



## NANCY COURSEN'S BRINED TURKEY

serves 6-8 with leftovers

### INGREDIENTS:

- 1 turkey, about 12-14 lbs.
- Brine:
  - 1 cup sugar
  - 1 ½ - 1 ¾ cups kosher salt
  - 2 ½ gallons cold water
  - 2 bay leaves, torn into pieces
  - 1 bunch fresh thyme
  - 1 head garlic, cloves separated and peeled
  - 5 whole allspice berries, crushed
  - 4 juniper berries, smashed

### ROASTING:

- 2 Tbs. softened butter plus butter for basting
- 1 ½ tsps. freshly ground black pepper
- 1 cup chicken stock, or more as needed

### INSTRUCTIONS:

Brining: Remove giblet bag from turkey, along with any extra internal fat. Rinse well under cold tap water. Combine sugar, salt and 3-4 quarts of water in a large bowl. Stir until sugar and salt dissolve. Add remaining brine ingredients except for the remaining 1 ½ gallons of water. Double-bag two heavy-duty, unscented trash bags (not made of recycled materials), then put them in an ice chest that is large enough to hold the turkey. Place turkey in bags, pour in brine and remaining 1 ½ gallons water – there should be enough liquid to completely cover the bird. Press out air in bags; tightly close each bag separately. Keep turkey cold with bags of ice, which will also help keep it submerged. Brine for 12 – 24 hours. Alternatively, place turkey and brine in a large pan. Refrigerate for 12 – 24 hours. If turkey floats to top, weight it down with a plate and cans to keep it submerged in brine.

### ROASTING:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Remove turkey from brine, rinse and dry well. Spread 2 Tbs. softened butter over skin. Sprinkle pepper over skin and in cavity. Tuck wing tips inder, loosely truss legs and place turkey in a V-shaped rack in a roasting pan. Tent breast with foil. Put turkey in oven. To assure that the bird cooks evenly, rotate roasting pan 180 degrees every 30 minutes while turkey is roasting. Roast for about 1 hour, remove foil and baste turkey with ½ cup stock. Return to oven and roast basting with pan drippings every 20 minutes. Start checking internal temperature after about 1 hour of roasting time. If legs begin to get too brown, cover loosely with foil. Roast turkey until internal thigh temperature reaches 165 degrees. Total roasting time should be about 2 to 2 ¾ hours. Let bird rest for at least 20 – 30 minutes before carving.

Note: Pan drippings should be used sparingly in making gravy as they are more salty than usual.