

# Gluten Free Flour in Baking

## Overview

Obviously, the goal of baking gluten free is to get food to taste as “normal” (i.e. be like you were using regular flour from wheat) as possible. There is no single flour that is a wheat equivalent, so most of the time in baking, you either must use some kind of pre-blended mix, or you buy the separate flours and mix them yourself. If you mix them yourself, you will most likely need some kind of binding agent (xanthan gum or guar gum, I use the former).

It’s a great time to experiment, so don’t be intimidated. Any of the flours can be purchased on Amazon, so I would not bother looking in the local stores.

## Using Pre-Blended Flours

These flours come ready to use for your recipes and are a lot more expensive than white or wheat flour. Depending on the size of package you get, expect to pay from \$3 to \$5 per pound. There are MANY types of blends, but these are three I have used:



They are different blends of flours, so expect them to behave differently depending on what you are doing. Namaste is a great blend, in my opinion and Bob’s Red Mill is the least expensive (it’s also sort of my “go-to” flour). With Bob’s, you are supposed to just take your favorite recipes and replace the flour they have with the equivalent of Bob’s. It’s good in theory, but does not always work out. You just have to try things.

## Using Separate Flours

They make flour out of practically anything, but at a high level, there are these main categories:

- Bean Flours (Garbanzo, fava, pea, etc.)
- Grain Flours (Rice, Oat, Millet, Sorghum, Corn, Teff, etc.)
- Nut Flours (Almond, Coconut)
- Starches (Corn, Tapioca, etc.)

I haven't had the nerve to try the bean flours, but have used the other varieties and I have tried out quite a few of them. By now, I just keep on hand my favorites which are:

- Brown Rice Flour
- Sorghum Flour
- Almond Flour (for some things; expect to spend A LOT for this)
- Teff Flour (use this to replace a portion of brown rice flour in recipes and make them healthier)
- Tapioca Flour (this is the starch I mostly use)

I also have a package of xanthan gum as you usually need a tablespoon of this in bread recipes and other baked goods. Most of the flours I buy are just Anthony's brand and are available on Amazon. Just make sure that when buying this stuff, it says that it is "certified gluten free".

Here are some sample packages:



# Favorite Gluten Free in the Grocery Store and at Home

## Pasta

I tried really hard to like pasta made from rice flour. But when you cook it, the water gets very thick, almost like gravy. It really started grossing me out. So, I pretty much gave up on using spaghetti like this.

I do like, and recommend, pastas made from blends of flours – one brand containing corn flour cooks up nearly the same as normal spaghetti without turning the water into a thick soup. The Bonavita pasta cooks up nicely and I use the Fusilli as a spaghetti replacement and the penne in place of lasagna noodles. I also use Ancient Harvest Garden Pagodos for a colorful pasta salad (this is a corn/quinoa blend and cooks up pretty fast). Here are some photos of these products:



## Nuts

Be **very careful** purchasing nuts and seeds. They in themselves are gluten free, but to process and package them, equipment is used that often handles wheat as well. I have never seen a “store brand” of nuts that is safe. Even the national brands you must watch and check the label. Fisher and Planters I have found to be safe.

## Cereals

Most corn flakes have malt, which is not gluten free. In fact, you should avoid ANYTHING with malt in it. Good cereals I get are virtually all of the Chex cereals, but wheat Chex. Also, Cheerios in recent years has become gluten free, which is nice. Granola must say that it is gluten free because oats must be specially handled to be safe.

If you want oatmeal, you must make sure that it is gluten free (Quaker is not). Bob’s Red Mill has gluten free oatmeal that is available in most grocery stores – it is one of the more common products you will see on shelves in the gluten free section. Another benefit of their oatmeal is that if you need some oat flour for some other recipe, you can just toss some in a blender and you will have oat flour.



### Breads

If you just need a quick loaf of bread for sandwiches, Franz is a great brand. You will pay over \$6 a loaf – what can I say about the fact that gluten free food is costly? Gluten free breads have gotten better over the years, but don't ever expect them to be like the bread you have had to leave behind. I like the Udi's Whole Grain Hamburger buns available in the freezer section. Here are a few photos of brands I buy:



### Other Information for the Grocery Store

Many “prepared” types foods can have gluten hidden in them. Beware of packaged foods where one ingredient is something like “natural flavorings” or “malt” (maltodextrin is okay though). You might need to check online to be sure. Be careful of processed meats because sometimes they also contain gluten.

Do not buy food out of the bulk bins – you just do not know how careful the store and customers might have been with them. Do not have the in-store deli slice meats for you – you are always safer buying deli meats in a package where the label confirms it is gluten free.

