

#11 A Guide to Gluten-Free Flours

Almond Flour This moist flour results in dense and chewy baked good. It's often mixed with wheat flour to produce a lighter texture.

Buckwheat Flour Buckwheat is not wheat, but is actually a protein-rich seed from a plant similar to rhubarb. After the seed is ground, it becomes a silky flour with a purple-gray color. It can be a little tricky to work with on its own, so is often mixed with other whole-grain flours and ingredients to make baked goods. When used in smaller amounts, or in combination with other flours, it makes baked goods moist and tender.

Coconut Flour With a subtle flavor and aroma of coconut, this popular gluten-free flour is high in fiber and low in calories. It's often mixed with regular wheat flour, but be sure to fluff it with a fork before you measure it. .

Potato Starch Flour This is a gluten-free thickening agent that is perfect for cream-based soups and sauces. Mix it a little with water first, then substitute potato starch flour for flour in your recipe, but use half the amount called for. It can be purchased in a health food store.

Tapioca Flour This is a light, white, very smooth flour that comes from the cassava root. It gives baked goods a nice chewy texture. Try it in white bread or French bread recipes. It is also easily combined with cornstarch and soy flour.

Soy Flour This nutty-tasting flour has a high protein and fat content. It's best when used in combination with other flours and for baking brownies, or any baked goods with nuts or fruit, which will mask any "beany" flavor.

Cornstarch A refined starch that comes from corn, it's mostly used as a thickening agent for puddings, fruit sauces, and Asian cooking. It is also used in combination with other flours for baking.

Corn Flour This flour is milled from corn and can be blended with cornmeal to make cornbread or muffins. It is excellent for waffles or pancakes.

Cornmeal Cornmeal can be ground from either yellow or white corn. This is often combined with flours for baking. It imparts a strong corn flavor that is delicious in pancakes, waffles, or muffins.

White Rice Flour This is an excellent basic flour for gluten-free baking. It is milled from polished white rice. Because it has such a bland flavor, it is perfect for baking, as it doesn't impart any flavors. It works well with other flours. White rice flour is available in most health food stores, and also in Asian markets. Look for types called fine-textured white rice flour.

Brown Rice Flour Made from unpolished brown rice, brown rice flour retains the nutritional value of the rice bran. Use it in breads, muffins, and cookies.

Kamut and Spelt Flours These are ancient forms of wheat. While they aren't appropriate for gluten-free diets, they can be often be tolerated by people with gluten sensitivities.