



As many of our customer are just starting out using gluten-free ingredients, we though some of these ideas might be of help:

1. Get some good cook books - If you are new to gluten-free baking, it's worth buying a couple of good gluten-free cook books.
2. Check before you start baking - Before you start baking, make sure you have all the ingredients to hand, and read the recipe all the way through; if it is the first time you've cooked the recipe, read it again!
3. Be precise -Do follow the instructions, especially with a new recipe. As you get more proficient, you can start to experiment. Use scales to get the correct proportions.
4. Try using apple purée - When baking, one almost never thinks of apple purée, yet its moisture, sweetness, acidity and fresh fruit flavour all have beneficial effects in recipes. It can be added as a supplement to a cake prepared normally, or used as a substitute for some or all of the fat or liquids.
5. Try recipes with a high moisture content -When starting out with gluten-free baking, look for recipes with a high moisture content: breads and moist cakes are a good start.
6. Puréed prunes - Can be substitutes for some of the fat in a mixture and add taste, fibre and moistness. Simply soak some prunes, or add a small amount of water, then blitz in a food processor until they are creamy.
7. Add teff to your diet - Teff flour is high in resistant starch, a newly discovered type of dietary fibre that can benefit blood-sugar management, weight control and colon health. Estimates suggest that 20-40% of the carbohydrates in teff are resistant starches. A gluten-free grain with a mild flavour, teff is a healthy and versatile ingredient for many gluten-free products.
8. Try psyllium husks -Ground psyllium seed husks (available in 500g and 1kg sizes) bind moisture and help make breads less crumbly.

9. Use sparkling water for a lighter batter -Gluten-free cakes and batter can be a bit on the heavy side if you're not careful: give your cooking a helping hand with this little tip! If you want a fluffier, lighter, batter or dough, try substituting fizzy water for plain water. It gives the dough or batter a bit more gas to start with and so you get a lighter result in your cooking.
10. Make sure your biscuit tray is cool -A warm baking tray will tend to make your biscuits spread out before they get into the oven. For gluten-free biscuits, where structure can be a problem, make sure your tray is cool.
11. Scrape the bowl as you mix and blend - Gluten-free batter and dough can be gummier and stickier, so make sure to scrape the sides of your bowl down well as you mix and blend, or you might miss part of the mixture.
12. Try soya, quinoa or coconut flours - There are a number of flours that you might not be aware of that could help with your gluten-free baking. Soya flour is a good option, as it has a high protein content. Quinoa flour is also high in protein, while for flavour, coconut flour stands out.
13. Agave syrup - Naturally sweeter than honey, agave nectar has a lovely fluid consistency and helps keep a mix moist.
14. Watch the oven temperature -Watch the oven temperature! If your oven is too hot, or your cake is on too high a shelf, then potentially the cake crust will be created too soon. As the cake continues to rise, it will burst through the crust – and you'll have a cracked crust!
15. No touching in the oven -To ensure your cakes cook evenly in the oven, there needs to be air circulation. Don't let your cake tins touch each other, or the oven walls, as this will restrict air circulation.
16. Try cooling cakes upside down - If you are looking for a flat base for a Victoria Sandwich, try cooling one of the layers upside down: this will make it easier to stack.
17. Don't cook in a mess -Before you start cooking, make sure your surfaces are clean and that any pans etc. are also clean. Gluten-free or not, it's not a good idea to cook cupcakes using the same board you've just made a hot chilli on! Also, have a clean damp cloth about, in case of spillages.
18. Avoid nuts sinking to the bottom -To prevent nuts or fruits from sinking to the bottom of a cake, mix them with some of the flour called for in the

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recipe before stirring them into your mixture, and keep the pieces on the small side.

19. Buy vanilla by the litre - Some baking essentials have a good shelf life and can be purchased in larger sizes to give a substantial saving. Try buying a litre of vanilla extract: this is much cheaper in the long term than the small bottles, and you won't run out.
20. Keep a sense of humour and use your failures - When starting out with gluten-free baking, learn from your mistakes: be bold and keep a sense of humour, an open mind and an open palate. Gluten-free baking may not taste exactly like your old recipes, but the end results can be just as (or even more) delicious than their wheat counterparts. In the early days, you might not always have perfect success, but experimentation will give you experience. The more you see how ingredients work, the better luck you will have overall. When you have a failure - as everyone does! - don't throw the cake away. Try a different use for it: perhaps in a homemade trifle?