

Title:

How to smoke a turkey

Word Count:

717

Summary:

Smoked turkey is a delicacy that many people love, but don't have often because it's expensive to buy. You may be surprised how easy it is to smoke a turkey

Keywords:

smokers

Article Body:

For those who long for the wonderful taste of smoked turkey but forgo the luxury because of how much it costs in stores, take heart! It's surprising just how easy and economical it is to make your own smoked turkey at home. Not only will you enjoy this tempting morsel, but just think how much you'll impress your friends and family.

you don't need a smoker; any covered grill will give the same effect. Simply place the turkey breast on the cool side of the grill and use soaked wood chips.

It's important to allow yourself plenty of time to smoke the turkey until it is completely cooked. Smoking time depends on the size of the turkey, the distance from the heat, temperature of the coals, as well as the outside air temperature. You can roughly estimate about 20 to 30 minutes per pound of turkey, but it's important to use a meat thermometer to be sure your turkey is thoroughly cooked. The turkey is done when the food thermometer, placed in the inner thigh, reaches 180° F (be sure the thermometer is not touching the bone).

Important points about how to smoke a turkey:

Food safety is of primary concern when smoking turkey. Turkey breasts, drumsticks, wings and whole turkeys are all suited for smoking, although for safety's sake, stick with whole turkeys that weigh 12 pounds or less. A larger turkey remains in the "Danger Zone" - between 40° F and 140° F for too long.

Do not stuff a turkey destined for smoking. Because smoking takes place at a low temperature, it can take too long for the temperature of the stuffing to reach the required temperature of 165° F, not to mention that smoked stuffing has an

undesirable flavor.

Here's a wonderful and easy recipe:

### Chili-Spiced Smoked Turkey Breast

1/4 cup fresh lime juice  
2 tablespoons olive oil  
2 teaspoons unsweetened cocoa  
2 teaspoons paprika  
2 teaspoons brown sugar  
1 teaspoon salt  
1 teaspoon dried oregano  
1 teaspoon chili powder  
1 teaspoon dried thyme  
2 garlic cloves, minced  
1 (6-pound) whole turkey breast  
2 cups mesquite chips  
Cooking spray

Combine the first 10 ingredients in a small saucepan; bring to a boil. Remove from heat; cool. Combine lime juice mixture and turkey in a large zip-top plastic bag. Seal and marinate in refrigerator 2 hours. Soak wood chips in water at least 30 minutes. Drain well.

Preheat gas grill to medium-hot (350° to 400°) using both burners. Turn left burner off. Place wood chips in a disposable foil pan or a foil packet pierced with holes on grill over right burner. Remove turkey from marinade; discard marinade. Place turkey, skin side up, on grill rack coated with cooking spray over left burner. Cover and cook 1 1/2 hours. Turn turkey over; cook 15 minutes or until meat thermometer registers 170°. Remove turkey from grill. Cover loosely with foil, and let stand at least 10 minutes before carving. Discard skin.

Yield: 16 servings (serving size: 3 ounces)

If you prefer an actual smoker, water smokers are available in electric, gas or charcoal model, and all work well. Charcoal smokers have two pans - one for charcoal and one for liquid which creates the moist, hot smoke needed for cooking. These are available wherever barbecue grills are found, but here's an economical secret: start going to garage sales. For some reason, smokers seem to be a popular item, possibly because a lot of folks don't know how to use them. However, as stated above, a smoker is not necessary to get the full, smoky

flavor you desire. Unless you're really into smoking many different things (cooking, not inhaling!), it's an expense you can do without. Not only will you save money, you'll also save space.

But, if you do have a smoker, here's an easy how to smoke a turkey recipe:

- 1 15 pound turkey, fresh or thawed
- 1/4 cup butter
- 1/2 cup white wine
- 1/2 cup honey
- 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon

Prepare smoker for a 6 to 8 hour smoke at about 230 degrees. In a saucepan melt butter. Add wine, honey and cinnamon. Heat on low temperature until mixture is smooth and thin. Using a turkey injector, inject half the mixture into the turkey in all meaty areas. Brush remaining mixture over turkey. You can reserve some of the baste to apply later, during the cooking process. Place turkey in smoker. When the internal temperature of the turkey reaches 165 degrees the turkey is done. Remove from smoker and let rest for 10-15 minutes. Carve and serve.

Enjoy!