



GLUTEN  
INTOLERANCE  
GROUP



# Gluten-Free Cooking & Baking Hacks

*Updated January 2019*

The kitchen can mean something different to everyone. It can serve as a main stage where the production of sustenance plays out several times a day. It can be the place to go for winding down, for comfort and warmth. When the body requires a change in the type of foods consumed, the kitchen can turn into a mystery of uncharted territory. With celiac disease and gluten-related disorders, those question marks take some time, energy, and experimenting to clear up. When some familiar, favorite recipes are no longer an option, it is important to explore alternatives. After all, the kitchen can be a laboratory, speckled with the presence of successful dishes that build up your cooking repertoire, provide the priceless pleasure of culinary accomplishment, and keep your body strong and functioning optimally.

Since a gluten-free diet is currently the only treatment for gluten-related disorders, removing gluten from the diet is essential for recovery and maintenance of health. Below are some hassle-free hacks to incorporate gluten-free cooking and baking into your life.

- **Label literacy** - When choosing ingredients, know your labels. When a product is not certified or labeled gluten-free, it will require more looking into. Find more information on label reading here: <https://gluten.org/resources/getting-started/label-reading/>
- Build up a collection of **reliable resources** that meet your needs and tastes. Try to find **cookbooks** or **blogs** with recipes that have **flavor and quality** you can count on. When possible, **read other users' reviews** to see how the recipe turned out for others.
- Customize **your space** - Create a go-to **pantry** area by designating an easily accessible space to keep your most-used, gluten-free ingredients on hand for cooking and baking.
- Find **support** in the ways that feel best to you (groups, friends, apps, cookbooks, etc.). While the kitchen can be a grounding place to be alone, it doesn't have to feel lonely.
- Try **new things** - Many cuisines can be largely without gluten while still being full of flavor. [Thai](#), [Ethiopian](#), and [Middle Eastern](#) cuisines have many options for gluten-free meals. (Always confirm gluten-free status of ingredients.) Don't be afraid to expand your culinary horizons!
- **Trial & error** - Treat the first time you make a recipe as an **experiment**. Make something once or twice before giving it as a gift or bringing it to a party.
- **Double or triple a trusted recipe** and store it in the **freezer** for quick thawing out on a fast-paced day. Future you will thank present you!

- Know your gluten-free whole **grains** - (Rice, millet, quinoa, amaranth, buckwheat, certified GF oats, etc.) For extra flavor, instead of using water, try cooking your grain of choice in broth with a pinch of salt for savory dishes or cook them in coconut milk for sweeter dishes. Keep a few servings of a pre-cooked whole grain of your choice in the refrigerator to add to dishes in a pinch. For example, a batch of brown rice can be added to any meal (with berries for breakfast, in a stir fry for lunch).
- Different gluten-free flours have **different functions** - While there are many gluten-free substitutes for wheat flour, they can function differently depending on the recipe. Some gluten-free flour blends can be substituted for wheat flour on a 1:1 ratio, but that is not the case for all. Use resources (cookbooks, blogs, etc.) to find recommendations for substitutions that have worked for others making a similar recipe. Experiment to find what works best for you.
- Get **creative** - If you are baking and your recipe did not turn out the way you'd hoped, try **transforming** it into something else! For example, if your gingersnap cookies turned out crispy instead of chewy, use them for a gingersnap crust. If at any point frustration is what you're feeling, **take a moment to feel it**. This is a learning process and will take **time and energy** to get it right.
- Keep a **notebook** - By documenting your baking successes and fails as you go along, over time you'll develop your own go-to guide that you may even share with others someday. Make note of any modifications you've made along the way for easier duplication.
- Take a **photo** - If you like looking back on recipes you've accomplished, a photo is a great way to **capture that memory**. Share it on social media if you want to let the world know you're building (and tasting) new skills! Feel free to share with/tag GIG, we would love to see your creations!

By incorporating hacks like these into your repertoire, a whole world of gluten-free flavorful cooking and baking will be at your fingertips in no time! On the next page is a recipe for mushroom gravy to get you started.

## **Mushroom Gravy**

*Looking for a gravy recipe that is easy to make, gluten-free, and almost absurdly delicious? Look no further. This mushroom gravy can accompany a holiday meal or can even go atop biscuits for a hearty morning breakfast. While most gluten-free thickening agents can work, cornstarch or arrowroot starch provide a more traditional consistency that will heat up well for leftovers.*

4-6 medium-sized organic cremini mushrooms, cleaned of debris with a moist paper towel  
2-3 tablespoons butter or avocado oil  
1 teaspoon dried thyme  
2 tablespoons thickening agent of choice (cornstarch or arrowroot starch are preferable)  
½ teaspoon salt  
1 cup broth, vegetable or chicken  
salt and Pepper, to taste

Chop mushrooms or run through the food processor until finely diced. Warm oil in a medium sized skillet placed over medium heat. Once oil is hot, add mushrooms. Keep over the heat until mushrooms have cooked through, 5-7 minutes, stirring occasionally. Sprinkle thickening agent and stir, allowing mushrooms to be thoroughly coated and the oil has soaked up any remaining powder. Add salt. Gradually pour in broth while constantly stirring. Continue to stir until the gravy begins to thicken, about 5 minutes. Taste, add more salt and pepper as needed.

Cook time: 10 minutes  
Yields: 1 cup

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Other helpful information is available at [www.GLUTEN.org](http://www.GLUTEN.org).

Advances in celiac disease are fast-paced. If this document is more than 2 years old, please visit our website for updated documents.

This information should not be used to diagnose or treat gluten-related disorders or other medical conditions. For questions about these conditions consult your healthcare team when considering this information.

Please consider your local GIG support group as another resource.

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The Mission of the Gluten Intolerance Group is to empower the gluten-free community through consumer support, advocacy, and education.

To make a donation or become a volunteer to GIG, visit our website or call the office at 253-833-6655.

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*This article has been assessed and approved by a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist.*