

Apple Pear Salad with Maple Pecan Bacon

8 thick bacon slices
¼ cup maple syrup
1 ½ cups finely chopped pecans
2 (5-ounce) packages gourmet salad greens
1 large Bartlett pear
1 large Gala apple
1 cup halved seedless red grapes
4 oz Gorgonzola cheese, crumbled
Cranberry Vinaigrette (recipe below)

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Place a lightly greased wire rack in an aluminum foil-lined 15 by 10 inch jelly-roll pan. Dip bacon slices in syrup, allowing excess to drip off; press pecans onto both sides of bacon. Arrange bacon slices in a single layer on rack, and bake 20 minutes; turn bacon slices, and bake 5-10 more minutes or until browned and crisp. Remove from oven, and let stand 5 minutes. Cut bacon crosswise into 1-inch pieces.

Place salad greens on a serving platter. Cut pear and apple into thin slices; toss with salad greens. Top with grapes, cheese, and bacon. Serve salad with Cranberry Vinaigrette.

Cranberry Vinaigrette

1 cup canned whole-berry cranberry sauce
1 tsp orange zest
½ cup fresh orange juice
¼ cup balsamic vinegar
¼ cup olive oil
1 Tbsp light brown sugar
2 tsp grated fresh ginger
½ tsp salt

Whisk together all ingredients in a medium bowl until blended and smooth.