



Brined & Barbecued Turkey

Ingredients:

Brine:

5 gallons cold water
4 cups kosher salt
2 cups sugar
4 bay leaves
2 bunches of fresh thyme
2 whole heads of garlic, separated (no need to peel)
10 whole allspice berries
4 juniper berries
22-pound turkey, thawed, neck and giblets removed

Barbecue:

2 teaspoons poultry season
1/2 teaspoon pepper
1 cup Port wine
1 large onion, quartered
2 large carrots, cut into chunks
2 stalks celery, cut into chunks
2 garlic cloves, peeled and halved

Directions:

Brine:

In a large pot, boil 1 gallon of water; add the salt and sugar and cook until dissolved. Set aside and let cook. In a large brining bag add the turkey, bay leaves, thyme, garlic, berries and remaining cold water. Add the salted/sugared water. If needed, add additional cold water to completely cover turkey. Close bag tightly and store in refrigerator or ice chest over night.

Barbecue:

Remove turkey from brine and drain well. Pat dry with paper towels. Combine poultry season and pepper. Sprinkle some of the mixture into neck and body cavities. Rub remaining mixture over the skin. Place turkey on its breast and spoon 1-2 tablespoons of Port wine into the neck cavity. Bring skin over opening and secure to back with a metal skewer. Turn turkey on its back and place onion, carrots, celery and garlic in the body cavity. Loosely tie the legs together.

Prepare a charcole-covered grill by removing cooking grate and opening all vents. Position a drip pan in the center of charcoal grate and place 25 to 30 briquettes along each side of drip pan. Burn briquettes until covered with gray ash, about 30 minutes. Place cooking grate in grill over coals.

Place the turkey breast up on the grill over the drip pan. Pour 1/3 cup Port wine into the body cavity. Cover the barbecue and adjust damper to maintain even heat. Add 6 to 8 briquettes to each side every 45 to 60 minutes and baste with remaining Port wine. Cook turkey until meat thermometer reaches 180 degrees in thigh and 165 degrees in breast, about 3 hours. Remove from grill and rest for at least 30 minutes before carving.

Tip: You can strain the drippings and add to gravy. Because the turkey was brined the drippings can be salty, so be sure to taste before adding seasoning.