

Gluten-Free Baking



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a note on flour

flour mixes (per cup)

While you can buy pre-packaged gluten-free flours designed for different purposes, it is a good idea to have one go-to flour you pre-mix and keep on hand. Below are some combinations staff at the Co-op have liked.

Gluten-free flours should be bought prepackaged, as there's possibility of gluten contamination when buying in bulk.

Variation 1: ½ C brown rice flour + ½ C garbanzo bean flour

Variation 2: ½ C oat flour* + ½ C garbanzo bean flour

Variation 3: 6 C rice flour + 2 C potato starch + 1 C tapioca flour

other flours

As you delve deeper into gluten-free baking, you may come across recipes using other flours, or experiment with changing the flours in these recipes.

Corn

Although typically sold as ground cornmeal, it can also be available as a coarser grit or finer flour. White or yellow corn products are the most common but blue corn products are also available. Most corn products sold today are not whole grains but rather are milled only from the endosperm, since corn germ is extremely high in oil and becomes rancid very quickly. Traditional Mexican corn flour used for tortillas is called masa harina. It is made by soaking dried corn in limewater before grinding it into flour - this removes the bran thus changing the properties and flavor of the corn; it also increases its nutritional value. Take care never to confuse corn flour with cornstarch in recipes.

Oats*

There are several different oat products available on the market today including - rolled oats, quick-cooking rolled oats, steel-cut/Irish oats, oat flour, oat bran and whole oat kernels called groats. Although oats are still a controversial topic among the gluten-free, if you can tolerate them they can offer many benefits to your baking. If you've ever made oatmeal for breakfast, then at some point you have likely experienced the gummy, gluey nature of oats. This gumminess comes from beta-glucan, a gum in oats that function as dietary fiber in our bodies - they can do the same for your baked goods.

Rice

Rice flour, milled from the endosperm of the rice kernel, is now widely available. It is a low-protein flour that contains no gluten, making it a common ingredient in gluten-free baking. However since it is not very flavorful, especially white rice, and can be gritty, it is often combined with other flour to achieve the desired effect. It is also used as a thickening agent in recipes that are refrigerated or frozen since it inhibits liquid separation - just be careful not to confuse flour for rice starch, which is usually produced by steeping rice in lye.

Millet

Pearl millet is the most common of thousands of millet varieties grown throughout the world. Its protein content is very close to wheat and is rich in a number of vitamins. Unless first cooked in water, millet retains a crunchy texture in baked goods - which could be desired. Once ground, millet flour must be used immediately or placed in the refrigerator to prevent off flavors from developing in the oils. The whole grains can also be popped and eaten like popcorn.

Teff

Teff has been grown in Ethiopia for thousands of years and is still the most plentiful cereal grain grown there. The tiny grains are traditionally ground into flour, fermented, and made into a mildly sour spongy pancake called injera. Teff, in the form of injera and many other baked goods are eaten daily in Ethiopia by those who can afford it. It also has an attractive nutritional profile, being very high in fiber, iron, protein and calcium - as well as significant levels of minerals, lysine and contains all 8 essential amino acids.

Buckwheat

Despite the name, it's not wheat at all! However many commercial buckwheat products are actually mixtures of wheat and buckwheat flours so you have to make sure to check the label. Buckwheat kernels are similar to other cereal grains and can be used in the same way such as ground into flour or left as coarse grits. Whole kernels are called groats and roasted groats are called kasha. Buckwheat is traditionally used in many foods around the world, from soba noodles in Japan to blinis in Russia. Even though it contains no gluten, it can still be a potent and potentially fatal allergen by itself - in sensitive people it can cause anaphylaxis and is described as a "hidden allergen".

Sorghum

This is the 5th most important cereal crop grown in the world; grown in Africa, Central America and South Asia. It is known for being a "sweet" grain so it works well in baked goods. Sweet sorghum syrup is known as molasses in some parts of the US, although it's not true molasses. In India it is commonly called Jowar and is a staple nutrition source for the rural and poor.

