COOKING YOUR CANTER HILL FARM PASTURE-RAISED TURKEY

HERITAGE TURKEY INSTRUCTIONS INCLUDED



HERITAGE TURKEY COOKING DIRECTIONS

Since 2015, I have been brining my turkey for less than 24 hours (in the below brine recipe), slathering it with Rosemary Maple Butter (recipe included) and draped it with a cheesecloth soaked in 50/50 White wine and melted butter and then cooked it. It has produced a FANTASTIC bird each year. We do not give directions as to cooking time, because the feedback has been that online tables have largely proven accurate, and that variations are typically due to people's stoves (and convection ovens), and you know that better than we do! For ease, we included a "cooking time by pound" table in these instructions that I have used for years, but please edit it based on your knowledge of your stove.

BRINING:

1. The night before roasting, remove neck and giblets from turkey. Mix cider, salt, lemons, bay leaves and 3 quarts water together in a large bowl or stockpot; stir to dissolve salt. Submerge turkey in the bowl or pot (I use a trash bag and put the bag with the brine and the turkey into a cooler), cover and refrigerate overnight.

2. Brine Recipe:

    - 1 Cup sea salt
    - 1 tablespoon of rosemary (I often use more)
    - 1 tablespoon of sage

- 1 tablespoon of thym
- 1 Gallon of water
- 2 oranges, sliced

  (Note: We do not recommend a 24-hour brine for Heritage turkeys, as it tends to "cook" them. I typically brine my bird overnight if I'm popping it into the oven early in the am, or I put it into the brine in the morning if we are planning to eat it at dinnertime. If you choose not to brine your turkey at all, consider using our recipe for Rosemary Maple Butter at the end of these instructions. You would mix this butter, stuff it between the skin and the meat of the turkey just before cooking, and then the bird "self-bastes" in this sweet butter).

ROSEMARY MAPLE BUTTER:

3. See the recipe on the next page. Slather it on BEFORE you drape the bird with the cheesecloth.

TENTING: WINE & BUTTER SOAKED CHEESE-CLOTH:

4. I melt 4 sticks of butter (that's 2 cups) in a saucepan and pour in 2 cups of a light white wine like Savignon Blanc. I unfold my cheesecloth and re-fold it so that it will fit fully over my bird and slightly into the roasting pan and then I submerge the cheesecloth in the pot and then drape the dripping cloth over the bird before putting it into the oven. Keep the cheesecloth on the WHOLE TIME you are cooking. The cloth will start to look very dark brown. Don't worry – the bird underneath looks GREAT!

RECIPE FOR ROSEMARY MAPPLE BUTTER

1 stick (1/2 cup) butter 1/2 c. pure maple syrup 1 Tbsp fresh minced rosemary
Bring butter to room temperature and whip all ingredients together. (Doesn't that sound easy? It was!)

APPLYING THE MAPLE BUTTER:

1. Rub turkey inside and out with salt and pepper.
2. Loosen the skin around the breast with your fingers and insert Rosemary Maple Butter between the meat and the skin as well as on the inside of the bird's cavity. *(Note: this part scared me last year. I was worried that I was going to detach the skin from the bird and end up with bare patches. I didn't. The skin of the Heritage bird is hardier than a commercial bird and didn't tear. The further you loosen the skin, the more area of the bird will be in direct contact with the butter, which is what adds the flavor. Loosen the skin as far as you can – just remove rings or watches first ☺)*
3. Set bird in deep roasting pan. Use a wire rack to lift the bird off the bottom of the pan.
4. Add chicken stock or butter/wine to the bottom of the pan. Using a sheet of oiled parchment paper, tent the roasting pan with the oiled (olive oil) parchment paper. *(For the past 2 years, I tend to prefer using cheesecloth – 4 layers (folded) instead, since it lets me baste it by "re-wetting" the cheesecloth).* Brush it on both sides with a pastry brush. The parchment paper is easily affixed to the roasting pan with a strip of foil on each end or you can use clean, oiled wooden clothespins. Remove parchment paper for the last 30 minutes of cooking for a crispy, golden skin.
5. Although the butter provides more of a "self-baste", I still baste the bird at least once an hour if I use cheesecloth instead of parchment paper. I simply re-"wet" the cheesecloth with the juices from the pan OR more 50/50 butter and white wine (melted), if the pan juices are sparse or they've been absorbed by the veggies.

COOKING TIME:

Size of Turkey	Unstuffed	Stuffed
4 to 6 pounds (breast)	1 1/2 to 2 1/4 hours	Not usually applicable
6 to 8 pounds (breast)	2 1/4 to 3 1/4 hours	2 1/2 to 3 1/2 hours
8 to 12 pounds	2 3/4 to 3 hours	3 to 3 1/2 hours
12 to 14 pounds	3 to 3 3/4 hours	3 1/2 to 4 hours
14 to 18 pounds	3 3/4 to 4 1/4 hours	4 to 4 1/4 hours
18 to 20 pounds	4 1/4 to 4 1/2 hours	4 1/4 to 4 3/4 hours
20 to 24 pounds	4 1/2 to 5 hours	4 3/4 to 5 1/4 hours