

Wood-Roasted Thanksgiving Turkey

Prep oven per Mugnaini Roasting Oven Protocol.

BE SURE TO FULLY PREHEAT OVEN. By the time you begin to roast your turkey you want to have a large bed of coals, a low flame of about 2–4" high and a deck temperature of 600 degrees. During the hours of roasting you will need to add a small piece of wood every 20–30 minutes to maintain the low flame and a deck temperature of 550 degrees. After placing wood in the oven be sure to leave the door off until the log is burning. Then place door within arch to partially cover oven opening. Be sure not to close oven opening

- 1 brined turkey 12 lbs.
- 1 orange
- 1 bunch fresh thyme
- 1 teaspoon poultry seasoning
- 2 carrots
- 2 stalks celery
- 1 onion
- 1 cup Chardonnay
- 1 cup water

Prepare roasting pan by scattering bottom of pan with coarsely chopped onion, celery, carrots and half of the fresh herbs. Pour water into pan. Set roasting rack inside pan.

Remove turkey from the brine and rinse under cold running water. Pat dry with paper towel, inside and out. Place turkey breast side up in roasting pan. Season inside of turkey with black pepper, quartered orange and 1 bunch of fresh thyme.

Tie turkey legs together with trussing string. Rub entire outside of turkey with olive oil. Loosely tent turkey with heavy duty foil and set pan into wood-fired oven.

Roast turkey until internal thermometer reads 160 degrees when inserted into the breast and 170 degrees when inserted into thickest part of thigh meat (roasting time about 2–2 1/2 hours). After 1 hour add chardonnay to roasting pan. Note that the turkey will roast faster in your wood-fired oven than your gas oven, and that brining also expedites the cooking process. Remove foil tent during last five minutes of roasting to complete the browning over top portion of bird.

Remove turkey from oven and cover with foil. Let rest for 20–30 minutes before carving.

See Flavor Brine recipe

Flavor Brine

To determine the amount of liquid needed for your brine, place turkey into the large container and cover it with water. Remove the turkey and measure the remaining quantity of water. This will be the amount needed. (Discard this water and start with fresh cold water.)

Brine Recipe—may need to be doubled depending on the size of your bird

- 2 gallons cold water
- 2 sprigs each fresh rosemary, thyme and sage
- 1 cup kosher salt
- 1 cup light brown sugar
- 2 oranges quartered
- 2 fresh bay leaves
- 1 tablespoon whole black peppercorns

Pour salt and sugar into 4 cups of water and cook over medium heat until dissolved. Set aside and let cool. Combine with remaining water and spice ingredients (ice may be added to expedite cooling) into larger container such as a stock pot, clean bucket lined with a clean plastic bag, etc. Be sure that water is COLD before adding the turkey. To prevent bacterial growth the water must remain 40 degrees or lower throughout brining. (Most refrigerators are set at 36–38 degrees.)

Remove the neck, liver and giblets from the cavity of the turkey. Rinse turkey well inside and outside under cold running water and immerse into brine. Cover and place in refrigerator for 24 hours.

