

Wet Brined Roast Turkey Recipe

Ingredients:

- 1 whole turkey (12-14 lbs), thawed if frozen
- 1 gallon water (or substitute part with beer or wine)
- 1 1/2 cups kosher salt
- 1/2 cup sugar (optional)
- 2-3 bay leaves
- 1 tablespoon black peppercorns
- 1 tablespoon dried thyme
- 1 tablespoon dried rosemary
- 1 lemon, quartered
- 1 onion, quartered
- 4 garlic cloves, smashed
- 2-3 tablespoons olive oil or melted butter (for roasting)
- Fresh herbs like rosemary, thyme, and parsley for stuffing the cavity (optional)
- 2 cups chicken broth (optional, for basting)

Instructions:

1. Prepare the Wet Brine:

- In a large pot, combine water, salt, sugar, bay leaves, peppercorns, thyme, and rosemary. Stir until salt and sugar are fully dissolved. Bring to a simmer, then remove from heat. Let cool completely before using.

2. Brine the Turkey:

- Place the turkey in a large brining bag or container. Pour the cooled brine over the turkey, making sure it's fully submerged. Refrigerate for 12 to 24 hours.

3. Preheat the Oven:

- Preheat your oven to 325°F (163°C).

4. Prepare the Turkey for Roasting:

- Remove the turkey from the brine and rinse it under cold water to remove excess salt. Pat dry with paper towels, both inside and out.
- Stuff the cavity with the lemon quarters, onion, garlic, and fresh herbs, if using.
- Rub the outside of the turkey with olive oil or melted butter.

5. Roast the Turkey:

- Place the turkey breast-side up on a roasting rack in a large roasting pan. Roast the turkey uncovered for about 13-15 minutes per pound, or until the internal temperature of the thickest part of the thigh reaches 165°F (74°C).
- Baste occasionally with chicken broth or pan juices, if desired.

6. Rest and Serve:

- Once cooked, remove the turkey from the oven and cover loosely with foil. Let it rest for 20-30 minutes before carving.

Nutritional Breakdown (per serving - based on 6 oz. of cooked turkey breast meat):

- **Calories:** 275 kcal
- **Protein:** 36g
- **Fat:** 12g
 - Saturated Fat: 4g
- **Carbohydrates:** 0g
- **Fiber:** 0g
- **Sugar:** 0g
- **Sodium:** 780mg
- **Cholesterol:** 110mg

(Note: Nutritional information is approximate and may vary depending on specific ingredients and portion sizes.)

Benefits of Brining:

- **Moisture Retention:** The salt in the brine helps the turkey retain moisture, especially in the breast meat, which can dry out during roasting.
- **Enhanced Flavor:** The herbs and aromatics add layers of flavor, while the salt deeply seasons the meat.
- **Even Cooking:** Brining ensures that the turkey stays juicy and flavorful, even if it's cooked a bit longer than expected.