Your man has a man cave, or maybe he’s just having his buddies over to watch the big game in the rumpus room, and he’s called you in as the snack coach. He wants to impress his friends, show them how much he’s matured since the old chip and dip days. He tells you he’d like to upscale some of the basics—nuts and popcorn—yet keep it on the manly side. Game on.

You offer up a snack that’ll play to his inner macho man: Maple Bacon Popcorn Mix. Blending whole grain popcorn with grunt-inducing maple bacon, and the added crunch factor of pecans will satisfy your primal yet sophisticated guy. Truth be told, this mix will appeal to you and your girlfriends as well so make an extra batch for your next girls’ night of fun. Score!

Maple Bacon Popcorn Mix
(Best served warm)
Makes: 2 Quarts

Ingredients:
- 8 cups popped popcorn
- 6 slices thick-cut bacon
- 1/4 cup pure maple syrup
- 8 cups popped popcorn
- 2/3 cup pecan halves, coarsely chopped
- 2/3 cup dried cranberries
- 2 tablespoons butter or margarine
- 1/4 teaspoon coarse ground black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon maple extract

Directions:
1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Line jellyroll pan with foil. Place wire rack in pan. Arrange bacon in single layer on rack. Bake 15 minutes until ends of bacon start to curl.
2. Remove and reserve 2 tablespoons of the bacon drippings. Brush bacon with 2 tablespoons of maple syrup; bake 15 minutes until browned. Cool then coarsely chop bacon.
3. Combine popcorn, pecans and cranberries in large bowl.
4. Combine butter, black pepper, maple extract, remaining 2 tablespoons maple syrup and reserved bacon drippings. Cook over low heat until butter is melted. Drizzle over popcorn mixture and mix thoroughly.
5. Spread popcorn mixture in jellyroll or roasting pan.