

MAPLE-BRINED WHOLE ROASTED TURKEY AND GRAVY

MAKES 12-14 servings without leftovers

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12-14 pound fresh turkey, giblet bag and neck removed, rinsed

For the brine:

1 1/3 cup kosher salt (such as Diamond Crystal)

1/2 cup maple syrup

1 quart hot water

1 orange, cut into crosswise slices

1 lemon, cut into crosswise slices

1 Tablespoon black peppercorns

2 teaspoons allspice berries

1 gallon ice cold water

1 onion, quartered

3 or 4 parsley sprigs, thyme sprigs and or sage leaves

3 sprigs of fresh rosemary

1 apple, quartered or cores from 2 apples

6 Tablespoons unsalted butter, melted or olive oil

1-2 cups stock or water

Gravy

1/4 cup dry white wine

5 Tablespoons all-purpose flour

3 -3 1/2 cups chicken or turkey stock, preferably homemade

sea salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

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1. I like to brine the turkey for about 14-18 hours. You can brine it, remove it from the brine and then store it in the refrigerator for a day until you are ready to cook it. To make the brine: Dissolve the salt and maple syrup in the hot water. Take the orange slices and carefully squeeze them into the mixture. Add the lemon, peppercorns and allspice berries.
2. Place the brining bag in a large stockpot. Add the cold water to the bringing bag and then the warm mixture. Place the turkey in the brine breastside down and make sure the whole bird is covered with liquid. Seal the bag securely and place pot in the refrigerator for 12-18 hours.
3. Remove the bird from the brine and rinse with cold water. Pat dry. Refrigerate until ready to cook or proceed with recipe.
4. The day of roasting, take turkey out of refrigerator and wipe dry with paper towels. Bring to room temperature, about 60-90 minutes.
Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Position a rack in the lowest rung of the oven. Oil a V-shaped rack in a roasting pan. **-OVER-**

5. Sprinkle a little freshly ground black pepper in the cavity and then add in the onion, herbs, and apple. Truss the turkey by tying the legs together. Brush the skin all over with some of the butter or oil.
6. Place the turkey on the rack in the pan, breast-side down and pull the wings behind the back. Roast for 40 minutes, basting with butter or oil after 20 minutes. **Reduce the heat to 325 degrees**, turn breast side up (I usually wear clean rubber gloves to do this) and add 1 cup stock or water to the roasting pan. Continue to roast, basting with the remaining butter or oil until used up and then with the pan juices every 20 minutes. Add additional stock to the roasting pan if you notice there are no pan juices with which to baste the turkey.
7. Roast until golden and cooked through. After about 2 hours, start testing for doneness by inserting an instant-read thermometer in the thickest part of the breast away from the bone; it should register 165-170 degrees. You may also test the thigh – it should read 180 degrees. The turkey should roast a total of about 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ hours, but it can range from about 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ - 3 hours or 12-14 minutes/pound.
8. Transfer to a cutting board or warmed platter and cover loosely with aluminum foil until ready to carve, at least 20 minutes (I prefer longer.) Use the pan juices to make gravy.

Prepare the gravy:

1. Pour all the pan juices, including the fat into a fat separator. Allow the fat to separate from the juices.
2. Heat the roasting pan over medium heat on the stove and add the pan juices, leaving the fat in the fat separator. Add the wine to the roasting pan. Bring to a boil and lower heat to a simmer for 2-3 minutes, stirring with a wooden spoon to dislodge any brown bits that stick to the bottom of the pan. Strain into a bowl or you can use the gravy separator again or wait until Step 4 and strain into the gravy saucepan.
3. In a saucepan over medium heat, warm the reserved fat from the gravy separator until it is bubbly. You should have at least 3-4 Tablespoons. If you don't, add some olive oil. Add the flour and whisk rapidly to cook the flour, about 2-3 minutes.
4. Whisk in the strained pan juices and 3 cups of stock to the saucepan until smooth. Bring to simmer and cook until thickened, about 5 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Keep warm on lowest heat. Add additional stock as needed to achieve desired consistency.