

# DRY-BRINED TURKEY with SHEET PAN GRAVY

*10 to 12 servings*

This turkey is great because it's dry-brined (we are all just dry-brining now, right?) and it's roasted on a sheet pan. The flavors are straightforward because I like my turkey well seasoned, golden brown and boring, but if you're just dying to crush up some fennel seed or add rosemary, please feel free. Sheet pan turkey = sheet pan gravy, and isn't that just the best?

## **Turkey**

**1 bunch fresh thyme**

**1 (12- to 14-pound) turkey**

**⅓ cup kosher salt**

**⅓ cup light brown sugar**

**2 tablespoons coarsely ground black pepper**

**4 to 5 medium red onions, quartered**

**3 lemons, halved crosswise**

**2 heads garlic, halved crosswise**

**⅓ cup olive oil**

**6 tablespoons unsalted butter**

## **Gravy**

**3 cups low-sodium chicken, turkey or vegetable broth, plus more as needed**

**6 tablespoons unsalted butter**

**½ cup all-purpose flour**

**2 tablespoons low-sodium soy sauce, plus more to taste**

**2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar or white wine vinegar, plus more to taste**

**Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**

For the turkey:

1. Strip the leaves from 4 sprigs of thyme, and coarsely chop. Place in a medium bowl along with salt, brown sugar and pepper and mix everything together.
2. Make sure the giblets are removed from the cavity and place the turkey on a rimmed baking sheet lined with a wire rack. (If you do not own a wire rack, just place the turkey directly on the baking sheet) Using paper towels, pat the turkey dry on all sides. Spread the salt mixture all over the bird, making sure to distribute the seasoning evenly to all the bits and parts.
3. Refrigerate turkey, uncovered, for 8 to 24 hours — the longer, the better— longer than 24 hours though and you'll start to "cure" the turkey, which could result in a too-salty-even-for-me bird, or tough meat.
4. Preheat oven to 325°F.
5. Remove turkey from the fridge, and transfer it to another clean rimmed baking sheet (if you only own one, transfer it to a plate or cutting board and clean the sheet tray before returning the turkey). Stuff turkey with remaining of thyme, a few of the quartered onions and half of the lemons and garlic. Scatter remaining onion, lemons and garlic around the turkey.
6. Combine olive oil and 6 tablespoons butter in a small pot over medium heat until butter is melted. Pour half of the mixture over the turkey and onions, season with salt and pepper and toss to coat.
7. Roast, rotating the baking sheet every hour or so, until the turkey has reached 160 degrees when a thermometer is inserted in the deepest part of the thigh, 2 1/2 to 3 hours. The turkey will be cooked through and tender, and the skin will be brown, but you can and should get it browner.
8. Increase temperature to 425°F. Pour remaining butter mixture over the turkey (melt it if solidified) and continue to roast until the internal temperature reaches 165°F and the skin is even more golden brown than before, 20 to 25 minutes. It's O.K. if the internal temperature is just shy of 165 degrees, it will come to temperature as it rests.

For the gravy:

1. Pour about 1 cup chicken broth onto the baking sheet (yes, it will fit I promise!). Using a spatula (a fish spatula is great), scrape up the bits from the turkey drippings, just like you're deglazing a skillet after searing a piece of meat.
2. Carefully pour the contents of the baking sheet into a large measuring cup or other spouted vessel. Add remaining stock until you have 4 cups of liquid; you may need more or less stock depending on how juicy the bird was.
3. Melt 6 tablespoons butter in a medium pot over medium heat. Add flour and cook, whisking constantly, until flour is sizzling furiously and well toasted, about the color of a graham cracker, 4 to 6 minutes. (The mixture will be thick at first but will thin as the flour cooks.)
4. Slowly whisk in sheet pan stock mixture, about 1/2 cup at a time, letting it bubble, thicken and incorporate completely between additions until it's all been added.
5. Add soy sauce and vinegar, and season with salt and pepper. Continue simmering until gravy is at your desired thickness, 5 to 8 minutes (or more if you like it really thick). Add more soy sauce if you feel like it needs more depth of flavor, vinegar if you want more acidity, and salt and pepper for seasoning. Remove from heat and set aside until ready to serve.

## TO SERVE

Carve the turkey and arrange on a large platter with the onions, lemons and garlic scattered around (they are for eating!). Reheat the gravy as needed and transfer to two cups, bowls, gravy boats, glass measuring cups or coffee mugs and serve alongside.