Be very careful about prepared meats, like rotisserie chicken. I have checked labels on them before and seen that they are gluten free only to have the store change up a marinade of something and then next thing I know, I get “glutened”, a rather painful experience for me that takes days to fully recover from.

Soy sauce is made from wheat, so you will have to use a substitute (several are available).

If you have doubts on anything, check online and/or on the label. You have to watch what snack chips you buy, what is in the beef jerky, etc.

### At Home

Here are some pointers for being gluten free at home:

- Have your own toaster that only toasts gluten free breads
- Have your own butter used only on gluten free foods.
- Always use clean utensils when preparing foods.
- Have your own gluten free cutting board for breads

When going out to eat, ask for a gluten menu or talk to the chef about meal selections available to you. Sauces and marinades often contain gluten. This website: <https://www.findmeglutenfree.com/> will help you locate restaurants throughout the country that are safe. Or check out the specific restaurant’s website and menu. Some restaurants are very good at doing gluten free. Nearly all fast food places do poorly (guess that’s not a bad thing since it makes us eat better).

Check out these websites for additional help:

- <https://www.celiac.com/>
- <https://www.cureceliacdisease.org/>
- Any number of gluten free cooking blogs – Google them and you will see many

# Recipes for Celiac

## Gluten-Free Crusty Boule (Artisan Bread)

*The best crusty type bread ever! Makes enough dough for two 1-pound loaves.*

### *Ingredients:*

- 1 cup Brown Rice Flour (can replace ¼ cup of this with teff flour; I usually do)
- ¾ cup Sorghum Flour
- 1 ½ cups Tapioca Flour (also called tapioca starch)
- 1 tablespoon yeast (can be reduced, but you will have to increase the rise time)
- ½ tablespoon kosher salt (increase or decrease to taste)
- 1 tablespoon xanthan gum
- 1 1/3 cups lukewarm water
- 2 large eggs
- 3 tablespoons neutral flavored or olive oil
- 1 tablespoon honey or sugar

### *Mixing the Dough:*

Whisk together the flours, salt, and xanthan gum in a large bowl and set aside. In a liquid measuring cup, combine the oil, honey, warm water, and yeast to “proof” it (let it sit and activate five minutes). In a separate small bowl, whisk the eggs together.

Dump the eggs into the bowl of dry ingredients and combine together with an electric hand mixer. Mix in about 1/3 of the water/oil/honey/yeast (*Do NOT add all of the liquid at once or it will result in lumpy dough*). Continue to mix it with the hand mixer while combining another 1/3 of the liquid and the dough will begin to come together in a thick dough. Add the final 1/3 of the liquid and mix until dough is nice and smooth.

### *Storing Dough and Baking the Bread:*

Break the dough into two equal halves. If you only want to do one loaf, put one of the halves in an oiled bowl with a lid and put the lid on almost completely and let it set on the counter for 30 minutes, or so, and then refrigerate it for later use (up to 7 days). Using slightly wet hands to handle the dough will make it so it won't stick to you.

For the other half of the dough, place it on some parchment paper and shape it into a round artisan bread and spray it with some Pam, covering it with some plastic wrap and place it in an oven that was preheated to 200 degrees and then turned off for up to an hour (keep an eye on it).

Preheat oven to 450 degrees and place a Dutch oven inside. Originally, I used a 5 ½ quart ALL aluminum one ALL (including the knob on the lid) that has a nonstick surface - something like this:



I have since replaced it with a fired clay bread baker I had someone make for me and it does a great job for artisan breads with less risk of burning than metal. I heat the oven to 475 degrees when I use the bread baker (which is all that time now).

When the oven is fully preheated, lower the parchment with the bread into the hot Dutch oven or bread baker, replace the lid and put it all in the oven for 20 minutes. Remove the lid and reduce the heat to 400 degrees (425 degrees for a clay bread baker) and continue baking for another 18 - 20 minutes. Once it is done, carefully lift it out of the pot/baker and place on a wire rack to cool (it will be gummy if you cut it while hot).

*Photos:*



Unfortunately, you can't just slice a nice warm piece straight out of the oven as it will be gummy - you must let it cool first. Don't keep it too long because like about any other celiac bread, it doesn't have a long shelf life. Sometimes after it cools, I will slice the whole loaf and put it in the

freezer. That way, you can just take out a couple slices for a sandwich or other meal and it will still have the nice crust with a soft center.

If it gets kind of dry, it still makes good French toast, or cut it into cubes for your favorite stuffing recipe or pulverize it into bread crumbs for other recipes.

