

Brining

Brining should begin at least 6 hours prior to cooking, but 12 to 20 hours would be ideal. Parts require less time, whole birds require more. Follow our five-step brining schedule and you're on your way to moist, tender turkey!

Step 1: Choose your Turkey

Wings, drums, thighs and breast meat will cook quickly, but a 10 lb whole bird can take up to 2 hours on the barbecue or up to 3 hours in the oven. Do not use a self-basting or Kosher turkey for brining.

Step 2: Choose your Container

Your turkey will need to be completely submerged in the brine solution. For parts, use either a covered container or a large zip-lock freezer bag (these bags are sturdy enough to handle most parts and the air can be squeezed out completely). To brine a whole turkey, use a large non-corrosive covered pot or 'brining bags'. Make sure you have enough fridge space to accommodate your container.



Step 3: Brine Solution – Liquid

You'll need about 1L of ice cold water to cover a few parts and about 3L to 4L to cover a 10-12 lb whole turkey. If you want to create your own 'signature brine', consider replacing some of the water with beer or soda pop.



Step 4: Brine Solution – Salt

Typically, a brine has enough salt in the liquid to float a raw egg. Don't be afraid to cut back if you prefer less salt. Kosher salt or sea salt are recommended. Also, many grocers or kitchen stores sell unique, seasoned salt mixtures which can work well. Dissolve salts in a small quantity of hot water then let cool before adding to the brining liquid. Use a ratio of 1 cup Kosher salt to 1 gallon liquid.



Step 5: Brine Solution – Aromatics & Seasonings

Here's where the flavour gets added! Sweet, savoury or spicy hot, you can mix to your taste. Try honey, maple syrup, molasses or brown sugar to sweeten up the brine. Fresh herbs such as rosemary, sage, thyme, basil or mint add subtle flavours, while garlic, shallots, ginger root, cinnamon sticks, cloves and lemon or lime zest 'define the brine'. Smokey chipotle peppers, ancho, jalapeño or spicy hot cayenne peppers will give the brine some heat!



Once the solution has been prepared and the turkey submerged, cover and refrigerate for the desired length of time. When finished soaking, remove the turkey from the brine, and discard brine. Thoroughly rinse under a slow stream of cool water and rub gently to release the salt. Pat the skin dry. Cook the turkey as you normally would, in the oven, on a rotisserie, or in the barbecue. Be sure to reach an end point temperature of 170°F.

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BRINING RECIPES

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BRINING Recipes

The following are brine recipes based on one average turkey breast. Increase the quantities as necessary to accommodate larger pieces, multiple parts, or a whole bird.

Standard Brine

1L ice cold water
¼ cup Kosher salt
1 tbsp whole dried cloves
½ tsp fresh ground black pepper
2 cinnamon sticks
grated zest from one lemon
¼ tsp ground allspice
1 tbsp oil
1-2 inches fresh grated ginger root



White Cranberry

(Recipe courtesy of Ocean Spray® Cranberries Inc.)
4 cups Ocean Spray® White Cranberry Juice Drink
¼ cup Kosher salt
2 tbsp sugar
2 bay leaves
1 clove garlic, crushed
1 tsp whole peppercorns

Fiesta Brine

2 cans of Pilsner beer (355 ml)
¼ cup coarse garlic sea salt
2 whole dried ancho peppers (seeds & stem removed)
2 cinnamon sticks, broken in half
1 tsp dried whole cloves
1 tbsp oil
zest from ½ a lime
¼ tsp fresh ground pepper



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Brining BASICS



TIPS AND TRICKS
ON LOCKING IN
MOISTURE USING THE
BRINING PROCESS

BRINING BASICS

Recipes courtesy of the Turkey Farmers of Ontario.