

Artisanal Cheese Ball
From the kitchen of Kathleen Watts

Ingredients:

8-ounce fromage blanc or cream cheese (I used Neufchatel)
1 package (4 oz.) aged Cheddar, finely shredded (I used finely shredded, but it was not aged)
1 package (4 oz.) crumbled blue cheese
1 tablespoon sour cream (I realized I had no sour cream so I substituted Ranch Dressing)
½ teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
¼ teaspoon each: garlic powder, fresh cracked black pepper
1/8 teaspoon salt
4 green onions, thinly sliced
8 slices smoked apple-wood bacon, cooked, drained, diced or 1 cup finely chopped smoked Almonds (I used the smoked apple-wood bacon)

Instructions:

1. Combine the cheeses, sour cream, Worcestershire sauce, garlic powder, pepper and salt in a food processor or bowl of a mixer, puree or beat with a mixer on low until mixture is smooth, about 3 minutes. Fold in the green onions; place mixture in a large bowl. Shape with a large mixing spoon; chill 1 hour.
2. Meanwhile, cook bacon in a skillet over medium heat until crisp, about 6 minutes; drain on paper towels. Chop; set aside.
3. Gently remove cheese ball from bowl. Spread bacon bits (or almonds) on wax paper or cutting board; roll the cheese ball until evenly coated. Serve at room temperature.

Serve with an assortment of crispy crackers and artisan flatbreads.

Cook's Comments:

You can make this up to a day ahead. Take it out of the fridge 30 to 60 minutes before serving.
Yields about 12 servings.

