

Candied Bacon Exploding Loaded Onion Rings: A Sharp Cheddar Shock!

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CANDIED BACON EXPLODING
LOADED ONION RINGS SHARP
CHEDDAR SHOCK

OVEN
400°F

TIME
15-20 min

METHOD
Air fryer

PRINT
Recipe Card

INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb thick-cut bacon
- 2 large yellow onions
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp paprika
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 cup milk (whole milk for best results)
- 1 cup bread crumbs (panko recommended for extra crispiness)
- 1 cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 1/4 cup maple syrup
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Vegetable oil for frying

DIRECTIONS

1. Prepare the : Candied Bacon: Preheat your oven to 400°F (200°C). Line a baking sheet with aluminum foil (for easy cleanup!) and place a wire rack on top. Lay the thick-cut bacon strips on the wire rack in a single layer. Bake for 15-20 minutes until they are partially crispy.
2. In a small bowl, mix together the brown sugar and maple syrup to create a thick glaze. Remove the bacon from the oven, brush the glaze generously onto the bacon strips, and return them to the oven for another 5 minutes to caramelize and become fully crispy. Watch carefully to prevent burning. Remove from the oven, let cool completely, then chop into small, manageable pieces.
3. Prepare the : Onion Rings: While the bacon is cooking, peel and slice the 2 large yellow onions into thick rings (about 1/2-inch thick). Carefully separate the rings and set them aside.
4. Set : Up Breading Stations: In one shallow bowl, mix together the all-purpose flour, paprika, garlic powder, salt, and pepper. In a second shallow bowl, whisk the milk. In a third shallow bowl, place the bread crumbs.
5. Bread and : Stuff the Onion Rings: Take each onion ring and first dip it thoroughly into the flour mixture, shaking off any excess. Then, dip it into the milk, ensuring it's fully coated. Finally, generously coat it with the bread crumbs, pressing gently to adhere.
6. Now, the fun part! Take each breaded onion ring and carefully fill the inside cavity with a sprinkle of sharp cheddar cheese and a small piece of the prepared

candied bacon. You want enough to be "exploding" with flavor but not so much that it won't hold together.

7. **Heat the : Frying Oil:** Heat vegetable oil in a deep fryer or a large, heavy-bottomed pot to 350°F (175°C). Use a kitchen thermometer to ensure the oil maintains a consistent temperature.
8. **Fry the : Loaded Onion Rings:** Carefully lower the loaded onion rings into the hot oil in batches, being careful not to overcrowd the pot. Fry for 2-3 minutes, turning occasionally, until they are golden brown and wonderfully crispy. The cheese inside should be melted and gooey.
9. **Drain and : Serve:** Remove the fried onion rings from the oil with a slotted spoon or spider and place them on a paper towel-lined plate to drain any excess oil. Serve the Candied Bacon Exploding Loaded Onion Rings hot, ideally with a side of sharp cheddar cheese sauce for dipping (not included in recipe, but pairs perfectly!). Enjoy this incredibly indulgent and delicious appetizer!

SWAPS & NOTES

Bacon: Thick-cut bacon is best here for a substantial "pig candy" experience.

You can use regular bacon, but thick-cut provides a better texture.

Onions: Yellow onions are great, but sweet onions like Vidalia would also be fantastic for a milder flavor.

Ensure they're sliced thick enough to hold the filling.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Consistent Oil Temperature: This is key for crispy, non-greasy fried foods.

Thick Onion Slices: Make sure your onion slices are thick enough to hold the filling without breaking apart during breading and frying.

Chill if Needed: If the onion rings seem too soft after stuffing, you can briefly chill them in the refrigerator for 15-20 minutes before frying to help them hold their shape.

Don't Overload: While it's tempting to stuff them full, ensure there's enough space for the cheese to melt and the bacon to be encased without overflowing before frying.

More recipes: [ChefManiac.com](https://chefmaniac.com)

Original recipe: <https://chefmaniac.com/candied-bacon-exploding-loaded-onion-rings-a-sharp-cheddar-shock/>