

*Saying Yes to Gluten-Free Life*  
WADE Conference  
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## **I. Introduction**

Why is a writer standing before us, instead of a doctor or nurse?

My story.

How I have become the holder of thousands of people's stories, the lives that happen outside of the visit to the doctor or nutritionist.

## **II. Celiac sprue — what is it and how do we deal with it?**

- A. What is celiac sprue? What are the symptoms? Who suffers from it?
  
- B. What tests can lead to a celiac diagnosis?
  
- C. The biopsy — gold standard or not necessary?
  
- D. What is the genetic component?
  
- E. Why is celiac the most under-diagnosed disease in the United States?

## **III. What to do if you test negative for celiac and gluten still bothers you?**

- A. Gluten intolerance

B. Gluten sensitivity

C. Wheat allergies

D. Other conditions with which people swear that going gluten-free helps them.

#### **IV. Living gluten-free and its connection to diabetes**

A. What causes autoimmune diseases?

B. What is the relationship between celiac and other autoimmune diseases?

C. How many diabetics have celiac? How many celiacs have diabetes?

D. Why might diabetics without celiac do better without gluten?

#### **V. What does it mean to live gluten-free?**

A. The obvious culprits

B. Places where gluten hides that you might not suspect

C. The dangers of cross-contamination

D. Medications, shampoos, and lipsticks

## **VI. Food is the path to healing**

- A. Learn to cook
- B. Find new foods you have never eaten before
- C. Focus on cuisines that are naturally gluten-free
- D. Create new traditions

## **VII. What patients need to hear**

Say yes to this. Your life will change, in so many ways.

## **VIII. Conclusion**

A cooking demonstration, of delicious gluten-free food, with the Chef.

## WHAT THE HECK IS GLUTEN ANYWAY?

Gluten is the elastic protein in wheat, rye, and barley. Its elasticity is why French bread holds together, why angel-food cakes rise so high, and why H and H bagels in New York are so wonderfully doughy. Gluten is the glue that holds together baked goods and pasta. In fact, gluten comes from the same Latin root as glue. Think of gluten as the glue of wheat, rye, barley, durum, semolina, couscous, spelt, kamut, and triticale.

It is not as simple as avoiding those foods in their visible form. Gluten can hide in places one might never suspect. Soy sauce? Contains wheat. Root beer? Malt flavoring from barley. Almost every piece of licorice made? Made with wheat flour. Even lipsticks can be made with wheat as a binder. Every time you lick your lips, you are growing sick. Gluten, it seems, is everywhere.

After the Food Labeling Act of 2004 went into effect (in 2006), the life of reading food labels became a bit easier for those who must eat gluten-free. Now, anything containing wheat (or processed in a facility that uses wheat) must be labeled as such. However, food producers are not required to label the foods that contain gluten. At least not yet. Therefore, gluten can hide in a number of guises, in places people might not expect:

- malt flavoring (from barley)
- hydrolyzed vegetable protein
- MSG made outside of the United States
- natural flavors (this could be anything; you have to ask the food producer)
- caramel coloring made outside the United States
- dextrans (especially within vitamin supplements and prescription medication)
- wheat starch (in the US and Canada; in Europe, wheat starch is allowed)

Confused? Sure. Living gluten-free means being mindful, every time you take a bite of food or put on lipstick. There is no question: living gluten-free is a way of living, every hour of the day. But in a life without gluten, there is freedom.

## **A GUIDE TO GLUTEN-FREE FLOURS**

### **Almond flour**

Take raw, blanched almonds, grind them to a fine flour (but not so much that they become almond butter), and you have almond flour. This and other nut flours — such as chestnut and hazelnut, macadamia and pistachio — add protein and vibrant taste to gluten-free baking.

### **Amaranth flour**

The tiny whole grains that make a surprising breakfast cereal can be ground into a fine flour. Frankly, I have never successfully ground them in the spice grinder. I buy this flour in small bags, and add it in handfuls to crepes and quiche crusts. Amaranth has a grassy, earthy taste, so it works best in savory dishes, like pizza dough.

### **Arrowroot flour**

The name alone is enough to make you want to try it. Legend has it that the Arawak people of the West Indies, long before the arrival of Columbus, used arrowroot powder to draw out the poison from arrow wounds. Hopefully, it will have similar beneficial properties for those of you cooking gluten-free. It is best used as a thickener, for rouxs and sauces, and fillings for fruit pies. Those who are allergic to corn are especially grateful for the existence of this starch.

### **Bean flours**

Dried beans can be ground into flours as easily as grains can. Chickpea flour — also known as garbanzo bean or ceci flour — makes a memorable flatbread in the south of France. Lentil flour shows up in Indian cuisine. Even fava beans become flour, and show up in some commercial gluten-free baking mixes. Experiment with the beans you like, in small doses.

