

Bourbon-Maple Roasted Turkey

Serves 10 to 12

The marinade used in this recipe may seem insufficient, but I find that it is easier to simply turn the turkey during its marinating time then to try to mess with a large turkey and a lot of liquid. Large brining or XL Ziploc bags work great for this task. If you plan on brining your turkey, brine it first then marinate.

For turkey:

1 (10 to 12 lb) whole turkey, giblets and neck removed, fat trimmed
3 large carrots, peeled and cut into large 3-inch pieces
3 large yellow onions, cut into wedges
3 large sprigs fresh sage
2 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened
Escarole or Kale and orange slices (for garnish – optional)

For marinade:

3 oranges, thinly sliced crosswise into rounds
1 cup bourbon (I used Jim Beam)
¼ cup maple syrup
1 cup apple cider
¼ cup vegetable or canola oil
2 teaspoons kosher salt
1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
8 garlic cloves, smashed

For Maple-Bourbon Glaze:

½ cup bourbon (I used Jim Beam)
½ cup water
1/3 cup maple syrup
2 tablespoons dark brown sugar

Prepare the turkey by removing the giblets and neck from the cavity (don't discard these items and keep refrigerated) and trimming excess fat. I also like to cut the tips of the wings off at the joint, as they tend to burn during cooking – add these tips to the giblets and neck and reserve. Place the turkey in a large brining or oven bag or an XL Ziploc with the orange slices.

In a medium bowl, whisk together the bourbon, maple syrup, apple cider, oil, salt, and freshly ground black pepper. Stir in the smashed garlic cloves. Pour the marinade over the turkey in its bag.

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Place the turkey in its brining bag in a large bowl or on a large baking sheet (just in case your bag leaks) and refrigerate. Turn every couple of hours to make sure that every part of the turkey has some time in the marinade; marinate for at least 8 hours or as long as 24 hours.

When ready to cook the turkey, preheat the oven to 425 degrees F and place a rack in the center of the oven. Remove the turkey from the marinade (but do not discard the marinade) and pat dry with paper towels. Scatter the carrots and onion wedges over the bottom of a large roasting pan. Place the wire rack atop the vegetables and place the turkey, breast side-up, on top.

Season the turkey and its inner cavity with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Remove the orange slices from the marinade and stuff them with the sage sprigs loosely (you may not be able to fit all of them) in the cavity of the turkey. Rub the softened butter over the turkey and under its skin. [Truss](#) the turkey with kitchen twine and pour 1-½ cups of the reserved marinade over it.

Place the turkey in the oven and roast for 45 minutes. The butter will cause the turkey to brown quickly so watch it carefully during this first part of cooking. You want the skin to have a rich brown color, but if it appears to be browning faster than you would like gently cover those areas with a sheet of foil to prevent burning.

While the turkey is roasting, make the glaze. In a small saucepan, combine the bourbon, water, maple syrup and dark brown sugar. Gently reduce to 1/3 cup and then remove from the heat to let cool.

Reduce the temperature to 350 degrees. Baste the turkey with pan juices and continue roasting, basting the turkey and checking its temperature every thirty minutes after the first hour. To get an accurate temperature, be sure to stick the thermometer in the thickest part of the turkey (see blog post on Bourbon-Maple Roasted Turkey for how to do this). When the temperature reaches 150 degrees F, remove the turkey from the oven and brush with the glaze. Return the turkey to the oven and continue roasting, brushing with glaze every 15 minutes or until the turkey registers 165 degrees F in its thickest part. Like before, if the turkey starts browning too quickly or burning, cover that area with a piece of foil. Once the temperature is 165 degrees F remove the turkey from the oven and let it rest. See the blog post for general baking times, but plan on about 3 ½ hours.

Let the turkey rest for at least 30 minutes before carving. This gives you time to make the gravy (see tomorrow's blog post) and pull together the rest of your meal. If

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displaying the turkey, place on a bed of sturdy lettuce (escarole is great) or kale and garnish with orange slices.

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