



*Makes about 4 cups*

My old chef Larkin Selman from Gautreau's was the most talented person I ever worked for. It was under Larkin that I came to understand that a finished dish is only as good as the sum of its parts and how critical it is to ensure that every component of a dish be as good as it could possibly be, down to the flour you dredged the fish in before it was battered and fried. Chef created dishes that exploded with flavor and challenged the senses. Gautreau's was an incredible place to work, and in thirty years, it has launched dozens of careers, including mine. I will remember my first bite of Larkin's red onion marmalade on his perfectly salty and crispy duck confit for the rest of my life. It inspired this recipe, which is a little more minimalist than his and adds a punch of bacon. Patience and diligence are the keys to making it work, and like so many things in this chapter, it goes just as well on grilled meat as it does on a biscuit.

2 cups diced bacon	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup firmly packed dark brown sugar
1 gallon thinly sliced sweet yellow onions	5 bay leaves
$\frac{3}{4}$ cup thinly sliced garlic cloves	$\frac{1}{4}$ tablespoon black mustard seeds
4 cups white wine	1 teaspoon red pepper flakes
1 cup apple cider vinegar	2 teaspoons dried thyme
$\frac{1}{2}$ cup bourbon	

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In a large skillet, cook the bacon over medium heat until soft and lightly browned, about 5 minutes. Add the onions and garlic and cook, stirring, until the onions are soft and transparent, about 7 minutes. Stir in the wine and simmer until reduced by half, about 15 minutes. Add the vinegar, bourbon, brown sugar, bay leaves, black mustard seeds, red pepper flakes, and thyme, stirring to combine. Turn the heat to low and simmer until almost all of the liquid has evaporated, 15 to 20 minutes. Remove from the heat and cool to room temperature. Remove and discard the bay leaves. Pour the jam into jars and refrigerate for up to 8 weeks.

On top toast: Spicy Bacon Onion Jam; on bottom toast: Apple Butter (page 207)