### **Corn flour**

You may not have heard of corn flour yet, but you have eaten it. Have you ever enjoyed a corn tortilla in a Mexican restaurant? That was made of corn flour. After corn kernels have been dried, soaked in lime water, and then washed, the corn is ground into a fine flour. Buy some authentic masa harina (as Mexican cooks call it) and make your own corn tortillas at home. You can also try it in gluten-free corn bread.

## **Guar gum**

The seeds of the guar plant, which grows in India and Pakistan, make a granular flour when dried and ground. Take a look at many processed foods — such as commercial ice creams and puddings — and you will see guar gum on the list of ingredients. In small amounts, guar gum can be a somewhat effective binder, mimicking the effects of gluten.

## **Millet**

Mild and ever-so-slightly sweet, millet is an adaptable grain. It soaks up the tastes of the foods surrounding it. It sings in harmony, rather than blaring out loud. Millet flour lends a crumbly texture to breads and muffins, and it is especially good in quick breads.

## **Potato starch**

Potatoes are endlessly useful. Their starchiness makes them fantastic when mashed. And that starch, when extruded by machines and put into little bags, helps gluten-free cooks to eat well. As is true for all the gluten-free flours, potato starch will not substitute directly for wheat. It needs to be combined with other flours and starches in a blend. Those who celebrate Passover or are allergic to corn are particularly grateful for the existence of potato starch. (This is not to be confused with potato flour, which is dried potatoes ground into a flour. If you want the taste of potatoes, choose potato flour.)

## **Quinoa**

As a grain, quinoa is nutty and delicious. As a flour, quinoa is a little bitter. It is packed with protein, however, and the texture adds density to gluten-free baked goods. I like to use a little quinoa flour, in combination with other gluten-free flours, in something savory: cheddar-cheese biscuits; zucchini bread; or herb muffins.

## **Rice flours**

When rice farmers harvest rice, they shuck the grains of its outer husk, which is inedible. What is left after this process is brown rice. If the farmer also removes the germ and bran from the rice grain, he is left with white rice. Brown rice flour is made from the first type of rice, and white rice flour is produced from the latter. Whether it is brown or white, 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. Smooth and finely ground, sweet rice flour thickens sauces and gravies so well that no one eating them can tell they are gluten-free.

## **Sorghum**

It is astounding that people in India and across the continent of Africa have been eating sorghum for generations, and I only discovered it when I had to go gluten-free. To me, sorghum flour is the closest in texture and taste to traditional wheat flour of any of the gluten-free flours. I've come to love it, and I use it in nearly every baked good I make. In a few cases, it even works as a direct substitution for wheat flour, such as in pancakes. It makes the basis for a good gluten-free bread, which is a godsend. Some people, however, detect a bitter taste in sorghum flour, so you should try some for yourself.

## **Tapioca flour**

What we in the West call tapioca comes from a plant originally from Asia, known as cassava. (In South America, it is known as manioc.) When the root has been dried, it is ground into a white flour. This tapioca flour is also known as tapioca starch (just to confuse us). Its starchiness makes it an excellent gluten-free flour, but it must be used in combination with other flours to make great baked goods.

## **Teff**

The tiny seeds of teff make a fascinating porridge. Dark brown as molasses, with a slight taste of chocolate, teff porridge will fill you up in the mornings. You can also cook up the grains the way you would polenta. As a flour, teff is nearly miraculous. The fine flour — ground from the tiny seeds — almost dissolve in baking, giving it a slightly gelatinous quality. This binds the baked goods similar to the way gluten works. Teff flour makes fabulous waffles and banana breads.

## **Xanthan gum**

Geeky chefs in love with molecular gastronomy adore xanthan gum. So do commercial food producers, who put xanthan gum in salad dressings and frozen foods as a stabilizer. If you have ever looked at the ingredients of your toothpaste, you saw xanthan gum there, since it binds everything together in a uniform consistency. Now, you can buy some for your gluten-free baked goods. Only a tiny amount (1/2 teaspoon or less) is enough to bind that dough to make cookies and pie crusts.

