

Smoked Cornish Game Hens

To add flavor, the game hens are marinated in a basic brine containing apple juice, herbs and spices. Slow smoking with apple, cherry or peach wood gives these little birds a light smoky flavor.

This recipe is for four Cornish game hens, and will feed 6 to 8 people. These go along nicely with a variety of grilled vegetables and a cold pasta salad.

Brine Ingredients

Three pints water

One pint apple juice

One-third cup canning salt

Two tablespoons sugar

1 tablespoon onion powder

1 tablespoon dill weed, dry

1 teaspoon chopped garlic

1 teaspoon black pepper

Combine the brine ingredients and bring to a boil. Remove the brine from the heat and chill down to 36 to 40 degrees Fahrenheit.

Prepare the game hens by cutting along each side of the backbone, removing it from the carcass. Push down on the breast to flatten, and then remove the ribs if you like.

Marinate the game hens in the fridge overnight. Remove the birds from the brine and pat dry with paper towels.

Smoke the Cornish game hens at 225 degrees Fahrenheit for 3 to 4 hours, or until the thigh temperature reaches 175 degrees. Allow the birds to rest for half an hour after smoking before splitting through the breasts and serving.

Optionally, the game hens can be indirect grilled, or grilled over medium low heat 45 to 75 minutes, or until 175 degrees is reached.

If you are a fan of smoked poultry, these *smoked Cornish game hens* will be something to cheer about. Juicy, tender and full of flavor, they will become an all time favorite.