

# Buttermilk-Brined Turkey

We didn't intend for the majority of our recipes to have a Southern feel but a theme emerged and we decided to run with it. A very recent New York Times Food article by Samin Nosrat of [Salt, Fat, Acid, Heat](#) fame provides a method for brining your turkey with several quarts of buttermilk and a hefty amount of salt. This seemed to dovetail perfectly with the pecans, the biscuits, and the Ambrosia salad. We hope that these recipes provide new ideas for Thanksgiving and we hope you'll actually try them out.

Brining your turkey often conjures images of sanitizing ice chests and many other tedious and unsavoury tasks, but have no fear - this brining can be accomplished with a very large Ziplock (Nosrat suggests 2 gallons but I would tend to think something four-gallons or larger will make life much easier....) so long as you spatchcock or portion the bird. If a little simple butchery isn't your thing then you should ask your butcher if they would be willing to do it for you. Don't forget to reserve the turkey's backbone to make the stock that will become your gravy.

This recipe promises flavour, moist meat, and lots more fridge space since the turkey is spatchcocked and brines in a bag. We think that it will deliver and is well worth a try this season. If you really want to impress the guests, you should consider dredging your brined (and appropriately portioned!) turkey and frying it in the style of Southern fried chicken. Paired with some cranberry sauce and some lighter vegetable side dishes you might just have a new tradition!

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From: <https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1021523-buttermilk-brined-roast-turkey>

## Ingredients and Materials

12 to 14 lb turkey

3 quarts buttermilk

7 tablespoons sea salt

The largest ziplock that you can find that isn't intended to hold bedding

## Method

Two to three days before you plan to cook, spatchcock the turkey: Put the turkey on a stable cutting board, breast-side down, and use heavy-duty kitchen shears to snip along both sides of the backbone to release it. You can start from the tail or neck end, whichever you prefer; just keep the blades of the scissors as close to the spine as possible. It helps to work incrementally, snipping a little on one side, then a little on the

other, rather than completing one side entirely and then doing the second side without the advantage of the opposing pressure.

Turn turkey over so breast faces up. Splay out its legs and press hard on breastbone until you hear the cartilage pop and the bird lies completely flat.

Place a 2-gallon resealable bag in a large bowl, stock pot or sink. Pour buttermilk and salt in bag and stir to dissolve salt. Place turkey in bag and seal carefully, expelling out air. Double-bag the turkey as needed to prevent leakage, then squish the inner bag to distribute buttermilk all around the turkey. Place it on a rimmed baking sheet and refrigerate for 48 hours. Turn the bag every 12 hours so that every part of the turkey gets marinated.

Three hours before you plan to start cooking, remove the turkey from the plastic bag and scrape off as much buttermilk as you can without being obsessive, discarding buttermilk. Set the turkey on a rimmed baking sheet and bring it to room temperature.

Position a rack in the upper third of the oven and heat to 400 degrees. Transfer turkey, breast-side up, to another rimmed baking sheet lined with a wire rack or parchment paper. Tuck thighs inward.

Place baking sheet on the prepared oven rack and roast the turkey, occasionally rotating the pan 180 degrees, until an instant-read thermometer inserted into the deepest part of the breast registers 150 degrees and the thickest part of the thigh without touching bone registers 165 degrees, about 80 to 100 minutes, depending on size. (You may want to tent the breast or other hot spots with aluminum foil, if darkening too quickly.)

Transfer turkey to a cutting board or platter and allow to rest at least 20 minutes before carving.

