

COOK'S

ILLUSTRATED

GRILL-ROASTED TURKEY FOR GAS GRILL

Published November 1, 1999.

Serves 10 to 12.

WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS:

For a grill-roasted turkey recipe with crisp skin and moist meat wonderfully perfumed with smoke, we determined that a small (less than 14 pounds) bird was best; the skin on larger birds will burn before the meat is done. Brining the turkey in a mixture of water and salt before cooking helped to keep the meat from drying out. To protect the skin and promote slow cooking in our grill-roasted turkey recipe, we placed the turkey on the opposite side of the lit gas burner. Using a V-rack also helped, as did turning the turkey three times instead of twice so that all four sides got equal exposure to the hot side of the grill.

Because it's not possible to add more wood during the cooking process, a turkey grill-roasted over a gas fire will not taste as smoky as one roasted over charcoal. Hickory and mesquite are widely available in chip form; both work well in this recipe. The total cooking time is 2 to 2 1/2 hours, depending on the size of the bird, the ambient conditions (the bird will require more time on a cool, windy day), and the intensity of the fire. Check the internal temperature in the thigh when rotating the bird. If the thigh is below 145 degrees, wait 30 minutes, otherwise check in about 15 minutes.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups kosher salt or 1 cup table salt
- 1 turkey (12 to 14 pounds), giblets and tail removed, rinsed thoroughly, and wings tucked (see illustration)
- 3 cups wood chips
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Dissolve salt in 2 gallons water in large (at least 16-quart) stockpot or clean bucket. Add turkey and refrigerate or set in a very cool spot (between 32 and 40 degrees) 12 hours or overnight. (If refrigerator space is at a premium, you can use a more concentrated brine for a shorter period of time. Double the salt in the solution, place four or five ice gel packs in the brine with the turkey cover, and place in a very cool spot for 4 hours.)
2. Toward end of brining time, soak wood chips in bowl with cold water to cover for 30 minutes, then drain. Make foil tray for chips with 12 x 18-inch square of heavy-duty foil: To do so, make a 1-inch fold on one long side. Repeat 3 more times and turn fold up to create a sturdy side that measures about 1 inch high. Repeat process on other long side. With short side facing you, fold in both corners as if wrapping gift. Turn up inside inch or so of each triangle field to match rim on long sides of foil tray. Lift pointed end of triangle over rim of foil and down to seal. Repeat process on other short side. Place chips in foil tray.
3. Meanwhile, spray V-rack with nonstick vegetable cooking spray. Remove turkey from brine and rinse inside and out under cool running water to remove all traces of salt. Pat turkey dry with paper towels; brush both sides with melted butter. Set turkey, breast-side down, in V-rack.
4. Position tray with chips on top of burner that will remain on during entire cooking time. Turn all burners to high, close lid, and heat grill until chips begin to smoke, 10 to 15 minutes. Turn off burner(s) without chips; leave one on high. Place V-rack with turkey over cool part of grill; cover and grill-roast, regulating lit burner as necessary to maintain temperature between 300 and 350 degrees, for 1

hour.

5. Open lid; with wad of paper towels in each hand, flip turkey breast-side up, (see illustrations below). The leg and wing that were facing the lit burner should now be facing away from it. Close lid and continue grill-roasting for 45 minutes.

6. Using thick potholders, carefully turn rack with turkey (breast remains up) so that leg and wing that were facing lit burner are now facing away. Insert instant-read thermometer into each thigh to check temperature and gauge how much longer turkey must cook (see note above). Close lid and continue grill-roasting until thermometer inserted into thigh registers 175 to 180 degrees, 15 to 45 minutes more. Remove turkey from grill, cover loosely with foil, and let rest for 20 to 30 minutes; carve and serve.

TECHNIQUE

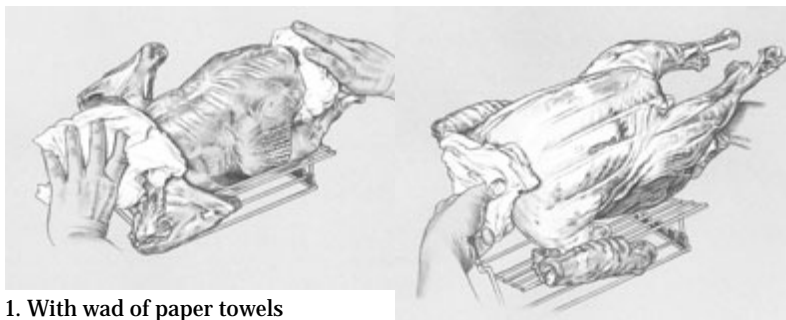
Protecting the Wings



Protecting the Wings:
Tucking the wings will prevent them from burning on the grill.

TECHNIQUE

Turning the Bird



1. With wad of paper towels in each hand, grasp turkey on either end and roll it toward you like a barrel, flipping it breast-side up on the rack.

2. The thigh that has been closer to the fire will now face you and should be away from the fire when the turkey is replaced on the grill.