Quinoa

This sacred crop of the ancient Inca Empire is actually a seed, not a grain, and is very high in healthful unsaturated fatty acids. Unlike wheat or most other cereal grains, quinoa is high in lysine, an essential amino acid and can be added into your diet to compensate for any deficiencies. Unusual among plant foods, it is considered a complete protein source. Also because of these fatty acids, especially when ground, the seeds can oxidize quickly and should be kept in the refrigerator.

Amaranth

This seed was the staple crop of the Aztecs and Mayans; though not as popular as quinoa, it has witnessed a resurgence of interest. Also like quinoa it is high in lysine, fiber, vitamins, minerals, and is considered a complete protein - its seeds can also be popped like popcorn.

Potato

Also not a grain but a tuber, it can be cooked, dried and cut into flakes or milled into flour. The starch in potato flakes, cooked potatoes and cooked potato water is already gelatinized. This starch is easily broken down by amylase into sugar and other products. This increases water absorption of doughs and improves fermentation. Baked goods containing potato produces are soft, moist and they resist staling. Can sometimes sub for instant mashed potatoes.

Garbanzo

Garbanzo bean flour, also known as gram flour, is made from chickpeas. Flour made from these beans are sweet, rich and give a slight “beany” flavor to baked goods - which some people don’t like. They are also both high in carbohydrates as well as relatively high in proteins.

Nut Flours

Virtually every nut can be ground into a fine flour to include into your gluten-free baking. Obviously each will impart its own unique flavor and sometimes color to the baked goods. Due to the high cost of most nuts you’ll want to include them sparingly into your flour mix. In general, almond flour/meal is the most common nut flour to use since it is relatively neutral in flavor. Also since most nuts are high in fats/oils you should use them quickly or store them in the fridge. Or, better yet, the freezer to prevent your flour mix from going rancid.

** Oats may come into contact with gluten during processing. This may pose a problem for those with celiac disease. If this is an issue for you make sure to purchase certified gluten-free oats.*

life changing loaf of bread

(makes 1 loaf) available at mynewroots.org

Psyllium has a distinctive, earthy flavor that some people instantly love, and others may have to get used to. As the name suggests though, it's well worth a try. The lovely website this recipe comes from is full of delicious recipes with gorgeous food photography.

- 1 C sunflower seeds
- ½ C flax seeds
- ½ C hazelnuts or almonds
- 1 ½ C rolled oats
- 2 T. chia seeds
- 4 T. psyllium seed husks (3 T. if using psyllium husk powder)
- 1 t. fine grain sea salt (add ½ t. if using coarse salt)
- 1 T. maple syrup (for sugar-free diets, use a pinch of stevia)
- 3 T. melted coconut oil or ghee
- 1 ½ C water

In a flexible, silicon loaf pan combine all dry ingredients, stirring well. Whisk maple syrup, oil and water together in a measuring cup. Add this to the dry ingredients and mix very well until everything is completely soaked and dough becomes very thick (if the dough is too thick to stir, add one or two teaspoons of water until the dough is manageable). Smooth out the top with the back of a spoon. Let sit out on the counter for at least 2 hours, or all day or overnight. To ensure the dough is ready, it should retain its shape even when you pull the sides of the loaf pan away from it.

Preheat oven to 350°F / 175°C.

Place loaf pan in the oven on the middle rack, and bake for 20 minutes. Remove bread from loaf pan, place it upside down directly on the rack and bake for another 30-40 minutes. Bread is done when it sounds hollow when tapped. Let cool completely before slicing (difficult, but important).

Store bread in a tightly sealed container for up to five days. Freezes well too – slice before freezing for quick and easy toast!

sandwich bread

(makes 1 loaf) available at www.theglutenfreespouse.com

Very different than the life changing loaf of bread, excellent if you are really missing a traditional loaf.

- 1 C potato starch (NOT flour!)
- ½ C quinoa flour
- ½ C arrowroot
- ½ C sorghum flour
- ½ C brown rice flour
- ¼ C sugar
- ¾ t kosher salt
- 2 ½ t xanthan gum
- 1 t baking soda
- 1 t baking powder
- ¼ C warm water (90-110°F)
- 2 ½ T yeast, dry active
- 1 t sugar
- 1 C whole milk
- 1 T apple cider vinegar
- 3 eggs

Before you begin, try to make sure that all of your ingredients are at room temperature. This will help the yeast work faster.

