

OUR ESSENTIAL TURKEY COOKING GUIDE

Tips | Tricks | Recipes

All of our turkeys are pasture raised, without growth hormones or unnecessary antibiotics, by farmers we know and trust.

The result? **An unforgettable meal, with a more flavorful turkey that's better for you, your family, and our planet.**

Happy Thanksgiving!

FLEISHERS | CRAFT BUTCHERY

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BRINING YOUR TURKEY

Brining is not required for a delicious meal, but it is an excellent way to make sure your bird stays juicy and tender. Choose wet or dry brining, but not both, otherwise you risk having an extremely salty turkey.

Wet Brine

Wet brining is the method of submerging your bird in a salt water solution for 12-24 hours. If you haven't already, pick up our Turkey Essentials Brining Kit which has pre-measured ingredients and a large resealable brine bag. If you'd like to make your own, follow these simple instructions and add peppercorn, juniper, coriander, bay leaves or whatever spices you like:

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

2 quarts of water, plus 6 quarts heavily iced water
2-2.5 cups kosher salt
A pot large enough to hold 8 quarts of liquid

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In your large pot, boil 2 quarts of water.
2. Add salt to boiling water and stir until dissolved.
3. Turn off heat and add 6 quarts of heavily iced water to the brine mixture and stir together. Using an instant-read thermometer, check that temp is 40° F or less before continuing.
4. Remove giblets from inside turkey (save them for gravy!) and place in the brine bag. Slowly add the cooled brine mixture to the bag. Seal bag and place on bottom shelf of refrigerator. (If you do not have sufficient refrigerator space, place the sealed brine bag with turkey inside a heavy duty garbage bag and store in an ice-packed cooler.)
5. After 12-24 hours, remove the turkey from brine bath and rinse thoroughly inside and out. Pat the skin and cavity dry with paper towels. Allow turkey to reach room temperature – at least 30 minutes – before roasting. Ideally 12-18 hours, but no longer than 24.

Pro Tip

To get crispy skin, allow the bird to dry out for 24 hours in your fridge, uncovered. Do not add salt.

Dry Brine

Dry brining is the method of dusting the bird with a mixture of salt and baking powder to draw out excess water from the muscles without adding any additional moisture. As with a wet brine, the salt in a dry brine helps to loosen the muscle fibers so that as the bird cooks, it remains juicy. Dry brining helps maintain maximum turkey flavor and gets the skin extra crispy.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

1/2 cup kosher salt
2 Tbsp baking powder

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a medium-sized bowl, combine 1/2 cup of kosher salt with 2 tablespoons of baking powder.
2. Pat your turkey dry with paper towels inside and out.
3. Generously sprinkle the dry brine all over the turkey so it's well-coated (top and bottom) but not completely encrusted. Important: Depending on the size of your bird, you may not have to use all of the dry brine to coat your turkey.
4. Put the turkey into your fridge uncovered for up to 24 hours. Do not rinse before roasting, but we do recommend brushing generously with clarified butter* for a golden, crispy skin.

* Clarified butter is butter that's been slowly cooked to remove water and milk solids. It's perfect for ensuring crispy skin, especially on a wet-brined bird. It also adds a nutty flavor to the skin.

ROASTING YOUR TURKEY

A whole bird will take the longest time to cook; spatchcocked can cut that time in half; parts will cook even quicker. The important thing to keep in mind is internal temperature. Legs and thighs require a higher temperature than the breasts, which is often the reason for dry, overcooked white meat. Cooking in parts is the easiest way to ensure all the meat is perfectly cooked because you can simply take them out when necessary.

We recommend roasting on a sheet pan with a wire rack (to keep the bird lifted out of its liquid), not a deep-sided roasting pan that insulates and can slow down cooking. A shallow pan allows for freer air flow around the legs and thighs, so they reach their temperature at the same time as the breasts. Spatchcocking helps by laying the bird flat, pushing the dark meat to the outside, exposing all the meat to the same consistent and even heat.

Whether or not you're using our Turkey Essentials Brining Kit, follow these instructions below for roasting the perfect turkey.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

Shallow sheet pan

Wire rack

Clarified butter

Your choice of herbs and spices (assuming the bird is brined and therefore doesn't need salt)

Meat thermometer (leave-in or probe)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 425° F.
2. Combine 8 tbsp of clarified butter with herb rub.
3. Place turkey breast-side up on a rack in a roasting pan or sheet pan. Rub a generous amount of the

herb and butter mixture over the entire bird, as well as underneath the skin, being careful not to tear it.

4. Rub the inside of the cavity with the butter mixture, then fill cavity with one large onion, quartered, and two stalks of celery, roughly chopped.
5. Tie the legs together tightly with butcher's twine, and tuck the wings underneath the turkey (skip this step if spatchcocked).
6. Place turkey in oven and roast for 20 minutes, then baste with pan juices.
7. Lower heat to 350° F and continue to roast.
8. Begin checking the temperature every 15 minutes by inserting an instant-read thermometer into the thickest part of the thigh, without touching bone.
9. When thermometer reaches our recommended temperatures below, remove turkey from oven. Let it rest, uncovered, for up to 30 minutes while you set out the rest of the meal. Now your turkey is ready to carve and serve.

ALWAYS COOK TO TEMPERATURE, NOT TIME.

Ovens, bird sizes and recipes vary. Monitoring the internal temperature is the only way to truly know your bird is done. We recommend using both an oven thermometer and a probe meat thermometer, so there's no guessing.

Breasts 150-155° F
Legs/Thigh 165-170° F

CARVING YOUR BIRD

Now that you've let the turkey rest, it's time to carve. Present the whole bird to your guests, relish in the "oohs and ahs," and bring it back to the kitchen for carving. Use a large, sturdy wooden cutting board, as plastic can get really slippery.

1. **Remove the thigh/leg.** Make a slice in the skin between the thigh and breast. Continue cutting down right to the breast through to the back to remove the thigh and leg; set on your cutting board to slice later. Do the same for the other side.
2. **Remove the wings.** Flip bird on its side to expose the joint connecting the wing to the body, cut right through the joint. Add to the platter or set aside for stock. Do the same for the other side. Alternatively, you can keep your wings on to act as leverage while you cut your breasts.
3. **Remove the breasts.** Slice down on either side of keel bone (a turkey's breastbone) exposing the keel bone and peel the breast from the bone, so it peels right off in one piece. Set on your cutting board to cut.
4. **Separate the leg from the thigh.** Separate the drumstick from the thigh by cutting through the joint that connects them. Put the drumstick on your platter. Do the same thing to the other side.
5. **Debone and slice thighs.** Cut along either side of the leg bone and peel meat from bone. Slice thighs across the grain. (The thigh meat should easily cut away from the bone.)
6. **Slice breasts.** Try to keep skin intact, slice across the grain and add to platter.

**SAVE YOUR CARCASS, WINGS, AND ANY
OTHER DISCARDED BONES FOR STOCK!**