

Apple Cider Brine

Swick

Serves 9 | Active Time: 15 minutes | Total Time: 15 minutes

Chef's Notes

This brine is a low-salt solution brine and is suitable for large cuts of meat such as whole chickens, turkeys or large pork loins. Due to the low-salt solution, the meat can soak for 1-2 hours per pound – even overnight.

Meat that soaks in a sugary brine (such as this one, with apple cider and sugar) will brown faster during cooking. If cooking a large piece of meat (such as a turkey), you may need to cover the turkey halfway through the cooking process. This will prevent the skin from getting too dark before the meat is fully cooked through.

This brine makes approximately 9 liters/quarts, once the water and ice are added. When brining smaller items, like chickens, you do not need this much brine. You just need enough to completely submerge the food, so decrease the recipe accordingly.

Create different brines by adding ingredients such as herbs, spices, honey, molasses, apple juice, rice wine vinegar, stock, tea, beer, or wine. The flavor combinations for brines are endless.

Making the Brine

To make this flavorful brine, place the apple cider, brown sugar, salt, peppercorns, juniper berries and fresh thyme into a large pot. Slice the heads of garlic horizontally and add to the pot. Bring the mixture to a boil. Once everything has dissolved, turn off the heat, cover and set aside to steep and cool.

Before brining, add 5 liters/quarts of cold water and 2 liters/quarts of ice to the mixture. You will be ready to brine up to 15 pounds of turkey, chicken or pork.

Step 1: Making the Brine

- 2 liters/quarts apple cider
- 1/2 cup brown sugar, maple syrup or honey
- 1 1/2 cups kosher salt (or 3/4 cup table salt)
- 1 tbsp black peppercorns
- 20 juniper berries
- 10 sprigs fresh thyme
- 2 heads fresh garlic
- 5 liters/quarts cold water
- 2 liters/quarts ice