



# contents

How to Bake with this Book **pg. 2**  
Why Using a Scale will Transform Your Baking **pg. 6**

Breakfast: Doughnuts, Pancakes & Quickbreads **pg. 9**

Cakes & Tortes **pg. 47**

Cookies & Bars **pg. 87**

Fillings & Sauces **pg. 129**

Glazes, Icings & Toppings **pg. 149**

Sweet Pies & Pastries **pg. 161**

Glossary of Terms **pg. 205**

## Appendices

*Appendix A: gluten-free flour mixes* **pg. 209**

*Appendix B: conversions, calculations & equivalents* **pg. 211**

*Appendix C: equipment substitutions & techniques* **pg. 213**

*Appendix D: ingredient substitutions* **pg. 221**

Index **pg. 227**

Acknowledgments **pg. 233**

# how to bake with this book

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**“Cooking is like love, it should be entered into with abandon or not at all.” - Julia Child**

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All the recipes in this book are gluten-free and wheat-free. In addition, many are dairy-free; some are grain-free, sugar-free and vegan.

Each ingredient was methodically selected and tested to aid texture, extend shelf-life and develop flavour.

Show of hands, have you ever started a recipe only to get halfway through and find out you are missing a very key ingredient or piece of equipment? Maybe, *you* didn't put your hand up, but mine is up sky-high. If this has been you once, or perpetually, your secret is safe with me.

My point is simple:

**Read a recipe from start to finish before beginning it and you won't be caught by surprise.**

Additionally, always try a recipe as written before swapping out ingredients, except for suggested variations, and never substitute multiple items at a time. For best result use the freshest ingredients. Because the quality of

ingredients varies in flavour, consequently each dish will vary slightly. Shop smart by talking to your vendor, for further insight, and remembering that big price tags do not inherently equal quality.

Have you noticed how gluten-free flours tend to be gritty and coarse? If you have not, rub some all-purpose flour between your fingertips and do the same with a couple of gluten-free flours.

I am just going to pause here while you go and do that... Wasn't that a huge textural contrast?

You can begin to improve this texture by trying the various gluten-free flour brands available, some are more refined than others. Chef/Instructor and friend Alan Watt gave me the great advice to

**pulse your gluten-free flours in a food processor to do your own flour refining.**

Um, but a word to the wise, cover your processor with a large tea towel, unless you like

<sup>1</sup>see glossary, page 205 | <sup>2</sup>see flour mixes appendix A, page 209 | <sup>3</sup>see conversions appendix B, page 211  
<sup>4</sup>see equipment substitutions appendix C, page 213 | <sup>5</sup>see ingredient substitutions appendix D, page 221

flour wafting through your nice clean kitchen.

## TIME TO TALK ABOUT MUST-HAVE KITCHEN TOOLS & TOYS

**SHARP CHEF'S KNIFE AND VEGETABLE PEELER:** These are essential for every kitchen. Sharp knives are safer knives!

**STAND MIXER:** I use a stand mixer for almost all recipes, sweet and savoury. It is an essential tool in my kitchen, and if you love to bake, you should own one! If you do not bake often, you can get by with a handheld mixer or just beat by hand; the latter will give your biceps a terrific workout!

**RIMMED BAKING SHEETS:** Also called sheetpans. Used for everything from baking cookies to roasting veggies, these are also a must-have. You probably want to have more than one on hand.

**HIGH-SPEED BLENDER OR FOOD PROCESSOR:** I use both my blender and food processor almost daily to purée soup, make a smoothie or blitz dough. A mini food processor will do the trick, you can work in batches as needed, but I find my full-size one more efficient.

**ELECTRIC KITCHEN SCALE:** A cheap investment that will pay off in delicious gluten-free baked goods. I rarely measure using measuring spoons and cups. I typically use my scale or purely measure by eye. I recommend following any baking recipe to the 'T' the first few times

you make it. The raw texture of these gluten-free recipes is different than the typical glutenous recipes you may be familiar with or even different from other gluten-free recipes you have tried. Just as bread flour differs in characteristics from rye flour, so does one gluten-free flour differ from another. See page 5 for more information on the weighty benefits of weighing out ingredients.

## WHAT TO BUY & WHAT NOT TO BUY THAT IS THE QUESTION

**WHAT NOT TO BUY:** Gluten finds itself in the following grains: wheat, barley and rye.

Common derivatives of those grains are:

**BARLEY:** barley flour, malt, malt syrup and malt vinegar.

**WHEAT:** all-purpose flour; besan flour; bran; bread crumbs; bread flour; bulgur; cake and pastry flour; cracked wheat flour; durum; enriched flour; farina; farro; fu (wheat gluten); gluten flour; graham flour; hard flour; kamut; phosphated flour; pizza '00' flour; self-rising flour; semolina; spelt flour; triticale; triticum; wheat flour; wheat germ; white flour and whole wheat flour.

