

# Bison Burgers with Balsamic Bacon Onion Relish

The humble burger is no longer a barbecue basic, but holds the potential to showcase gourmet flair. In this recipe, a rich sweet and tangy onion topping takes lean ground bison to new heights.

Yield: 4 servings

## INGREDIENTS:

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| 6       | thick slices bacon, chopped                      |
| 1       | large Spanish or sweet onion, halved and sliced  |
| 1/2 cup | brewed coffee                                    |
| 1/4 cup | balsamic vinegar                                 |
| 3 tbsp  | dark brown sugar                                 |
| 3       | cloves garlic, minced and divided                |
| 1/2 tsp | each sea salt and freshly ground pepper, divided |
| 1/4 cup | dry breadcrumbs                                  |
| 1       | egg  |
| 2 tbsp  | each Dijon mustard and softened butter           |
| 1       | shallot, grated                                  |
| 1/2 tsp | dried thyme                                      |
| 1 lb    | ground bison (or lean ground beef)               |
|         | Toasted crusty rolls or Kaisers                  |

## Suggested Accompaniments

Arugula and sliced tomatoes

## METHOD:

Cook bacon in a large skillet until browned. Use a slotted spoon to remove from skillet. Drain off all but 1 tbsp of the fat. Add onion to skillet; cook, stirring for 20 minutes or until golden brown. Stir in cooked bacon, coffee, balsamic, brown sugar, 1 clove garlic and 1/4 tsp each salt and pepper. Increase heat to medium high. Simmer for 5 minutes or until liquids are almost absorbed.

Stir breadcrumbs with egg, mustard, butter, shallot, thyme and remaining garlic, salt and pepper. Crumble in bison and mix gently until uniform. Form into 4 equal-sized patties. (Burgers can be prepared up to this point and reserved in the refrigerator for 24 hours.)

Preheat grill to medium heat; grease well. Add burgers and cook for 4 to 5 minutes per side or until no longer pink inside (and an instant read thermometer registers 160°F/71°C). Serve burgers on rolls topped with warm relish, arugula and sliced tomatoes.

**TIP:** Leftover bacon relish can be used to make a gourmet grilled cheese using aged white Cheddar or a flatbread pizza topped with goat cheese.



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