



Wet Brined and Roasted Heritage Turkey

Brine Ingredients

12 - 14 pound heritage breed turkey, unstuffed*
2 cups kosher salt – (1 part salt to 16 parts water)
2 gallons cold water – (1 part salt to 16 parts water)
1/4 cup sugar (optional)
2 oranges, washed and cut into chunks
2 onions, peeled and cut into chunks
2 bay leaves (preferably fresh)
3 carrots, washed and cut into pieces
2 celery stalks, washed and cut into pieces
Sage
Thyme
3 TBL whole juniper berries, slightly smashed
2 cups apple cider
1 cup white wine

Remove the neck and giblets** from the cavity and reserve for a stock you can use to make gravy, or to eat at another time. Place turkey in a container or bag large enough to hold it and the brine. Add the brine ingredients. Be sure the turkey is completely submerged in the liquid. If your turkey is larger or smaller you may want to adjust amounts, simply keep true to the ratio of 1 part salt to 16 parts water. Cover and refrigerate, or if cold enough outside - under 40 degrees - and you have a place to put it you can leave it, covered, outdoors. Brine for two to four days. Drain for 24 hours before roasting.

To Roast: Preheat oven to 375 degrees

Bring the Turkey out of the fridge an hour or two to warm up before roasting. Chop a few onions and carrots and toss with plenty of oil (olive or otherwise) so there is enough to coat the pan, set the bird on top of the vegetables, and slather some butter over the skin. If you like, stuff some fresh herbs such as sage and rosemary loosely in the cavity. When ready roast for 10 minutes per pound at 375 degrees. Baste with pan drippings every 15/20 minutes or so. You may cover the bird at any time with cheesecloth soaked in butter to aid an even browning, or simply cover with aluminum foil. Use an instant meat thermometer to check temperature in the deepest part of the thigh being sure not to hit bone. Meat should be 165 degrees before removing from the oven. Allow the bird to rest on your carving board under a cloth or aluminum foil for a minimum of 20 minutes before carving.

*Note: When you make stock from the carcass be sure not to salt it as there will already be residual salt from the brine in the carcass.

**Reserve liver for another use, or add to gravy stock for the last 15 minutes of stock simmer.