Combine all of the ingredients through the baking powder. Then set aside the flour mixture. If your house is cold you may want to preheat your oven to 175°F to create a “proof box” for your loaf to go in later.

Mix the warm water, yeast and sugar together then set aside, away from drafts, to proof till at least doubled in size. Keep an eye on it since yeast has a way of growing faster than you might think, especially in warm weather.

Combine the milk and vinegar then allow to “ferment/curdle” a few minutes. Meanwhile whisk the eggs together then add the milk to the eggs. Finally add in the yeast mixture.

In a stand mixer with the dough hook attachment, or by hand, combine all the dry ingredients with all the wet ingredients. This will make a fairly sticky dough and will not look like a regular bread dough that pulls away from the sides of the bowl. Spray your loaf pan with whatever pan spray you like to use, then fill that pan with the dough. NOTE: All of the dough can go into one loaf pan but it will rise up high so watch your spacing in the oven.

Once the dough is in the loaf pan, spray the top with oil as well. Place into the 175°F oven and let rise/proof for 30 mins or until the dough has at least come over the top of the pan. Turn the oven up to 350°F to bake for 30-45 minutes; keep a close eye on it towards the end to make sure the outside doesn't burn before the inside is done. If the top is getting too brown then you can cover it with foil tent.

Remove from the oven onto a cooling rack, let it rest in the pan for a few minutes. Then de-pan back onto a cooling rack and let cool completely before slicing.

pear & cranberry cornbread muffins

 (makes approx 18)

Amazing muffins! The combination of tart whole cranberries with the sweet pear is incredible.

- 2 T ground chia + ½ C water
- zest of 1 lemon
- 1 inch knob ginger, grated
- 5 T melted coconut oil
- ½ C applesauce
- 3 T lemon juice
- 1 C water
- ½ C coconut sugar
- 1 ½ C medium ground cornmeal
- 1 ½ C almond meal
- 1 ½ t baking soda
- ½ t cinnamon
- pinch of salt
- 2 slightly under ripe pears, chopped
- 1 C cranberries

Grind chia seeds and mix with water. Let sit until it becomes a gel, about 10 minutes. Preheat oven to 350F.

Combine dry ingredients in a large bowl.

Combine wet ingredients, ginger, lemon zest, and chia gel. Pour wet ingredients over dry and stir until uniform texture is achieved. Add pears and cranberries, mix thoroughly.

Line muffin tins and pour batter to top of liner. Makes approx. 18 muffins. Cook until toothpick comes out clean, about 20-25 minutes.

buckwheat pancakes

(makes 5-7 pancakes) from the *Whole Life Nutrition Cookbook*

Rich but light. Wonderful flavor.

- 1 heaping cup buckwheat flour
- ¼ C tapioca flour
- 1 t baking powder
- ½ t baking soda
- ¼ t sea salt
- 1-1 ½ C hemp, almond, or sunflower milk
- 2 T melted virgin coconut oil
- virgin coconut oil for cooking

In a medium bowl mix the dry ingredients. In a separate bowl whisk together the wet ingredients. Add the wet to the dry and gently mix until combined. Let the batter sit for a few minutes to thicken.

Heat a thick bottomed skillet over medium heat. Add a few teaspoons of coconut oil or butter. When the skillet has heat, add about 1/2 C of batter. Cook for about 1-2 minutes or until top begins to bubble, flip, and cook for a minute or so more on the other side. Repeat this process until all of the batter is used. Add a little coconut oil or butter in between cooking each batch.

pancakes

from the kitchen of Jess Zerbel

The buckwheat pancakes are wonderful, but this recipe is also great for waffles.

- ¾ almond meal
- ¾ brown rice flour
- ½ t baking powder
- ½ t baking soda
- ½ t cinnamon
- ½ t salt
- 1 T arrowroot powder
- 2 T chia seeds + ½ C water
- 2 T maple syrup
- 2/3 C coconut milk
- 1 t vanilla extract
- water or almond milk for thinning

Grind chia seeds in a blender or food processor. Mix with water and let sit until a thick gel forms, about 10 minutes.

