



Buttermilk Maple Bacon Pound Cake

- ❖ 12 slices maple-smoked bacon
- ❖ ¾ cup butter
- ❖ 1 ½ cups coarsely chopped pecans
- ❖ 2/3 cup packed dark brown sugar
- ❖ ½ cup real maple syrup
- ❖ 1 tsp. vanilla
- ❖ 2 tsps. reserved bacon drippings
- ❖ 3 cups all-purpose flour
- ❖ ¼ tsp. baking soda
- ❖ ½ tsp. salt
- ❖ 1 ½ tsps. cardamom
- ❖ 1 cup butter
- ❖ ¼ cup shortening
- ❖ 3 cups white sugar
- ❖ ½ cup sour cream
- ❖ 6 eggs
- ❖ Juice and zest of one large lemon
 - Or 1 tsp. lemon extract
- ❖ 2 tsp. pure vanilla extract
- ❖ 1 cup buttermilk

1. Heat oven to 350°F.
2. In a grilling pan, bake bacon in oven until crisp; flipping once then drain on paper towels. Tear bacon into pieces; set aside. Reserve 2 tablespoons drippings in a skillet.
3. Meanwhile, in 10-12 cup bundt pan, melt ¾ cup butter in oven.
4. Mix brown sugar, maple syrup and vanilla until smooth in a bowl.
5. Cook pecans in reserved bacon drippings over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until light brown. Add brown sugar mixture to pecans, stirring until sugar is dissolved. Pour mixture over butter in pan.
6. Reduce oven to 325°F.
7. Mix together the flour, baking soda, salt, and cardamom with a fork or whisk in a medium bowl. Set aside.
8. In a large bowl, beat 1 cup butter and shortening with sugar until smooth. Add eggs, one at time, beating well after each addition. Add the lemon juice and zest (or 1 tsp. lemon extract), vanilla extract and sour cream. Gently mix in flour mixture alternately with the buttermilk. Fold in ½ of the bacon crumbs. Pour batter into the prepared pan.
9. Bake in preheated oven for 90 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Do not open oven door until after one hour. When cake begins to pull away from the sides of the pan it is done. Let cool in pan for 10 minutes, run knife around sides of pan to loosen cake. Place heatproof serving plate upside down on pan; turn plate and pan over. Let pan remain over cake 1 minute so pecan mixture can drizzle over cake. Remove pan; sprinkle cake with last half of the bacon. Serve warm.

Note: You may want to put an extra cookie sheet on the rack below the pan. I had a little bit of spillage but it wasn't too bad.