

## Gluten-Free Cooking and Baking Tips



Most gluten-free flours will not substitute directly for wheat flour

### Gluten-Free Grains/Flours:

#### **Almond flour**

This and other nut flours such as chestnut, hazelnut, macadamia and pistachio add protein and vibrant taste to gluten-free baking.

#### **Amaranth flour**

Amaranth has a grassy, earthy taste, so it works best in savory dishes, like pizza dough. Also it can be used in crepes and quiche crusts.

#### **Arrowroot flour**

It is best used as a thickener (like corn starch), for rouxs and sauces and fillings for fruit pies.

#### **Bean flours**

There are many types of flours made from dried beans. Chickpea flour, also known as garbanzo bean flour, can be used to make flatbread. Lentil flour is used frequently in Indian cuisine. Fava bean flour is typically seen in commercial gluten-free baking mixes.

#### **Buckwheat flour**

It is a fruit; it is sometimes combined with wheat flour in pancake and baking mixes, so don't assume all buckwheat products are gluten-free.

#### **Corn flour**

It is used to make corn tortillas and gluten-free corn bread.

#### **Corn starch**

Thickener derived from corn. It is best used to thicken soups, sauces, and gravies.

#### **Guar gum**

It can be a somewhat effective binder, mimicking some of the effects of gluten.

#### **Montina**

Savory flour so only use ~15% of flour in a product as Montina flour (has a green fleck).

#### **Millet**

Mild and slightly sweet, millet is an adaptable grain. It soaks up the tastes of the foods surrounding it. Millet flour lends a crumbly texture to breads and muffins and it is especially good in quick breads.

#### **Potato starch**

It needs to be combined with other flours and starches in a blend. It should not be confused with potato flour, which is dried potato ground into flour.

## **Quinoa**

As a grain it is nutty and delicious but as flour it is a little bitter. It is packed with protein and the texture adds density to gluten-free baked goods. Use a little quinoa flour, in combination with other gluten-free flours, in something savory: cheddar-cheese biscuits, zucchini bread, etc.

## **Rice flours**

Whether it is brown or white (or black or green), rice comes in three different categories: long-grain, medium-grain, and short-grain. Each type can be ground into rice flour. The starchiness of short-grain rice makes it the perfect candidate for rice flour. Sweet rice flour thickens sauces and gravies well. Make sure you use correct kind the recipe calls for (e.g. white, brown, etc).

## **Sorghum**

Sorghum flour is the closest in texture and taste to traditional wheat flour of all the gluten-free flours. It can be used in nearly every baked good. In a few cases, it even works as a direct substitution for wheat flour, such as in pancakes.

## **Tapioca flour**

Tapioca flour is also known as tapioca starch. Its starchiness makes it excellent flour, but it must be used in combination with other flours to make great baked goods.

## **Teff**

The tiny seeds of teff make a great porridge or can be cooked the way you would cook polenta. The fine flour almost dissolves in baking, giving it a slightly gelatinous quality. It binds the baked goods in a similar way to gluten. Teff flour adds to waffles and banana breads. It can be used in flour breads if you want a harder crust.

## **Xanthan gum**

It is used to smooth out the texture of foods and to hold them together.

- Cookies: ¼ teaspoon/cup of flour
- Pancakes and Waffles: ¼ teaspoon/cup of flour
- Cakes: ½ teaspoon/cup of flour
- Muffins and Quick Breads: ¾ teaspoon/cup of flour
- Bread: 1 to 1½ teaspoons/cup of flour
- Pizza: 2 teaspoons/cup of flour

## **Thickening Agents:**

Can be used as substitutes for 1 tablespoon of wheat flour:

- 1 ½ teaspoons cornstarch
- 1 ½ teaspoons potato starch flour
- 1 ½ teaspoons arrowroot starch
- 1 tablespoon white or brown rice flour
- 2 teaspoons quick cooking tapioca
- 1 ½ teaspoons sweet rice flour

## Gluten-Free All Purpose Flour Mix Recipe:

Mix the following flours together:

- 1 cup cornstarch
- 2 cups soy flour
- 2 cups rice flour
- 3 cups potato starch flour

Use a little bit more flour than recipe calls for. Reduce oven temperature by about 25 degrees when baking the item. Store extra flour mix in the refrigerator. Add Xanthan Gum using above proportions.

**Note: There are many commercially available gluten-free flour blends.**

## Gluten-Free Baking Tips:

- Baked goods such as bread, muffins, and desserts may be challenging at first. Don't expect the same results if you use gluten-free flour in place of regular flour.
- Gluten helps products rise and gives a chewy texture to baked goods. Gluten-free baked products may need xanthan gum and guar gum to help the product rise properly.
- If you're not a skilled baker, gluten-free mixes may be the best approach. Gluten-free mixes are available for bread, pizza crust, rolls, etc.
- If you'd like to experiment with gluten-free baked goods, start with muffins, pancakes, and cookies. They are more forgiving than other baked products.
- Start by using gluten-free recipes for baked goods instead of a recipe that normally calls for gluten containing flours. You can try gluten-free flour substitutes later.
- Gluten-free baked goods may be less nutritious than regular versions. The flour used to make gluten-free products is lower in iron, folic acid, other B vitamins, and fiber.
- Gluten-free recipes may rely more on refined flours like white rice flour. In time, you should learn how to bake with more nutritious, whole grain flours to improve nutrition. Try brown rice flour, amaranth flour, potato flour, or flour made from beans.
- Nut flours are nutrient rich. Many people enjoy baking with almond flour. Replace 1/3 of the gluten-free flour blend with almond flour. Try making your own almond flour by grinding whole, frozen almonds in a food processor.

Adapted from the Wheat Free and Gluten Free Website, the Wheat free Website and the Food Allergy News Cookbook.