BRINE: to soak or preserve in salty water.

What is the purpose of brining? **Brining** is the process of submerging a cut of meat into a solution of salt and water and refrigerating. It adds flavor, seasoning from the inside out, but it also changes the meat's physical nature. The salt in **brine** denatures the meat's proteins to allow the cells to retain more moisture.

What is in brine? It's simply a salt water solution. Sometimes for extra flavor, you might add other ingredients, like sugar, herbs, or spices. A good ratio is half a gallon of cold water and half a cup of kosher salt. Karen O’s hint: When I brine beef, pork or chicken I substitute beer for water. Ian’s tips: Always use kosher or sea salt, not iodized. Add some kind of acid like lemon juice or apple cider vinegar to help tenderize. Include sugar, brown sugar, honey or molasses to enhance the meats natural flavors and to help with caramelization. Use half hot water and half ice cubes. The hot water helps dissolve the salt and sugar. The ice cools everything down quickly.

Does brining make meat salty? Nope. **Brine's** saline content has nothing to **do** with how **salty** the finished product will be. It's more scientific than that. While 20% or more of **meat's** moisture can be lost in cooking, the extra liquid retained by the **meat** thanks to **brining** will help "baste" it internally, helping your meat to stay juicy and flavorful.

Is brine healthy? **Brine** is water mixed with salt or an acid, such as vinegar. Fermented **brine** contains good bacteria that may improve **health**, but only some brines go through the fermentation process. Fermented pickles act like probiotics, protecting the body's microbiome and supporting the growth of healthful bacteria in the gut.

Can I brine without salt? The bottom line: It's fine to **brine** with a **salt** substitute. Just be sure to use a low-**salt** (not a **salt**-free) brand.

How long should I brine? As a general rule of thumb, **brine** meat for about one hour per pound. You **can** go longer, but keep in mind that it's definitely possible to over-**brine** your meat. Most over-**brining** simply makes everything a little too salty, and you **can** soak the meat in cold water to draw out the excess salt. The amount of time needed to **brine** meat depends on the cut of meat and its thickness. Thin cuts like pork chops and chicken pieces may need only 30-60 minutes of **brine** time, while a whole turkey can **brine** for 6-12 hours, with some recipes going as **long** as 24-48 hours.

BRINE FOR PORK: 4 pork chops for 4 TO 12 hours

¼ cup salt, 4 cups water (see Ian’s tip above), 4 tbs brown sugar, 2 tbs apple cider vinegar, 3 cloves of crushed garlic, 3 sprigs of fresh rosemary

BRINE FOR CHICKEN: 4 to 5 pounds of chicken for 8 to 24 hours

8 cups of water, 1/3 cup salt, ¼ cup honey, 3 bay leaves, 5 cloves of garlic, 1 tbs peppercorns, 3 sprigs of fresh rosemary, 7 sprigs of fresh thyme, 2 lemons, sliced.