

Grilled Sweet Potato Salad with Hot Bacon Dressing, Blue Cheese & Pecans

Recipe by Elizabeth Karmel for the North Carolina Sweet Potato Commission.



Tossed with hot bacon dressing, tangy blue cheese and crunchy pecans, this Sweet Potato Salad is a classic dish with a savory twist! Taking your taste buds from sweet to tangy to creamy, everyone will beg for seconds, and thirds! Enjoy this tasty sweet potato salad as a side to your favorite barbecue ribs, with a deli sandwich or plated next to a piece of juicy, roasted chicken.

Ingredients

For Hot Bacon Dressing

- 6 slices center-cut bacon
- 2 tablespoons raspberry vinegar
- 1 tablespoon Country Dijon mustard
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon bacon grease, warm
- Sea salt, to taste
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

For Sweet Potato Salad

- 2-1/2 pounds sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1-inch rounds
- Sea salt, to taste
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 2/3 cup sliced scallions (about 10-12 scallions)
- 1/2 cup sundried tomatoes packed in oil and cut into strips
- 1/3 cup toasted pecans
- 1/3 cup blue cheese crumbles

Instructions

1. **To make the dressing:** Preheat oven to 200°F. In a skillet, cook bacon until crispy; drain and reserve grease. Crumble bacon and set aside. In a small bowl, whisk together vinegar and mustard; slowly whisk in olive oil and 1 tablespoons of the reserved bacon grease until dressing is emulsified. Season with salt and pepper. Keep warm in oven.
2. Using a brush, lightly coat sweet potatoes with olive oil. Put the potatoes in a resealable plastic bag, add the oil and massage to coat all surfaces.
3. **Grilling Instructions:** Just before putting on the grill, season sweet potatoes liberally with salt. Place rounds directly on the cooking grate over direct heat; grill until well-marked, about 3 minutes on each side. Move to indirect heat. Finish cooking, turning halfway through, until soft and tender, 20-30 minutes. Remove from grill. Immediately cut into quarters and remove to a large bowl.
4. **Grilling Alternative:** Preheat oven to 400°F. On a rack fitted into a baking sheet, place sweet potato rounds and season well with salt. Bake until tender and browned around the edges, about 30 minutes. Immediately cut into quarters and remove to a large bowl.
5. **To make the salad:** To sweet potatoes, add 2 tablespoons of the dressing; toss until just coated. Add reserved bacon, scallions, sundried tomatoes, pecans and blue cheese. Drizzle a little more dressing and toss to coat. Season to taste.
Serve immediately or at room temperature.

Number of servings (yield): 6