Mix dry ingredients together in one bowl.

Mix chia and wet ingredients (not including the milk or water for thinning) in another bowl. Pour wet ingredients into the dry and add milk or water until batter is the desired consistency.

banana muffins

(makes 12 muffins) from the kitchen of Jess Zerbel

Make these ahead of the holiday for quick breakfasts or snacks. They would also be delicious with some blueberries thrown in too!

- 4 very ripe bananas
- ¼ C coconut oil
- ¼ C sugar of choice (coconut, sucanat, cane, etc)
- 1 t vanilla
- 1 C buckwheat flour
- 1 C rolled oats
- 2 heaping t baking powder
- 1 t baking soda
- 1 t cinnamon
- pinch of salt
- ½ C chopped walnuts

Preheat oven 375°F.

Melt coconut oil, sugar, and vanilla together. Add mashed bananas.

Stir flour, oats, baking soda, baking powder, cinnamon, salt, and walnuts to combine.

Add banana mixture to dry ingredients. Stir until well combined.

Line muffin tins, fill nearly to top of liner, bake for 25 minutes.

gluten-free pie crust

(makes 1 top and 1 bottom or 2 bottoms)

available at www.glutenfreegirl.blogspot.com

You can substitute any of the flours and starches for others you have on hand as long as you sub them BY WEIGHT. The secret to perfect pie crusts is to keep everything cold (even your flour can be chilled before using).

- 5oz (1¼ C) almond flour
- 2oz (2/3 C) sorghum flour
- 2oz (2/3 C) tapioca flour/starch
- 2oz (½ C) teff flour
- 3oz (½ C) potato starch
- 2oz (¼ C) sweet rice flour
- 2 t xanthan gum
- ¼ t guar gum
- ½ t kosher salt
- 9 T unsalted butter, cold
- 1 egg
- 6-8 T ice-cold water

Combine all of the dry ingredients (ingredients up until the butter) until thoroughly mixed together. Then set the flour aside.

Remove the butter from the freezer and cut in into small, pea-sized pieces. Alternatively, you could use a small cheese grater to grate the fats into small pieces - just be careful of your fingers.

Combine the butter into the flour mixture. With your hands, gently scoop up mounds of flour and rub your hands together to incorporate SOME of the butter into the flour. Keep repeating this motion until you're done - this should go fairly quickly, especially if you've cut your butter into small pieces to begin with. You want to end up with something that has a sandy texture, but where you can still see some little pieces of butter - these pieces are what create the nice flaky texture of the dough. When you have completely finished the dough you should still be able to see nice little pieces of fat dotted throughout the dough.

To finish the dough, whisk together the egg with 3 T of water. DO NOT add all of the water at once because you might not need it all! From here you can either mix the dough together by hand or you can use your food processor.

BY HAND: Add the egg-water to the sandy dough then work it together with your hands until it feels like a coherent dough. If it feels dry or like it's not really coming together then sprinkle in some more water a little at a time. Remember, you can always add more water but it's harder to correct with flour if you add too much!

BY FOOD PROCESSOR: Dump the sandy dough into the food processor with its standard blade attachment. Drizzle in the egg-water while pulsing the food processor just until it comes together into a ball. Just like above, if you need more water then sprinkle in a little at a time and pulse for a few seconds. Even if you use this method you might still want to finish the dough off by kneading it a few turns by hand - just to get a feel for the dough.

Wrap the dough in plastic wrap, flatten it into a disc for easy rolling later, then let it chill/rest for at least 15 minutes. If it's easier, at this point you can divide the dough in half and wrap them separately so that you can roll out the top and bottom crusts later. Or save one for later if you only need a bottom crust. Gluten-free pie crusts are more likely to break and tear, but as you can't over-work the gluten, you can just patch things back together without worrying. The longer you can chill this, the less likely it is to tear.

Roll the dough out between two pieces of plastic wrap/parchment/waxed paper dusted with flour.

For easy transferring, peel off the top sheet of plastic/paper then invert your pie pan over the dough. Place one hand under the dough and plastic/paper and the other hand on the pan then flip the whole thing upside down. Once in the pan, peel off the other sheet of plastic/paper. Using the back of your hands, gently press/form the dough into the shape of the pan.

