



NUTTY IDEAS FOR GLUTEN-FREE BAKING

Discovering the Taste, Texture and Functionality of Tree-Nut Ingredients



From indulgent fudge cake to better-for-you breakfast muffins, consumers are demanding more and better-tasting gluten-free foods.

The challenge when making gluten-free baked goods is the loss of structure, volume and texture when wheat is removed from a formula. As product developers have worked to create appealing gluten-free products, great progress has been made in creating gluten-free baked goods that are just as delicious as their traditional counterparts. Using nut ingredients helps address some of the technical challenges of gluten-free baking while boosting the nutritional profile of gluten-free foods. Tree-nut ingredients such as nut flours, nut butters and nut pastes offer unique opportunities to create flavorful and more appealing gluten-free baked goods.

In this fact sheet, we share with you some insights on working with nut ingredients in gluten-free baking along with several formulas that demonstrate these ideas.

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Nutty Ideas ...

You'll be amazed by the versatility of tree-nut ingredients and how they add flavor, functionality and nutritional value to gluten-free baked goods. We've identified several application strategies that we would like to share with you. Nut flours, nut butters, nut pastes and other forms of tree-nut ingredients improve the taste and the texture of gluten-free baked goods, giving them a healthy halo that keeps customers craving more.

Nut Flour as a Wheat Flour Substitute

One of the more adaptable ingredients for gluten-free baking is nut flour.

- Nut flours made from almonds, cashews, hazelnuts, pecans and walnuts, as well as from peanuts, are some of the most adaptable ingredients for gluten-free baking.
- Finely ground nut flours add a delicate flavor to gluten-free formulas and are an excellent source of fiber, protein and “good” fats.
- Unlike some gluten-free flour substitutes, which can be gritty, finely milled nut flours have a smooth, buttery mouthfeel.
- Nut flours have some of the water-binding properties found in wheat flour. This makes finely ground nuts a good moisture barrier between the filling and the crust in fruit pies and tarts. (A thin layer of finely ground nuts sprinkled over pie dough before the fruit is added helps absorb fruit juices before they penetrate the pie crust.) And naturally occurring oils present in nut flours contribute to a tender, moist product.
- Nut flours and nut meals work as thickeners in creams and fillings where wheat flour would normally be used.
- In most sponge cake formulas, finely milled blanched almond flour can be substituted one for one for wheat flour.

Nut Flours Improve Gluten-Free Flour Blends

Bakers often need a combination of ingredients to replace the flavor and function of wheat flour when baking gluten-free products. Manufacturers offer various gluten-free flour blends for this purpose. Here are some tips on working with nut products in combination with these gluten-free blends.

- Tree nuts are good sources of unsaturated fat. Almonds, pistachios and walnuts are high in linolenic acid, plant sources of beneficial omega 3 oils. Using nut flour or ground nuts along with gluten-free flour blends enhances the health profile, flavor, texture and appearance in gluten-free baked goods.
- The flavors of skin-on almonds and hazelnuts compliment the taste of whole grains such as buckwheat and millet, which are often used in gluten-free formulas.
- In crackers, nut flours or coarser nut meals add both flavor and a pleasing crispness.
- Nut meals or finely granulated nuts improve mouth feel and add chewiness. These characteristics help balance any gumminess in a gluten-free formula.

The Toasty Notes in Nut Butters Harmonize Gluten-Free Flavors

- Deeply roasted nut butter adds a rich flavor component and also helps to compensate for the bland taste of some gluten-free blends. Nut butters work especially well to add flavor in brownies, bar cookies, hermits, soft gingerbread and molasses cookies.

Many Classic Baked Goods Made from Tree-Nut Ingredients are Naturally Gluten-Free.

Macarons (French Almond Macaroons) - These delectable cookies resemble tender, nutty meringues sandwiched with a creamy filling. Ubiquitous in France, macarons are now almost as popular as cupcakes in many parts of this country. Classically they are made with blanched almond flour but pistachio flour and hazelnut flour formulas are also popular.

Italian Macaroons, Pignoli Cookies, Rustic Macaroons and Amaretti– Italian cookies rely on ground nuts for substance and flavor. Chewy Italian-style macaroons, made from Almond Paste, Macaroon Paste or Kernel Paste have many fans as do their cousins, the pine-nut covered pignoli cookies. Amaretti cookies, made with Kernel Paste, are an addictive sweet with a long shelf-life because they are dried thoroughly during baking.

Nutty Meringues – Crisp and crunchy meringues made with ground hazelnut or walnut flour are an earthy treat. They keep well and are easily packaged.

Nut Butter Clusters- Upscale versions of the “Rice Krispies Treat” are gaining in popularity. Use puffed rice or other gluten-free cereal and bind it with caramel syrup or marshmallow. Roasted nut butter, in addition to dairy butter, adds richness and toasted caramel notes.

Click on the Links for these Gluten-Free Recipes:

Formulas for Professional Bakers

[Lemon Chiffon Cake](#)
[Clementine and Almond Cake](#)
[Brutti ma Buoni, Ugly but Good Hazelnut Cookies](#)
[Chocolate Earthquake Cookies](#)
[Hermit Cookies](#)
[Apricot, Almond & Orange California Bars](#)
[Walnut Fudge Brownies](#)
[French-Style Almond Macaroons](#)
[Rustic Macaroons, Sicilian Style](#)
[Chocolate Coconut Macaroon Cookies](#)
[Almond Krispy Rice Treats](#)

Recipes for Home Bakers

[Springtime Almond Sponge](#)
[Clementine and Almond Cake](#)
[Brutti ma Buoni, Ugly but Good Hazelnut Cookies](#)
[Chocolate Earthquake Cookies](#)
[Hermit Cookies](#)
[Flourless Carrot Cake, Cream Cheese Icing Fudge Brownies](#)
[French-Style Almond Macaroons](#)
[Rustic Macaroons, Sicilian Style](#)
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