

Zingerman's®

TURKEY BRINING

When you brine a turkey it absorbs extra water, helps it stay juicier after cooking. The salt not only seasons the bird, it also breaks down the muscle proteins, allowing the turkey to absorb more moisture and not dry out.

Brining is easy, but it can take a day or two, depending on how much time you can spare.



1 make the brine

Over medium heat, dissolve two cups of sea salt or kosher salt per gallon of water. Two gallons of water can handle a 20 lb bird. Use a half gallon less for smaller birds. Add other herbs and spices like coriander seeds; whole peppercorns, or garlic and onions. Cool the brine to room temperature.

2 Soak the turkey

In a large stockpot, tub, or brining bag, cover the turkey in the brine and seal tight. Be sure to remove neck, giblets and liver first. Store in the fridge for a day or two, longer is never a bad thing. Make sure the turkey is completely submerged. If necessary, prepare additional brine solution at a ratio of ¼ cup per quart of water.

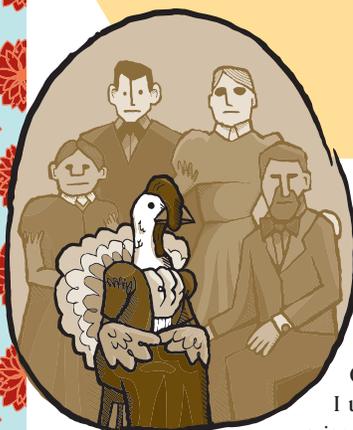
3 remove turkey from brine

Remove the bird from the brine and rinse the turkey with cool water. Pat dry with paper towel. Let rest for half hour.

4 cook your turkey

Accept accolades with grace and humility. Practice your reactions in the bathroom mirror a few days before the feast so your responses will seem genuine.

BRINING TIPS



You can add all types of herbs and spices to your brine like bay leaf, fennel seeds, peppercorns, cloves, juniper berries, allspice berries, orange peels, lemon peels, mustard seeds, etc.

Can't fit a big stockpot in your fridge? I use a large plastic bag or clean out the crisper drawer and brine the turkey in there.

Let the turkey air-dry overnight in the fridge. Place it on a roasting rack set inside a roasting pan and cover loosely with plastic bags to avoid cross contamination. This drying step will give your turkey crispier skin.

You can roast the turkey either immediately after brining or after air-drying. I've found that brined turkeys tend to cook a bit more quickly, so cook as usual, but start checking the turkey's temperature an hour before the end of your estimated cooking time.