Fill and cover with a top crust if desired.

Chill the dough again for at least 15 minutes before baking it. Though the filling changes how long and possibly at what temperature you bake the pie, this crust tends to do well at 350° F. If the pie will be baked at a higher temperature or for a long time, you might need to use a "pie guard" or cover the exposed crust with foil.

blue buns

(makes about 12 buns) available at greenkitchenstories.com

You can substitute the brown rice flour and amaranth flour for a gluten free flour mixture or other gluten free flours; amaranth, millet, corn.

- 4 T psyllium seeds husks
- 2 t natural xylitol, honey or stevia
- a pinch of salt
- 25 g active yeast
- 3 3/4 C (9 dl) lukewarm water (or half vegetable juice and half water)
- 1 1/2 C (200 g) brown rice flour
- 1 1/2 C (200 g) amaranth flour
- 150 g mixed seeds (we used pumpkin, sesame, flax, sunflower)
- 75 g dried coconut flakes
- 1 t ground spice (cardamom, thyme or turmeric)
- 3 T blue poppy seeds, to sprinkle

Combine psyllium, natural xylitol, salt and yeast in bowl, add lukewarm water (and vegetable juice) and stir around until you get a gel like consistency. Measure all flours, seeds, coconut and spices and mix well.

Add the dry mixture to the gel and stir around with a spoon for a couple of minutes and then kneed it by hand.

Make 12 round buns and place them on a baking sheet covered with parchment paper. Sprinkle with the poppy seeds.

Let them rise for 30 minutes and bake them for 1 hour and 10 minutes at 350°F. Let them cool before serving. We always make two batches of bread and throw one in the freezer, for emergencies.

variations:

Sweet- Add 1 t cardamom, 2 t cinnamon, 1/4 C maple syrup, and 1/2 C raisins

Savory- Add 1 t thyme, 1/2 t oregano, and sun-dried tomatoes

cornbread stuffing (serves 6)

Two recipes in one! You can stop at the first part and eat cornbread, or continue on to make this tasty vegan and gluten-free stuffing.

cornbread

- 2 T ground chia + ½ C water
- 5 T coconut oil
- 1/2 C apple sauce
- 1 T vinegar
- 1 C water
- 1 ½ C medium ground cornmeal
- 1 ½ C almond meal
- 1 ½ t baking soda
- 2 T coconut sugar
- pinch of salt

Grind chia seeds and mix with water. Let sit until it becomes a gel, about 10 minutes.

Preheat oven to 325F. Stir all dry ingredients together in a large bowl. Melt coconut oil, add apple sauce, vinegar, water, and chia gel. Pour wet ingredients over dry and stir until uniform texture is achieved. Do not over mix.

Oil a 9x9 baking dish and coat with a pinch of cornmeal.

Bake for 30 minutes, turn heat up to 350F and bake for additional 30 minutes or until an inserted toothpick comes out cleanly. Take cornbread out of pan and cool on rack.

stuffing

- 3 T olive oil, separated
- 1 T Herbs de Provence
- 2 t poultry seasoning
- 2 cloves garlic
- 1 small red onion
- 1 rib celery
- 1 large carrot
- 1 C vegetable broth
- ½ C water

Preheat oven to 350F. Cut cooled cornbread into 1/2" cubes. Coat two cookie sheets with 1T olive oil each, place cubes on sheets and drizzle with additional olive oil. Bake until golden brown. About 12 minutes.

While cornbread toasts chop garlic, onion, celery, and carrots. Heat remaining 1T of olive oil in saute pan, add chopped vegetables. Saute until onion is translucent. Add vegetable broth, water, Herbs de Provence, and poultry seasoning. Simmer for 5-10 minutes. Add toasted cornbread, stir to combine.

'buttermilk' biscuits (makes 7-9)

These biscuits are chameleons. Serve as a side to dinner, or as breakfast under gravy and scallions the next morning. Add ½ t cinnamon for sweet, or ½ t rosemary for savory. Decisions, decisions.