## Blueberry Muffins

*Even the batter is good to eat!*

### *Ingredients:*

- 1 cup Bob's Red Mill 1-to1 Baking Flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 2/3 cup butter, softened
- 3/8 cup granulated sugar
- 1 large egg
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2/3 cup milk
- 2 generous cup blueberries
- 2 Tablespoons granulated sugar, for topping

### *Instructions:*

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Use the mini muffin tray and spray Pam on about 18 of them.

In a medium bowl, combine butter, salt, baking powder, and granulated sugar. Beat on medium-low speed until thick. With the beater still running, add the eggs. Beat until combined.

Beat in the flour blend ¼ cup at a time. Add the milk and vanilla extract. Mix until a thick batter forms.

Gently fold in the blueberries with a rubber spatula. (If you are using frozen or cold blueberries, the batter will get VERY thick. This is totally normal.)

Spoon batter into prepared mini muffin pan. Fill each cavity to the top or very slightly higher. When all the batter has been put in the pan, use the 2 Tablespoons of sugar on top them so they will have a nice crisp top crust.

Bake about 18 minutes. To brown the tops, place under the broiler for a couple minutes.

Allow muffins to cool in the pan for five minutes and then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.





## Sandwich Bread

*A tasty, low cost lunch sandwich bread made using the paddle attachment with the KitchenAid mixer.*

### *Ingredients:*

3 ¼ c Bob's Red Mill 1-to-1 gluten free flour  
1 tablespoon yeast  
½ tablespoon salt  
1 1/3 cups lukewarm water  
2 large eggs  
3 tablespoons neutral flavored or olive oil  
1 tablespoon honey or sugar

### *Mixing the Dough:*

Whisk together the flour, yeast, and salt in a large bowl and set aside. In a liquid measuring cup, combine the oil, honey, and water. In a separate small bowl, whisk the eggs together.

Dump the eggs into the bowl of dry ingredients and mix at a low speed. Add about 1/3 of the water/oil/honey (*Do NOT add all of the liquid at once or it will result in lumpy dough*) and mix together until it is absorbed. Add another 1/3 of the water/oil/honey and mix until it absorbs. Add the final 1/3 and mix until it absorbs and then increase the speed and let beat for a minute or two. *Dough will be like an overly thick cake batter.*

### *Baking the Bread:*

Put the dough in an oiled, normal size pullman pan. I let it rise for just over 2 hours in an oven preheated and then turned off so that it was maybe 100 degrees, or so. At any rate, it should rise to within an inch of the top of the pan. I put a couple of wet paper towels over the top to keep the dough from drying out while it was rising.

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Put the lid on the pullman pan and bake for 50 minutes. Remove the cover and bake another 15 minutes to brown the top.



## Other Recipes Online I Like

Dinner Rolls: <http://www.artofglutenfreebaking.com/2009/11/dinner-rolls-gluten-free-revised-22810/> -

We substitute the blend in the recipe with Namaste and everyone loves these rolls! Great for Thanksgiving!

A decent gluten free sandwich bread: <https://meaningfuleats.com/gluten-free-sandwich-bread/>

# gluten free artisanal bread

[CathysGlutenFree.com](http://CathysGlutenFree.com)

## Ingredients

- 1 cup organic sorghum flour
- 1 cup tapioca flour
- 1/2 cup teff flour
- 1/2 cup millet flour (I swapped this out and used ½ c brown rice flour; I would like to try it by swapping out the millet flour for ¼ c brown rice flour and ¼ c flax meal – would be healthier!)
- 1/3 cup organic cornstarch
- 1 tablespoon xanthan gum
- 2 teaspoons sea salt
- 1/2 teaspoon instant yeast (I used 1 teaspoon of just normal yeast)
- 1 1/2 cup warm water 105 - 110 degrees Fahrenheit (I proofed the yeast in the water and also added 1 teaspoon of honey so the yeast would be more active)

## Instructions

1. Combine all ingredients. Cover with plastic, and let sit overnight at room temperature.
2. Shape dough into a round loaf. Set it in a floured towel, and allow to rise 2 hours. (I actually heated the oven to 170 and turned it off. I covered the dough with brown rice flour, a sheet of plastic and then a damp towel on the top. I let it rise for about 3 hours in the oven as I wanted it to be a little more airy than the original recipe does it.)
3. Preheat oven to 450 F with a cast iron pot and lid inside. (or ceramic bread baker)
4. Remove the hot pot from the oven. Gently roll the dough into it. Cover with the hot lid and bake 30 minutes.
5. Uncover. Continue baking for 30 minutes.

My photos of the finished product:



I let it sit all day before slicing it and it had a great crust! You can freeze it to retain the fresh taste and crustiness. Just separate each slice with parchment paper to keep the slices from sticking together. This is a deeper, denser, full-bodied bread and may not be for everyone.