## **Where do you find these?**

Health food stores

Large-chain natural foods stores, such as Whole Foods or Wild Oats

Some major grocery stores are carrying gluten-free flours now

Online sources

## QUINOA SALAD WITH HORSERADISH CRÈME FRAICHE

*For the horseradish sauce:*

½ cup crème fraiche (or goat milk yogurt)

2 tablespoons fresh grated horseradish

½ teaspoon kosher salt

½ teaspoon cracked black pepper

*For the quinoa:*

¼ yellow onion, minced fine

2 cloves garlic, smashed and minced

1 tablespoon good quality olive oil

1 cup quinoa, rinsed and dried

2 ½ cups chicken or vegetable stock

1 teaspoon kosher salt

2 roma tomatoes

1 orange pepper, cut into small strips

1 bunch green onions, chopped fine

1 head red leaf lettuce, rinsed, dried, and torn into bite-size pieces

4 ounces smoked salmon (optional)

*For the vinaigrette:*

1/8 cup golden balsamic vinegar

1/8 cup balsamic vinegar (or ¼ cup, if you can't find golden balsamic)

1 teaspoon Dijon mustard

¼ cup good quality olive oil

½ cup canola oil

salt and pepper to taste

**Making the horseradish sauce.** Make the horseradish sauce by combining the crème fraiche (or yogurt) with the grated horseradish, salt, and pepper. Put the bowl into the refrigerator and allow this sauce to marinate for at least 30 minutes.

**Cooking the quinoa.** In a small skillet, sauté the onion and garlic in olive oil until they are fragrant (about 2 minutes). Add the quinoa and toast it in the olive oil for about 1 minute. Add the stock and salt to the pan and bring it to a boil. Lower the heat to medium-low and let the quinoa simmer until it is tender (about 15 minutes). Spread the quinoa out on a plate and set it in the freezer for a few minutes to cool down.

**Coring the tomatoes.** Bring a pot of salted water to a boil. Take the cores from the two tomatoes. Flip them over and use a sharp knife to score a small x into the bottom of each tomato. Put them in the boiling water. When the skin starts to slip off, remove the tomatoes from the boiling water and submerge in a bath of ice water immediately. When they have cooled, peel the tomatoes, remove their seeds, and dice into small pieces.

**Making the vinaigrette.** Make the vinaigrette by putting the two vinegars, mustard, salt, and pepper in a blender and mix until well incorporated. Slowly, with the blender running, drizzle the oils into the blender until the vinaigrette has fully emulsified.

**Assembling the salad.** Take the quinoa out of the freezer (it should be well cooled but not at all frozen). Put the diced tomatoes, orange pepper, and green onions into the quinoa and stir. Drizzle a small amount of the vinaigrette over the quinoa and toss the salad. (Save the reserved vinaigrette for later salads.) Lay the quinoa on a bed of the red leaf lettuce. Top with the horseradish sauce and the smoked salmon, if desired.

Feeds 4, in small portions.

## **Chocolate Banana Bread**

3 large bananas, mashed

½ cup butter, softened

½ cup organic cane sugar

½ cup turbinado sugar

2 eggs

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

½ cup sour cream

1 cup teff flour

½ cup sweet white rice flour

½ cup sorghum (or brown rice flour)

½ cup tapioca flour

½ cup almond meal (or hazelnut flour)

1 teaspoon cinnamon

1 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon xanthan gum

1 teaspoon baking powder

1 teaspoon baking soda

3 tablespoons cocoa powder

**Prepare for baking.** Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Butter a 9” round cake pan.

Flour the dish with a sprinkle of white rice flour.

**Mash the bananas.** Mash the bananas with a large potato masher or fork. Set aside.

**Creaming the butter and adding the liquids.** Mix the butter and sugars together. When they are just creamed, stop mixing. Add the eggs, vanilla extract, and sour cream to the butter and sugar. Mix in the mashed bananas.

**Mix the dry ingredients.** Stir together all the dry ingredients. Break up the lumps of cocoa powder with a fork. Set aside.

**Combine everything.** Using a rubber spatula, fold the dry ingredients into the wet batter, ¼ cup at a time, until everything is just mixed together.

**Baking the bread.** Scrape the dough into your pan. Top with a small handful of demerara sugar, covering the surface of the dough. Place into the oven and bake for about 40 minutes, or until the knife you insert gently into the bread comes out again clean.

**Cool and serve.** Let the bread sit in the pan for five to ten minutes, then turn it over onto a wire rack. Serve warm, with cream cheese, if you wish.

Feeds 6.

## **Good Online Resources for Your Patients**

*Celiac Awareness Campaign from the National Institutes of Health*

<http://www.celiac.nih.gov/>

*Celiac Disease Foundation*

<http://celiac.org/>

*Celiac Sprue Association*

<http://www.csaceliacs.org/>

*Celiac Support Group Online*

<http://www.celiac.com/>

*Gluten Intolerance Group*

<http://gluten.net/>

*National Foundation for Celiac Awareness*

<http://www.celiaccentral.org/>

*University of Chicago Celiac Disease Center*

<http://www.uchospitals.edu/specialties/celiac/index.html>

*And finally, my website....*

Glutenfreegirl.com

