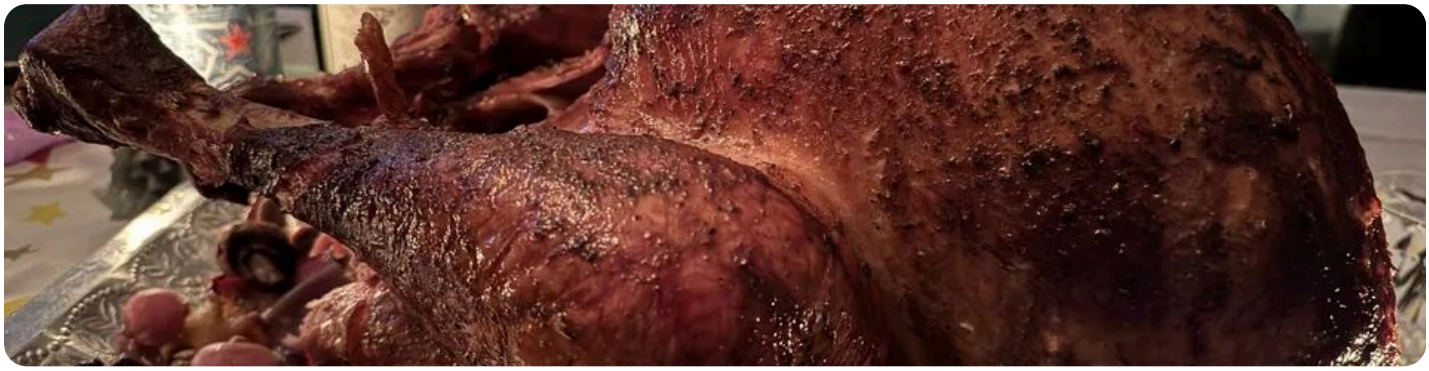
BBQ+

RECIPE

SMOKED WHOLE TURKEY WITH HERB BUTTER AND BACON

A festive bird that stays juicy right to the bone, with golden brown skin and a mild smoke flavour. An overnight dry brine, herb butter under the skin and bacon over the breast halfway through: that keeps the lean white meat tender.



INGREDIENTS

For 10 people

- 1 turkey of about 5.5 kg, skin-on, unseasoned and not injected (ask your poulterer or butcher to keep the neck and giblets separate)
- 45 g fine sea salt
- 150 g softened butter
- 3 cloves garlic
- 1 unwaxed lemon
- 2 tbsp finely chopped fresh herbs: thyme and sage
- 4 tbsp [homemade BBQ rub for pork and chicken](/en/recipes/homemade-bbq-rub-for-pork-and-chicken/), or a mild chicken rub
- 250 g smoked bacon, thinly sliced
- 2 onions, 2 carrots and 1 stick of celery
- 500 ml chicken stock

HOW TO COOK A WHOLE TURKEY ON THE BBQ

1. Remove the neck and the bag of giblets from the turkey and pat it thoroughly dry, inside and out.
2. Sprinkle the salt evenly all over the turkey and inside the cavity.
3. Let it dry uncovered on a rack in the fridge overnight, for up to 24 hours.
4. Mix the butter with the crushed garlic, the grated lemon zest and the herbs.
5. Gently loosen the skin from the breast with your fingers, working from the cavity towards the neck, without tearing it.
6. Slide the herb butter under the skin and smooth it out from the outside over the whole breast.
7. Tie the legs together with kitchen twine and tuck the wing tips under the back.
8. Dust the skin lightly with the rub, without rubbing it in hard.
9. Set up the kamado or BBQ for indirect cooking at about 160 °C (320 °F) and add the apple wood to the coals.
10. Place a drip pan with the roughly chopped onions, carrots, celery and the stock on the heat deflector below the grate.
11. Place the turkey breast side up over the drip pan as soon as the smoke runs thin and blue.
12. Insert a probe thermometer into the thickest part of the breast and a second one into the thigh, without touching the bone.
13. Cook the turkey for about 1 hour with the lid closed, until the skin turns golden brown.
14. Lay the bacon slices over the breast and keep cooking at about 160 °C (320 °F).
15. Take the turkey off the BBQ when the breast reaches 75 °C (167 °F) and the thigh 80 to 85 °C (176 to 185 °F), after about 3 to 3.5 hours in total.
16. Let it rest for 30 to 45 minutes, loosely tented with aluminium foil.
17. Strain the liquid from the drip pan, skim off the fat and reduce it to a jus in a small saucepan.