



**Pacific Northwest  
Canned Pears**  
Always ripe. Always ready.

# Pear Walnut Stuffed Chicken Thighs with Pear Bacon Jam

## Ingredients

### Pear Bacon Jam

¼ pound bacon, chopped  
3 cups diced onion  
3 tablespoons minced fresh ginger  
6 (15-ounce) cans Pacific Northwest Canned Pears, diced, in extra light syrup, drained, juice reserved, pears divided to use 2 cups for Jam and 1 cup for filling

### Pear Filling

3 tablespoons vegetable oil  
3 cups reserved diced Pacific Northwest Canned Pears  
3 cups fresh baby spinach, chopped  
3 cups arugula, chopped  
1-½ cups chopped walnuts

### Chicken Thighs

12 skinless, boneless chicken thighs  
1 tablespoon smoked salt  
1 tablespoon paprika  
6 tablespoons vegetable oil

### Polenta

12 cups chicken broth  
¾ cup reserved pear juice  
3 cups cornmeal  
1-½ cups grated Parmesan cheese  
6 tablespoons minced chives, plus 3 tablespoons for garnish

## Servings

Yield: 12 servings

## Nutrition

Calories: 566  
Total Fat: 33g  
Saturated Fat: 7g  
Cholesterol: 68mg  
Sodium: 1662mg  
Carbohydrate: 44g  
Fiber: 5g  
Sugar: 12g  
Protein: 26g  
Calcium: 164mg  
Iron: 3mg

## Method

### Pear Bacon Jam

Heat a medium-sized skillet over medium heat for about 1 minute. Fry bacon for about 5 minutes, stirring constantly until browned. Add onion and ginger, stirring often until bacon is cooked and onions are caramelized, 2 to 3 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in pears and reserved pear juice. Return to heat and simmer about 1 minute to thicken. Set aside.

### Pear Filling

Heat a medium-sized skillet over medium heat for about 1 minute. Reduce heat to medium-low. Add oil, walnuts, spinach, and arugula. Sauté just long enough to wilt greens, about 2 minutes. Add 1 cup diced pears and cook an additional 2 to 3 minutes to blend flavors. Set aside.

### Chicken Thighs

Lightly sprinkle both sides of chicken with smoked salt and paprika. Divide filling evenly on each thigh and gently tuck in underside to close tightly; secure with toothpicks.

Heat an oven-safe skillet over medium-high heat for about 1 minute. Add oil and heat to a shimmer, about 1 minute. Place chicken, meat side down, in skillet and cook 2 to 3 minutes, until lightly browned. Carefully turn chicken over and place in oven. Bake until internal chicken temperature reaches 180 degrees, about 20 minutes.

### Polenta

Bring chicken broth to a boil in a 2-quart saucepan over medium-high heat. Whisk in cornmeal. Reduce heat to simmer. Add reserved pear juice, and cook, uncovered, whisking often for about 15 minutes, until smooth. Thin, if needed, with water. Remove from heat and whisk in Parmesan and chives.

To serve, divide polenta between 4 plates. Slice chicken thighs, shingle across polenta, and top with 2 to 3 tablespoons of Pear Bacon Jam. Drizzle with remaining reserved pear juice, if desired, and garnish with chives.

*Cindy Kerschner  
American Family Dining Services  
Allentown, PA  
Honorable Mention 2024 CAN DO Challenge*