- 2 C flour mix + more to flour surface
+ more as needed
- 3 T cornstarch
- 1½ t xanthan gum
- 1 T baking powder
- ½ t sea salt
- ⅓ C butter sub.
- ¾ C rice milk

Preheat oven to 450°F.

In a large bowl, whisk together the dry ingredients. Cut in the butter with a pastry cutter, fork, or your hands, until the dough resembles coarse crumbs. Make a well in the center and pour in the milk. Gently combine until you have a moist, sticky dough.

Generously flour your work surface. Mold the dough into a ball and turn onto floured surface. Roll around to incorporate more flour, then knead dough 6-10 times. Do not be afraid to add more flour as needed—you want a pliable dough that doesn't stick to the counter. Pat dough into a round disc about ½-inch thick.

Dip a glass cup or biscuit cutter in flour mix and cut out biscuits. Bake 10 min on an ungreased cookie sheet, until golden on the bottom.

Remove from the pan and serve.

rustic apple cake (makes one 9" round)

This delicate dessert is the perfect finish to a heavy meal. We recommend making two rounds, as appetites mysteriously stretch when the cake appears...

- butter and flour mix for the pan
- 1 med-large apple; any baking apple
- 2 flax eggs (2 T ground flax + 6 T water)
- ½ C canola oil
- 2 T brandy / apple juice
+ more as needed
- 1 C flour mix
- 2 T cornstarch
- ½ C + 3 T raw cane sugar
- ½ t xanthan gum
- 1½ t baking powder
- ½ C walnuts, chopped + more to garnish

Preheat oven to 325°F. Butter and flour a 9" spring form pan

Mix the flax eggs and refrigerate 15 min. While eggs set, whisk together the flour, cornstarch, xanthan, and baking powder. Core the apples; chop half of them, and slice the remaining half.

Scoop the eggs into a medium bowl. Whisk in the oil until consistency is even. Whisk in brandy/juice and sugar until creamy and smooth. Gradually stir dry ingredients into the wet. If everything's combined and it's thick, add brandy/juice by the T until creamy and smooth—you're shooting for a runny-sticky traditional cake batter consistency.

Stir in chopped apples and walnuts. Pour batter into prepared pan. Set remaining apples and walnuts on batter in your desired pattern, pressing slightly. Consider dusting the top with a pinch of cinnamon or nutmeg. Get creative!

Bake 50-60 min, until a toothpick comes out clean. Let cool 15 min, then remove spring form and serve—if using a round, serve in the pan, or else *carefully* remove with a spatula (frosting spatula works best).

easy cake base

(makes two 8" cakes) from the kitchen of Jess Zerbel

This simple cake base is a fabulous start to many flavors of cake. Try some of Jess' suggestions here, or experiment with your own.

basic cake

- 3 C brown rice flour
- ¼ C arrowroot powder
- 1 C sugar of choice (sucanat, cane, coconut)
- 2 t baking Soda
- 1 t salt
- 2 C coconut milk
- 2/3 C refined coconut oil
- ½ C water
- 2 t vanilla
- 1 T + 1 t vinegar

Preheat oven to 350°F. Oil or butter and dust with flour two 8" baking pans

Combine dry ingredients. Combine wet ingredients in separate bowl. Add wet ingredients to dry, stir until uniform texture is achieved, do not over mix.

Pour batter into pans. Check at 18 minutes, an inserted toothpick should come out cleanly. Or, line muffin tins, fill nearly to the top of each liner. Check at 15 minutes. Makes 18. Top with your favorite frosting.

A traditional butter cream frosting would be lovely on any of these. For a vegan option set 2 cans coconut milk in the refrigerator over night. Open cans gently, do not shake, skim the solid white coconut fat from the top of each can into a mixing bowl with 2 T (or to taste) powdered sugar or maple syrup, whip with an electric mixer until a light and desired texture is achieved.

Feel free to add vanilla, almond extract, cinnamon or cocoa powder where you would like.

variations:

Chai- Add 1 C shredded coconut, switch the refined coconut oil to unrefined (more coconut flavor!), add 2 t cinnamon and 1 t cardamom.

Mexican Chocolate- Add ¾ C cocoa powder + 2 T water, 2 t cinnamon, 1/8 t cayenne pepper.

