

# Dry-Brined Turkey

By Kim Severson

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**Total Time** 3½ hours, plus 2 days' brining

**Rating** ★★★★★ (4,650)



Ryan Liebe for The New York Times. Food Stylist: Barrett Washburne.

This fantastic turkey recipe borrows a technique perfected by Judy Rodgers, the chef from the Zuni Café in San Francisco, who had exceptional results salting chickens long before roasting them (also called dry-brining). No more fussy liquid brine that alters the texture of the meat — just crisp, golden skin and tender, moist meat. This turkey will be the talk of the table. Allow two days for the bird to season before roasting.

## INGREDIENTS

**Yield:** 12 to 14 servings

- 1 12- to 16-pound turkey, preferably a heritage or pasture raised bird
- Kosher salt
- 1 tablespoon black pepper
- 10 sprigs fresh thyme
- ½ bunch flat-leaf parsley
- 2 small onions, halved
- 2 small apples, cored and halved
- ½ cup unsalted butter, softened
- 2 cups white wine (see tip)

## PREPARATION

### Step 1

Two days before serving, rinse turkey and pat dry. Rub all over with kosher salt, slipping salt under skin where possible and rubbing some into cavities. Use about 1 tablespoon per 4 pounds of bird.

### Step 2

Wrap bird in a large plastic bag and place in refrigerator. On second night, turn turkey over. A couple of hours before cooking, remove turkey from bag and pat dry. (There is no need to rinse it first.) Place in roasting pan and allow to come to room temperature.

### Step 3

Heat oven to 450 degrees. Sprinkle half the pepper into main cavity of turkey; add thyme, parsley, half the onions and half the apples. Truss legs with kitchen twine. Put remaining apples and onions in neck opening and tuck neck skin under bird.

### Step 4

Rub butter under breast skin and onto thigh meat. Sprinkle bird with remaining pepper.

### Step 5

Roast for 30 minutes. Remove turkey from oven, reduce heat to 350 degrees and cover breast of bird and wing tips with foil. Add 1½ cups white wine (or use water) to bottom of roasting pan and roast bird for another two hours, depending on size; figure 12 minutes a pound for an unstuffed bird. Remove foil in last half-hour so breast browns.

### Step 6

When turkey has roasted for 2 hours, begin to test for doneness by inserting a meat thermometer (digital is best) into two places

in thigh, making sure not to touch bone. It should be at about 160 degrees.

#### **Step 7**

When roasting is done, tip turkey so interior juices run back into pan. Remove turkey to a separate baking sheet or serving platter, cover with foil and then a damp kitchen towel and allow to rest for at least 30 minutes before carving.

#### **Step 8**

Pour fat and drippings from pan into a measuring cup. Deglaze pan with ½ cup white wine (or use broth) and pour that into same measuring cup. Fat and drippings can then be used to make gravy.

#### **TIP**

*If you'd prefer not to use wine, you may substitute water in Step 5 (in the roasting pan), and broth in Step 8 (to deglaze the pan).*

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