

## Turkey Perfect® Turkey Roasting Instructions

### Defrosting a Turkey

If you are using a frozen turkey, there are two methods I recommend for defrosting your bird.

1. Defrosting in a refrigerator – you will need to allow 24 hours for every 5 lbs of turkey.
2. Defrosting in a sink - you place the turkey in the sink and fill the sink with cold water. Change the water every hour. Why do you need to change the water every hour? As the turkey thaws, the temperature of the water decreases. By changing the water every hour, you maintain the temperature of the water and allow the turkey to thaw quicker. When using the sink method, allow 30 minutes for every 1lb of turkey.

### Turkey Defrosting Chart

| WHOLE TURKEY   |                            | DEFROSTING CHART   |  |
|----------------|----------------------------|--------------------|--|
| WEIGHT         | DEFROSTING IN REFRIGERATOR | DEFROSTING IN SINK |  |
| 8 - 12 pounds  | 24 - 48 hours              | 4 - 6 hours        |  |
| 12 - 16 pounds | 48 - 72 hours              | 6 - 8 hours        |  |
| 16 - 20 pounds | 72 - 96 hours              | 8 - 10 hours       |  |
| 20 - 24 pounds | 96 - 120 hours             | 10 - 12 hours      |  |

### Brining with Turkey Perfect® Brine Mix

As you may have imagined, I am huge fan of brining turkeys. During the cooking process, meat can lose up to 30% of its water. A properly brined and cooked turkey will reduce the water loss by as much as one half.

The salt and sugar in the brine alter the proteins causing them to trap moisture that would ordinarily be lost during cooking. By using the Turkey Perfect® brining mix, those flavors are trapped in your turkey.

After brining, you may roast your turkey according to the directions on the turkey packaging or follow the directions below. Turkeys can also be fried, smoked, or grilled.

### Turkey Perfect Herb Brining Mix Instructions

You will need:

- 1 - 20.8 ounce package of Turkey Perfect™ Herb Brining Mix
- 1 - 10 to 25 pound turkey, thawed
- 3 quarts water
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- ½ cup apple cider vinegar or white vinegar
- 5 quarts ice water
- 1 brining bag or ice chest

1. Remove neck and giblets from inside turkey. Store neck and giblets in refrigerator if you plan on making gravy with them later. With a knife, carefully cut a 3-inch slit on both sides of turkey just under the thickest part of the breast - cutting the skin only, not through the meat. Place turkey, breast side down, in in a large brining bag or clean ice chest.

2. Heat 3 quarts of water in a large stock pot over medium-high heat. Add brine mix and sugar and stir until dissolved. DO NOT BOIL. Remove from heat, add vinegar, and allow to cool for 15 minutes.

3. If storing turkey in refrigerator, place bagged turkey in roasting pan for support. Add brine solution and ice water, sealing bag and making sure all air is removed. TURKEY TIP- To avoid spillage on the floor or countertop when pouring brine into bag, place the brine bag in a cooler or the sink before pouring in the contents. Turkey must be kept in refrigerator (or ice chest) that maintains temperature of 40° F or below. Brine turkey for 1 hour per pound. Turkeys over 24 pounds can be brined for 24 hours.

4. Remove turkey from brine; gather leftover spices/herbs from brine solution and pat onto meat for added flavor. Brush turkey lightly with oil and roast, grill, or fry turkey as desired.

### Turkey Perfect Apple Sage Brining Mix Instructions

You will need:

- 1 - 18 ounce package of Turkey Perfect™ Apple Sage Brining Mix
- 1 - 10 to 25 pound turkey, thawed
- 2 quarts apple cider or apple juice
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- ½ cup apple cider vinegar or white vinegar
- 6 quarts ice water
- 1 brining bag or ice chest

1. Remove neck and giblets from inside turkey. Place neck and giblets in refrigerator if you plan on making gravy with them later. With a knife, carefully

cut a 3-inch slit on both sides of turkey just under the thickest part of the breast - cutting the skin only, not through the meat. Place turkey, breast side down, in a large brining bag or clean ice chest.

2. Heat apple cider or apple juice in a large stock pot over medium-high heat. Add brine mix and sugar and stir until dissolved. DO NOT BOIL. Remove from heat, add vinegar, and allow to cool for 15 minutes.

3. If storing turkey in refrigerator, place bagged turkey in roasting pan for support. Add brine solution and ice water, sealing bag and making sure all air is removed. TURKEY TIP- To avoid spillage on the floor or countertop when pouring brine into bag, place the brine bag in a cooler or the sink before pouring in the contents. Turkey must be kept in refrigerator (or ice chest) that maintains temperature of 40° F or below. Brine turkey for 1 hour per pound. Turkeys over 24 pounds can be brined for 24 hours.

4. Remove turkey from brine; gather leftover spices/herbs from brine solution and pat onto meat for added flavor. Brush turkey lightly with oil and roast, grill, or fry turkey as desired.

## Trussing

Trussing is the art of tying the legs and wings of a turkey with string in order to present a more beautiful turkey. These days, most turkeys come with metal or plastic clips that have been used for "trussing" purposes. If you decide, however, to truss your bird, here are the simple directions.

First - Use 100% cotton string to tie the legs together; this promotes even cooking. Another option is to tuck the ankles of the bird into the pocket of skin at the tail end.

Next - Wings can be tucked behind the bird.

## Cooking a Turkey

Now that you've prepared your turkey, it's time to cook it.

1. Pre-heat oven to 325° F.
2. When you pull the turkey out of the brine, make sure to drain the brine water out of the cavity of the turkey. Place thawed and brined turkey, breast-side up, on a V-rack in a shallow roasting pan. Make sure neck and giblets are removed from the turkey.
3. Lightly rub canola oil or spray canola oil on the skin of the turkey to promote even browning.
4. Place turkey in the preheated oven.

5. Cook turkey until a meat thermometer that is inserted into the thickest part of the breast reads 165°F and the innermost part of the thigh reads 180° F. Do not touch bone when inserting the thermometer. Approximate cooking times can be found in the chart below.

6. Let turkey rest for 30 minutes after it is done cooking. Allowing this time to rest will ensure that you have a perfect turkey!

General cooking times for both stuffed and unstuffed turkeys based on recommendations from the National Turkey Federation:

Cooking Chart with Times

| WHOLE TURKEY   |                                | COOKING CHART                |  |
|----------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| WEIGHT         | UNSTUFFED TURKEY<br>(IN HOURS) | STUFFED TURKEY<br>(IN HOURS) |  |
| 8 - 12 pounds  | 2 3/4 - 3                      | 3 - 3 1/2                    |  |
| 12 - 14 pounds | 3 - 3 3/4                      | 3 1/2 - 4                    |  |
| 14 - 18 pounds | 3 3/4 - 4 1/4                  | 4 - 4 1/4                    |  |
| 18 - 20 pounds | 4 1/4 - 4 1/2                  | 4 1/4 - 4 3/4                |  |
| 20 - 24 pounds | 4 1/2 - 5                      | 4 3/4 - 5 1/4                |  |

**\* Please remember that every oven is different and cooking times can vary.**