

Tamara's Candied Bacon Hearts

- 1 package thick-cut bacon
- Fresh ground pepper
- Light brown sugar

Preheat oven to 350°. Place a rack over a foil-covered pan with sides (not a cookie sheet).

To make hearts, cut bacon in half lengthwise, then crosswise. Each heart will require one half a piece of bacon.

Working on a piece of paper towel, and one heart at a time, season bacon with pepper, then sprinkle with a light layer of brown sugar.

Move bacon to the prepared rack. Place the bottom short edges of two bacon strips on the pan, overlapping to form the bottom point of the heart. Next fold over the top ends, twisting each once to create the top loop of the heart. When forming the heart, alternate bacon ends. Gently press the intersection of the four ends together. Sprinkle on more sugar, if desired.

(If making as simple strips, lay the strips on the rack, pepper, and sprinkle with a layer of brown sugar.)

Place in oven and bake 25 to 40 minutes, depending on the thickness of bacon. Remove when crispy.

Serve immediately, or set aside to cool. Can be made one day in advance, and reheated before serving. They're tastiest when served warm or at room temperature.

TIPS: Clean-up from this recipe can be a mess if you don't use the rack-and-foil method. If, by chance, you don't have a rack & pan combo that will work, try this kitchen hack: Take a sheet of heavy-duty foil, twice the size of your sheet pan. Fold the foil in $\frac{1}{2}$ " accordion pleats. Spread out over a foil-covered sheet pan. Lay bacon perpendicular across the foil ridges to lift it from the pan bottom. Once the bacon is done cooking... simply toss all the foil in the trash.