

Brining a Turkey

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Ingredients:

Turkey (thawed, cleaned and patted dry)
2 gallons of Water
¾ cup Kosher Salt
¾ cup Maple Syrup
1 head Garlic
(Cloves separated, peeled and slightly smashed)
Small bunch of fresh Thyme
Small bunch of fresh Sage
2 Bay Leaves
1 TBSP whole Peppercorns
2 large (gallon size) zip style storage bags filled with Ice
(or refrigerate the turkey in a brining bag)



Directions:

Depending on the size of your turkey and your container, you may need to make additional brine. When you bring your turkey home from the store (before you unwrap it), place it in the container you plan to brine it in. The amount of water it takes to cover the turkey is the amount of brine you'll need to make. This recipe makes 2 gallons of brine.

Heat 1 gallon of water to a simmer in a large pot. Add salt, syrup, garlic, thyme, sage, bay leaves and peppercorns and stir until the salt has dissolved. Turn off the heat and cover. Let the brine steep as it cools to room temperature (This can be done the day before you plan to brine, just refrigerate the brine once it's cooled to room temperature.) Before brining, make sure the package with the giblets and the neck has been removed from the turkey cavity. Place the turkey, with the cavity facing upward, in a non-reactive container or brining bag. (I like to use a large water cooler because it frees up space in the refrigerator). Pour 2 quarts water over the turkey, then the gallon of prepared brine, then 2 more quarts of water to equal 2 gallons of brine. Place bags of ice on top of the turkey to weigh it down and place the cover on the water cooler. Brine the turkey overnight or for up to 1 hour per pound. The next day, drain the brine. Rinse the turkey and pat it dry thoroughly inside and out. Prepare the turkey. It is not necessary to season the turkey any more. Depending on how you prepare your turkey, you may wish to rub it with vegetable oil or stuff the cavity with aromatics such as lemon, apple, celery or onion.