



SMOKING THE HOLIDAY BIRD

Brining • Spatchcocking • Smoking

Ingredients & Supplies

- Turkey
- Johnsons bucket
- Salt
- Gallon of water
- Sugar
- Extra Large Ziploc Bags
- Sharp cutting shears
- Ice
- Paper towels
- Lemon slices
- Cotton & latex gloves

Helpful Tips:

- **Don't cook your bird to a specified time, cook to an internal temperature.**
- Use a fresh bird (frozen birds have usually sat in a salty solution)
- Don't have a bucket? Use a stockpot, food safe bucket, YETI bucket, etc.
- **Why Brine?** The salt modifies the protein fibers, letting in more moisture and adding a bolder flavor profile.
- Brine for about 12 hours. Any more and the protein fibers can become mushy, leaving your meat rubbery.
- You can take the neck, giblets, and tail you trimmed and use it in a stock or gravy.
- **Why Spatchcock?** By eliminating the cavity, you get better smoke penetration. Plus, your bird will cook more evenly when its flat.
- You can spatchcock after you're done brining, however, doing this before makes it easier to place in the container.
- You don't want your brine hot when your bird goes in, or else it will start cooking!
- For a less salty bird, you can rinse it off after it comes out of the brine.
- Don't have oven mitts? Use basic cotton gloves under latex gloves so you can pick up hot items without getting burnt.

1. Bring a quart of water to a boil. Add cup of salt (you can deduct this by adding brown sugar, maple syrup, bourbon, etc.), black peppercorn, dried thyme, lemon (or other citrus element like oranges, ginger, etc.)
2. Give it a stir and let it boil so it mixes better.
3. While its boiling, its time to spatchcock
4. Clean up the bird by looking for any pin feathers and trimming off the neck skin. Take the neck, giblets, and tail out.
5. Score along the backbone. Using cutting shears, carefully cut score marks by starting at the neck. The hip bone will be tough so be careful!
6. Flip your bird over, score the cartilage near the breast bone. Place your hands on the bird and forcefully press down to flatten the bird. Flip the bird over to see if you need to trim anything else.
7. Back to the Brine: Add ice to cool your brine. Stir.
8. With an extra large Ziploc baggie over a bucket, put your bird in breast down first. Pour the brine over and add more ice.
9. Seal your bag (to help vacuum seal, you can pour water around the bag and push the bag down so the air comes out.
10. Transfer your bird to a cooler on your back porch and add in more ice to keep it cool. Just make sure to keep your bird below 41 degrees.

11. Remove the bird from the brine and pat dry with paper towels to get all of the moisture off. This is the time to trim more if you need to!
12. Take your bird outside and lay it out to begin seasoning. We recommend any of Johnsons' poultry rubs! Flip your bird over and make sure to season the inside.
13. Let your bird sit for 15 minutes to let the seasoning adhere to the bird.
14. Lay your turkey out and tuck the wing tips under (this helps keep the tips from burning).
15. Place your turkey directly on the grill and do some final seasoning. Cook for about an hour at 250 degrees, then crank it up to 350 degrees. Bird will be done in half the time as a regular bird, just be sure to cook your bird to an internal temperature, not a specified time.
16. Take your bird off the grill once the internal temperature of the thighs and breasts reaches 160 degrees (it will still continue to cook after its been taken off the grill).
17. Place tin foil over your bird and let it rest for about 45 minutes before beginning to carve.
18. When its time to carve, run your knife through the thighs and legs. Pop the wings off and start slicing the sides. Enjoy!