

## Top Ten Essential Items to Have in a Gluten Free Pantry

- 1) **White or Brown Rice Flour, Millet Flour, Sorghum Flour, and Garfava Flour** – These flours can be used separately or in combination with other flours to make Gluten Free Flour Blends. The blending of several different gluten free flours is a key concept in gluten free baking. Each flour has its own distinct taste, properties and will react differently from each other when used in a recipe. Having these flours on hand will prove to be beneficial in making many of the Gluten Free Flour Blends which are frequently used for baking gluten free.
- 2) **Cornstarch, Potato Starch and Tapioca Starch** – These starches are vital to gluten free baking. When added to a Gluten Free Flour Blend the starch helps to produce a better flavor and texture in a gluten free baked good. They have very little nutritional value or taste but yet are found to be an indispensable ingredient in successful gluten free baking. Even though each starch has its own distinct baking attributes, many times they can be interchanged with each other in recipes if necessary.
- 3) **Dry Active Yeast** - This is an essential ingredient for baking many Gluten Free breads. Purchase the Dry Active variety rather than the Bread Machine or Quick Rise variety. The Bread Machine and Quick Rise varieties are not always conducive to Gluten Free baking or recipes therefore it may hinder you from achieving good results. Another tip is to always check the package date for freshness.
- 4) **Xanthan Gum or Guar Gum** – Not only are these two products used in gluten free baking but also in many traditional food items. Their use in a recipe can have many purposes. When added to gluten free baked goods they can help to bind, stabilize, emulsify, thicken, lend structure or suspension. Even though they are frequently substituted for each other, each has its own benefits when used in a recipe. Although many times in gluten free baking a gum is a necessary ingredient, contrary to popular belief not every recipe must contain it.
- 5) **White Sugar, Brown Sugar & Powdered Sugar** – Sugar is an integral ingredient for baking whether Gluten Free or not. Sugar is needed for yeast to ferment which is vital for bread to rise. It is used for sweetening and to enhance flavor but another very important role usually not thought about is the bulk that it adds to a recipe. This bulk helps incorporate air into batters during the creaming process. Sugar also helps baked items produce color. Powdered sugar also known as Confectioners Sugar or 10X Sugar can be a hidden source of gluten so it is very important to check the ingredient label before purchase.

- 6) **Sweet Rice Flour, Potato Flour, And Almond Meal** – Here are a few more items which should be thought of as standard fare for a gluten free pantry. Most can be bought and kept in smaller quantities than the previous flours and starches. Except on occasion, each of these are most often used in small amounts within a recipe. Even though the amount may seem insignificant in relationship to the recipe's other ingredients a successful outcome can be dependent on it being added in.
- 7) **Baking Powder and Baking Soda** – If you plan on doing any type of Gluten Free baking these two items are a must. They are both chemical leaveners. Baking powder does not need an acidic ingredient to release its leavening power whereas baking soda does but in some recipes, depending on the amount of acidic ingredients, a combination of both is used. Double-acting baking powder begins releasing carbon dioxide as soon as it is moistened, and again when heated in the oven. There are several aluminum-free brands of baking powders if this is important to you as well.
- 8) **Unflavored Gelatin** – This is an ingredient that is used frequently in gluten free baking. It can be used as a binder, a thickener, an alternative to gums, an egg substitute when mixed correctly with water or it can be used to add much needed protein to some recipes such as in gluten free bread. If necessary, it usually can be eliminated from a recipe but it does aid in providing texture, structure and elasticity for overall better results.
- 9) **Ener-G Egg Replacer** – This is another ingredient that is used frequently in Gluten Free baking. It usually acts as a leavening agent in a recipe that already includes eggs. It adds extra leavening without adding extra moisture. Because Gluten Free baked goods lack gluten they sometimes need the extra leavening boost from the egg replacer. Not all brands of egg replacers are Gluten Free so be sure to read the label.
- 10) **Buckwheat Flakes and/or Quinoa Flakes** – Knowing there are many people that are unable to or choose not to consume oatmeal these flakes can be used as a substitution. Both of these Gluten Free grains are sold in many different forms but it is the oatmeal-style flakes which respond best and are interchangeable in recipes originally made with oatmeal. Both have a pleasant taste and nutritional values which should be appreciated and taken advantage of in a Gluten Free diet.