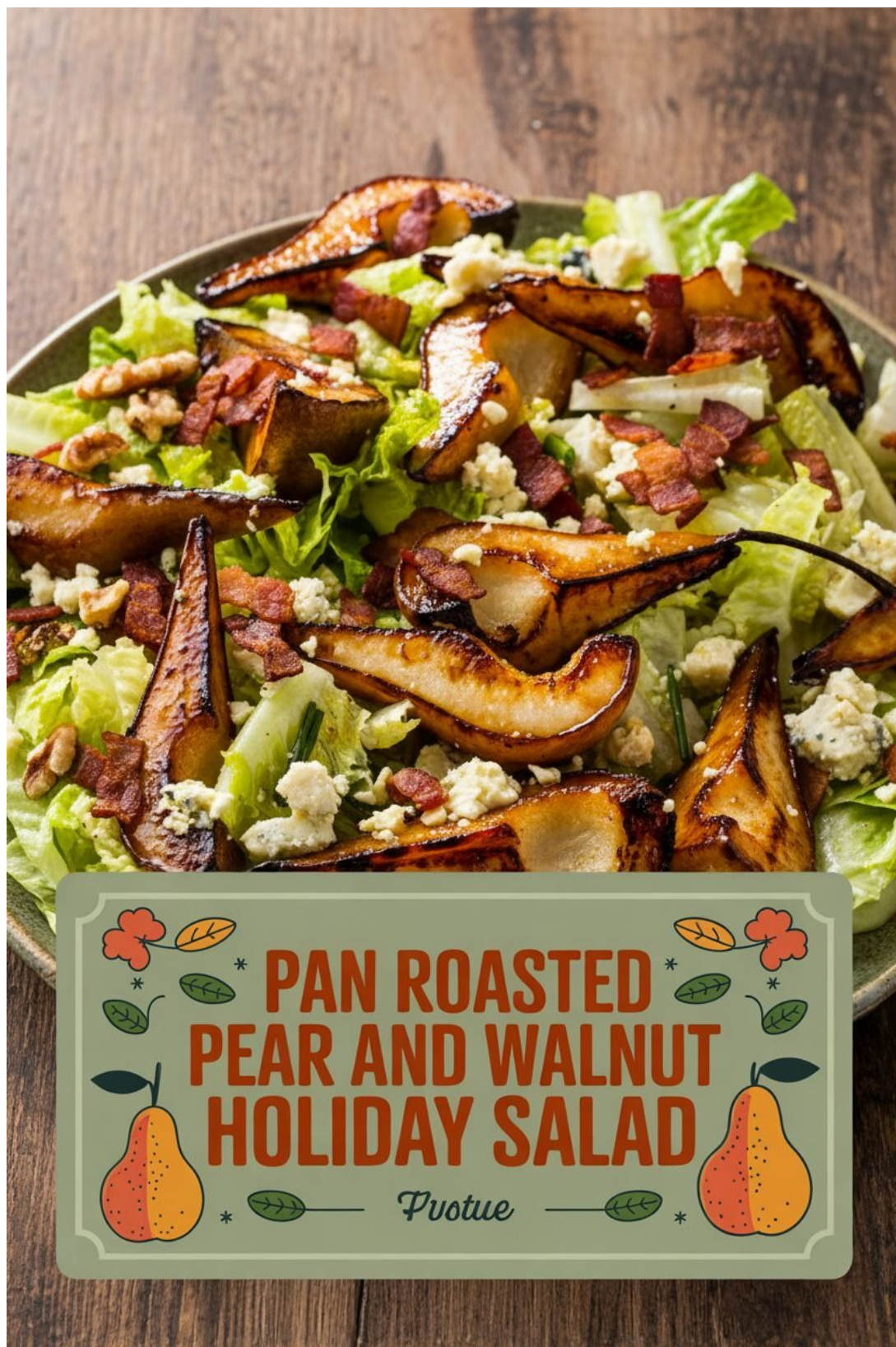
Which tip will you try first?

From My Kitchen to Yours

I hope this recipe brings a little warmth to your table. The mix of sweet, salty, and crunchy is pure joy. It reminds me of crisp autumn afternoons.

I would love to hear about your cooking adventure. Tell me how it went for your family. **Have you tried this recipe?** Your stories are my favorite thing to read.

Happy cooking!
—Elowen Thorn.



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Pan Roasted Pear and Walnut Holiday Salad

Author: Elowen Thorn



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Cooking Method: [Stovetop](#)



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Cuisine: [American](#)



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Difficulty: **Beginner**



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Prep time: **15 minutes**



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Cook time: **20 minutes**



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Rest time: **30 minutes**



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Total time: **1 hour 5 minutes**



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Servings: **4 servings**



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Calories:**520 kcal**



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Best Season: **Summer**

Description

A festive salad featuring pan-roasted pears, crispy bacon, tangy blue

cheese, and a sweet maple-cider vinaigrette.

Ingredients

- ☐ 4 slices thick-cut bacon, cut into ½-inch-wide strips
- ☐ 3 slightly underripe Bosc pears, quartered and cored
- ☐ 2 teaspoons sugar
- ☐ 5 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- ☐ ¼ cup cider vinegar
- ☐ 3 tablespoons maple syrup
- ☐ Salt and pepper
- ☐ 2 romaine lettuce hearts (12 ounces), cut into 2-inch pieces
- ☐ ¼ cup chives, cut into 1-inch pieces
- ☐ 4 ounces blue cheese, crumbled (1 cup)

Instructions

1. Cook bacon in 12-inch nonstick skillet over medium heat until crispy, 8 to 10 minutes. Using slotted spoon, transfer bacon to paper towel-lined plate. Discard fat and wipe skillet clean with paper towels.
2. Toss pears and sugar together in bowl. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in now-empty skillet over medium heat until shimmering. Cook pears, cut sides down, until well browned, 2 to 4 minutes per side, redistributing as needed for even browning. Transfer pears to large plate and let cool completely, about 30 minutes.
3. Whisk vinegar, maple syrup, 1 teaspoon salt, ½ teaspoon pepper, and remaining ¼ cup oil together in large bowl. Add lettuce and chives and gently toss to combine. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Transfer to serving platter and top with blue cheese, bacon, and pears. Serve.

Notes

For a vegetarian version, omit the bacon and add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of toasted walnuts. The pears must be slightly underripe to hold their shape during cooking.

Keywords: Pear, Walnut, Bacon, Blue Cheese, Holiday Salad, Fall