

Balsamic Glazed Pearl Onions: Sweet & Savory Side Dish

Caramelized Pearl Onions in Balsamic Glaze: A Sweet and Savory Side Dish by Jason Griffith



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10 min

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INGREDIENTS

10 oz pearl onions, peeled (fresh or frozen, thawed)

2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar (good quality vinegar enhances flavor)

3 tablespoons sugar (granulated sugar)

1 tablespoon butter (unsalted or salted)

1 tablespoon olive oil

$\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon salt

Swaps and Notes:

Pearl Onions: If fresh pearl onions are hard to find or peeling them seems daunting, frozen peeled pearl onions work perfectly and save a lot of prep time. Just thaw them first. You could also use small shallots, quartered if large, for a similar effect.

Sugar: While granulated sugar is standard, brown sugar could add a deeper molasses note to the caramelization. You can adjust the amount based on how sweet you like your glazes.

Balsamic Vinegar: The quality of your balsamic vinegar will impact the final flavor. A richer, slightly aged balsamic will give a more profound taste.

Butter & Olive Oil: This combination provides flavor and helps with the caramelization. You can use all butter or all olive oil, but the mix offers a nice balance.

Seasoning: A pinch of black pepper or a sprig of

fresh thyme or rosemary added during simmering would complement the flavors beautifully.

Directions:

Start the Simmer: Begin by placing your lovely whole peeled pearl onions in a large sauté pan or skillet. Ensure the pan is large enough to hold them in a single layer for even cooking. Set the heat to medium-low. Add the olive oil and butter to the pan. Let the butter melt and combine with the oil.

Add Glaze Ingredients: Once the onions are gently simmering in the oil and butter, it's time to sweeten things up and add depth. Pour in the balsamic vinegar, sprinkle in the sugar, and add the $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of salt. Finally, add 2 tablespoons of water to the pan. Give everything a good stir to combine the ingredients and coat the onions.

Cover and Simmer (First Stage): Cover the pan with a lid. Let the onions simmer gently for about 10 minutes. This steaming helps to tenderize them.

Check and Continue Simmering: After about 10 minutes, peek inside the pan. If the liquid seems to be running low and the onions aren't quite tender, don't worry; just add another 2 tablespoons of water. Re-cover the pan and continue simmering for another 10 minutes.

Achieve Tenderness and Caramelization: After the second 10-minute simmer, check the onions for tenderness with a fork and look for that beautiful caramelized color. The liquid should be reduced to a thick glaze. If they need a little more time to become perfectly tender or to develop a deeper caramelization, remove the lid and let them simmer, uncovered, for an additional 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. This last step helps the glaze thicken and coat the onions beautifully.

Rest and Serve: When they're just perfect-tender inside with a glossy, caramelized exterior-remove them from the heat. Let them chill for a few minutes in the pan before serving. This allows the glaze to thicken slightly more and cling to the onions. Enjoy!

Tips for Success:

Even Sizing: Try to use pearl onions that are roughly the same size to ensure they cook evenly.

Don't Rush: Caramelizing takes time. Keep the heat on medium-low and be patient. Rushing the process with high heat can burn the sugar and vinegar.

Monitor Liquid: Keep an eye on the liquid level. Adding water as needed ensures the onions simmer and tenderize before the sugars fully caramelize and risk burning.

Taste and Adjust: Once the glaze has reduced, taste an onion. You can always add a tiny bit more salt, a dash more vinegar for tang, or a pinch more sugar for sweetness, if desired.

Freshly Cooked: While they can be made ahead, these are best served warm soon after they've finished caramelizing.

Serving Suggestions and Pairings:

Roasted meats like beef tenderloin, pork loin, or roasted chicken.

Grilled steak or lamb chops.

Vegetarian mains like polenta, mushroom dishes, or lentil loaves.

As part of a cheese board or antipasto platter.

My This Tomato Skillet with Okra and Sausage is My Favorite Quick Dinner Packed with Southern Flavor for a complete Southern-inspired meal.

A comforting bowl of This Cajun Chicken Sausage Gumbo is My Favorite Bowl of Southern Comfort.

Storage and Leftover Tips:

More Recipes You Will Love:

For another comforting meat dish, check out These Easy Turkey Wings are My Favorite Comfort Food for Lazy Sundays.

DIRECTIONS

1. **Start the : Simmer:** Begin by placing your lovely whole peeled pearl onions in a large sauté pan or skillet. Ensure the pan is large enough to hold them in a single layer for even cooking. Set the heat to medium-low. Add the olive oil and butter to the pan. Let the butter melt and combine with the oil.
2. **Add : Glaze Ingredients:** Once the onions are gently simmering in the oil and butter, it's time to sweeten things up and add depth. Pour in the balsamic vinegar, sprinkle in the sugar, and add the ½ teaspoon of salt. Finally, add 2 tablespoons of water to the pan. Give everything a good stir to combine the ingredients and coat the onions.
3. **Cover and : Simmer (First Stage):** Cover the pan with a lid. Let the onions simmer gently for about 10 minutes. This steaming helps to tenderize them.
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11. **Freshly : Cooked:** While they can be made ahead, these are best served warm soon after they've finished caramelizing.
12. **Serving Suggestions and Pairings:** These Caramelized Pearl Onions in Balsamic Glaze are incredibly versatile and can elevate a variety of meals. They make a fantastic side dish for:
 13. Roasted meats like beef tenderloin, pork loin, or roasted chicken.
 14. Grilled steak or lamb chops.
 15. Vegetarian mains like polenta, mushroom dishes, or lentil loaves.
 16. As part of a cheese board or antipasto platter.
 17. For other hearty and flavorful main dishes, consider serving these alongside:
 18. **My This : Tomato Skillet with Okra and Sausage is My Favorite Quick Dinner Packed with Southern Flavor for a complete Southern-inspired meal.**
 19. **A comforting bowl of : This Cajun Chicken Sausage Gumbo is My Favorite Bowl of Southern Comfort.**
20. **Storage and Leftover Tips:** Leftover Caramelized Pearl Onions can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3-4 days. To reheat, gently warm them in a small skillet over low heat until heated through, adding a tiny splash of water or balsamic vinegar if the glaze seems too thick. They can also be microwaved, but the stovetop will help maintain their texture and glaze consistency.
21. **More Recipes You Will Love:** If you enjoyed the comforting and savory flavors of these pearl onions, you'll love exploring some of these other delicious recipes:
 22. **For another comforting meat dish, check out : These Easy Turkey Wings are My Favorite Comfort Food for Lazy Sundays.**
 23. **If you're into flavorful one-pan meals, my : This Mexican Chicken and Rice Casserole is My Favorite One-Pan Dinner That's Always a Hit is a must-try.**
 24. **And for a super convenient and tasty start to your day, my This One-Pan Breakfast Bake Will Make You Skip**

is fantastic.

25. **Final Thoughts:** These Caramelized Pearl Onions in Balsamic Glaze are a testament to the power of simple ingredients and gentle cooking. They transform a humble vegetable into a sophisticated and incredibly flavorful side dish that complements a wide array of meals. Whether you're aiming for elegance or just a delightful addition to your weeknight dinner, these onions are sure to impress. Give them a try - you'll love how easy and delicious they are!

SWAPS & NOTES

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TIPS FOR SUCCESS

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

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