



Champagne Turkey

While the title of the recipe contains Champagne, since it's added at the very beginning all the alcohol is cooked out of it, leaving the turkey extra tender, juicy and flavorful. An alternative for the champagne would be sparkling apple cider.

Ingredients

1	whole turkey, neck and giblets removed
1/2 to 1 cup	butter or margarine, cubed
2	apples, cored and halved
1 tablespoon	garlic powder
	salt and pepper to taste (I use lemon pepper in lieu of salt & pepper)
1	(750 ml) bottle champagne (or sparkling cider)
1	Turkey sized Roasting Bag

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C).
2. Rinse turkey, and pat dry.
3. Gently loosen turkey breast skin, and insert pieces of butter between the skin and breast¹.
4. Place apples inside the turkey's cavity.
5. Sprinkle with garlic powder (I never measure, just sprinkle until I think it's had enough) and rub salt and pepper² all over, inside and out.
6. Place turkey in a roasting bag and pour champagne (or sparkling cider) over the inside and outside of the bird.
7. Close bag, and place turkey on a rack in a roasting pan.
8. Follow the directions on the box for the roasting bag based on the turkey's size – make sure you add the flour to the bag as it requests, and put slits in the bag per the instructions too (I use one of the slits to put my meat thermometer in).
9. Bake turkey the length of time specified for the weight of your turkey, or until the internal temperature is 180 degrees F (85 degrees C) when measured in the meatiest part of the thigh. Remove turkey from bag, and let stand for 15-20 minutes before carving.

¹For a 25 lb. bird I'll use one stick of butter per breast – less for a smaller bird. It's easier to push the butter under the skin with your fingers if the butter is not room temperature – either chilled in the fridge or frozen. I'll cut it into squares to add if it's frozen, leave it whole if it's just chilled, then massage the breasts to warm up the butter with my hands and spread it evenly under the skin (I always joke around that I'm giving the turkey a boob job when I'm adding the butter or margarine).

²In place of the salt and pepper, I use lemon pepper, (or McCormick's Grill Mates Montreal Chicken) and rub it inside the cavity before putting the apples in it, as well as all over the turkey before putting it in the roasting bag.

Check the turkey during the roasting time to keep an eye on the thermometer – it tends to cook faster than the directions for the roasting bag, though it could be related to my oven, so your oven performance may vary.

While the turkey is 'resting', there will be plenty of juice in the bag you can pull to make an excellent gravy – one of our guests is not a gravy lover, but he couldn't get enough of this gravy!

As for what kind of champagne to use for this turkey – I've always used a Spumante – which is considered a sparkling wine. I'm not big on real dry wines or champagnes, I have enough things to give me a headache, I don't want something enjoyable to give me one, too. If you're replacing the champagne with sparkling cider, be sure to get the white version, not the red.

In case you're wondering – even cooking in the roasting bag your turkey will turn out with the most wonderful deep golden brown envied in pictures...I was skeptical at first, but have not been disappointed.