

Roasted Turkey - Cider Brined

Total Time: 24 hours (brine) + 4 hours cooking prep and cooking

Ingredients

- 1 gallon fresh pressed unpasteurized apple cider
- 1 turkey (fresh or thawed) – make sure it will fit in your brine container (clean cooler, stockpot, food grade bucket)
- 1 lb Kosher salt
- ¼ C black or mixed peppercorns (crush them for more flavor)
- ¼ C juniper berries
- 1 C brown sugar
- 1 large onion, quartered
- 2 carrots, rough chopped
- 2 stalks celery, rough chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, rough copped
- 3 sprigs fresh thyme
- 3 sprigs fresh rosemary

Steps - Brine

1. Thaw turkey according to instructions with frozen turkey. Attention! This step may take multiple days if you have selected a large bird. If you have a fresh turkey, skip this step.
2. Combine the cider, salt, peppercorns, juniper berries, brown sugar, onion, carrots, celery, garlic, thyme, and rosemary in a pot and bring to a gentle boil. Remove from heat, let it cool, and then refrigerate. This step can be done 2-3 days ahead of your brining.
3. In a clean food safe container just large enough to completely submerge your turkey, add your turkey and brine. Add enough ice water to cover your bird. If your turkey wants to float, add a plate or other food safe weight to help keep your turkey below the brine liquid. Place the container in your refrigerator. If the container is too large to fit in your refrigerator, make sure you have plenty of ice and check on it halfway through the brine process. Add ice if needed. Brine for 16 – 24 hours.
4. Remove the turkey, rinse, and pat dry. Discard the brine.

Steps - Roast

1. Preheat oven to 500° F after removing all but the bottom rack.
2. Place turkey in a large roasting pan with the breast side up.
3. Make sure your turkey skin is dry. Pat dry again if needed.
4. Cover the turkey skin with an even coat of butter or olive oil. Thoroughly cover the turkey without pooling the oil or butter in the roasting pan. Your hands are the best tool for this job.
5. Place turkey in oven. Make sure the breast side is up. Roast about 35 minutes until the skin is golden brown.
6. Cover the turkey with foil. You are specifically wanting to cover the turkey breasts, but you can cover the entire bird.
7. Reduce oven to 350° F and return turkey to oven, covered in foil.
8. We know it's tempting, but do not baste your turkey. If you are looking, you are not cooking.
9. Roast until your thermometer reads 161° for breast and 181° for thigh, 2–2½ hours for a 18 lb bird. The thermometer rules here, not the clock. Roast it until it reaches the right temperature.

10. Remove the turkey from the oven and let it rest, still covered in foil for 30 minutes.
11. Use the pan drippings for gravy.
12. Carve turkey and serve.

If you like stuffing with your turkey, we recommend our apple and sausage stuffing recipe. We also recommend cooking the stuffing separate from your turkey to make sure both your stuffing and turkey are fully cooked but not overdone.