Black Forest- Add ¾ C cocoa powder + 2 T water, switch the vanilla to almond extract, add ½ C chopped dried cherries.

peanut butter cookies

(makes 20-24)

Molasses and quality salt give these more depth than your standard peanut butter cookies. For something truly special, top with chopped dark chocolate. The oat and garbanzo flour mix is best for this recipe.

- 1 C raw cane sugar
- ½ C peanut butter
- ½ C vegetable shortening
- ¼ C unsweetened applesauce
- 2 T molasses
- 2 T rice milk
- 1½ C flour mix
- 3 T cornstarch
- ¾ t baking soda
- ½ t sea salt
- ½ t xanthan gum
- coarse finishing salt, to taste
(fleur de sel is perfect)

Preheat oven to 375°F.

Whisk the flour, cornstarch, baking soda, xanthan, and salt together.

In a separate bowl, with a mixer or whisk, blend the sugar and molasses. Add peanut butter, shortening, and milk, blending all the while. Beat in the applesauce until well-incorporated. Add the dry ingredients to wet, ½ C at a time, beating well after each addition.

Scoop the dough and roll into 1-inch balls. Consistency should be pliable but moist—if it sticks to your hands, add flour mix by the T until ideal consistency.

Place about 1 inch apart on an ungreased cookie sheet, and flatten gently with a fork to achieve the classic peanut butter cookie crisscross.

Sprinkle with finishing salt.

Bake 9-11 min, until light golden brown. Remove from baking sheet immediately, cool, and enjoy.

variation:

You can use any nut butter instead of peanut butter. Cashew butter is especially versatile, giving you the correct texture without a strong flavor. This allows you to add herbs, spices, and extracts to really change up the flavor of the cookies. You can also use the same amounts of honey or maple syrup in place of molasses, or sprinkle the cookies with sugar instead of finishing salt.

zimtsterne

recipe available at www.mytaste.com/click/index/2695620/?site=food.com

This classic German Christmas cookie is actually rooted in Jewish traditions, and is usually served at Yom Kippur, which is why many pictures of the cookie show it as a Star of David. The dough is frosted, cut into stars and then baked. To make it simpler, you can frost the dough and then cut the sheet into diamonds.

You will notice these measurements are by weight and not by volume. In Europe, as well as in professional US bakeries, it is standard to use weight and not volume for measurements. Everyone may scoop out a different amount of flour with a measuring cup, but 10 oz of flour is the same every time, making this a more accurate way to bake.



Another European/US difference is the use of caster sugar, a super-fine sugar that can be hard to find in the US. In this recipe you are able to substitute with powdered sugar, though that may not work for every recipe.

dough

- 300g (10.6 oz) finely ground almonds or almond meal
- 100 g (3.5 oz) caster sugar or powdered sugar
- 50 g (1.75 oz) rice flour
- 3 t cinnamon
- 1 T lemon zest
- 2 egg whites

glaze

- 1 egg white
- 1 dash salt
- 200g (7 oz) caster sugar or powdered sugar
- milk, 1-3 T

If you are working with whole almonds, grind them in a food processor until finely ground. You can leave some bigger pieces if you want the texture.

In a bowl, mix dry ingredients and lemon zest for dough. Add egg whites and knead until a sticky dough is formed. Wrap with plastic wrap and put into the fridge for at least an hour, even 2-4 hours.

Near the end of the cooling time preheat the oven to 325° and make meringue glaze.

To make the glaze, beat egg white with salt until stiff. While still beating, add sugar a little at a time to make meringue. Milk should be added a little at a time to get the right consistency. The glaze should be creamy enough to spread on the cookie but not so runny that it will slide off.

Line baking trays with parchment paper. Take dough from the fridge and roll it out between layers of parchment paper or cling wrap. The dough should be 1/3" thick.

Line baking sheets with parchment paper.

Using a star-shaped cutter cut out cookies and place them on the baking tray. Using a brush, spread meringue glaze on the cookies.

Bake the cookies for about 10 - 12 minutes. Watch them carefully, because the meringue should not be browned.

Take them out and let cool completely. Store them in airtight container. The cookies are known for getting even better in storage.

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