**RYE:** beer, rye flour, whiskey and some vodkas.

**OTHER COMMON HIDING PLACES FOR WHEAT\*:** baking powder; hydrolyzed vegetable protein (hvp), monosodium glutamate, non-certified

<sup>1</sup>see glossary, page 205 | <sup>2</sup>see flour mixes appendix A, page 209 | <sup>3</sup>see conversions appendix B, page 211

<sup>4</sup>see equipment substitutions appendix C, page 213 | <sup>5</sup>see ingredient substitutions appendix D, page 221

oats, spices, powdered seasonings, sauce mixes (including some everyday condiments), soy sauce, prepared soup and bulk bins.

*\*Note: all the items in this list do not inherently contain wheat/gluten but often do.*

## NOW THAT YOU'RE WARNED, HERE'S WHAT TO BUY.

While we find gluten in so many products there are many more free of it. However, most, if not all gluten-free flours/starches should be used in combination with others for best results.

HERE'S AN EXHAUSTIVE LIST OF GLUTEN-FREE GRAINS, FLOURS AND THE LIKE: agar; almond flour; almond meal; amaranth flour; arrowroot starch/flour; bean flour; buckwheat flour, light and dark; brown rice flour; cassava flour; coconut flour; cornflour; cornstarch; chia seed; chickpea flour; flaxseed; glutinous rice flour; kasha, which is toasted buckwheat; lentil flour; maca root; masa; millet flour; mung bean starch; nut meal/flour; oat flour, certified gluten-free; polenta; potato starch; potato flour; psyllium husk; quinoa flour; soy flour, although I do not recommend it for other health reasons; sorghum flour; sweet potato flour; sweet rice flour; tapioca starch/flour; teff flour; white rice flour; wheat starch, all gluten has been stripped from the starch; xanthan gum, see the article on page 11; yam flour and yuca flour.

## WHAT KEY PANTRY ITEMS WILL YOU BE NEEDING?

**BROWN RICE FLOUR:** Despite being perhaps one of the most widely used gluten-free flours on the market, brown rice flour should not be used as a direct cup-for-cup flour substitute. Left as the solo grain, your product will be dry and gritty. What is worse, it will grow exponentially drier in a matter of a day.

Nevertheless, we do not discard brown rice as a valuable player in the field of gluten-free baking. No, he just needs a soul mate. Let me introduce arrowroot starch...

**ARROWROOT STARCH:** This starch provides a moderate stretch, chew and a lighter texture to baked goods. As a starch, it is nutritionally deficient on its own; so, I like to pair it with brown rice flour as opposed to white rice flour, which has much of the fibre and protein stripped out of it.

**SWEET (GLUTINOUS) RICE FLOUR:** This is a sort of middle ground between flour and starch. It has the body flour provides and the stretch starch provides. Again, I still caution against using it as a cup-for-cup flour substitute. Think of it as the baby of Papa Brown Rice and Mama Arrowroot, it is still highly dependent on its parents and they grow stronger together because of the bond with their child.

<sup>1</sup>see glossary, page 205 | <sup>2</sup>see flour mixes appendix A, page 209 | <sup>3</sup>see conversions appendix B, page 211

<sup>4</sup>see equipment substitutions appendix C, page 213 | <sup>5</sup>see ingredient substitutions appendix D, page 221

**ALMOND FLOUR:** In a few recipes I replace brown rice flour with almond flour, but do not be fooled, they are very different flours. Almond flour is made from blanched almonds which have been ground. I use it largely to add fibre and protein to recipes. Almond flour has little to no binding qualities so when combined with other flour it is always the weaker partner but valued highly for its nutritive value. It can be used as a portion of the flour, largely in recipes where other thickeners are relied on.

As an aside: there is a difference between almond flour and almond meal. Almond flour is said to be made from blanched almonds and is softer and more flour-like, whereas almond meal is made from raw ground-up almonds and has a bit more texture. The industry tends to use labels interchangeably so it is extremely hard to know which one you are buying from the label alone. The texture and weight can be clues as to which you are buying. The flour version is lighter and finer than the meal. If it helps, think of flours as being delicate and meals as being hearty.

**PSYLLIUM HUSK POWDER:** As a pure fibre, this little powder sops up all the extra moisture

gluten normally would. However, gluten is a protein which uses the liquid to form bonds with itself, whereas, psyllium is a fibre which merely sponges up the liquid. Coupled with gums and/or starches this shortcoming can be partly overcome.

**DOUBLE-ACTING BAKING POWDER:** Anytime you find baking powder in a recipe in this book, assume it is double-acting baking powder.

**GOAT MILK:** You will notice I use goat's milk in many of my recipes; this is for two reasons. One, it is much better for the human digestive system than cow's milk. Two, twenty-five percent of the adult population is lactose intolerant. Of that percentage, most still tolerate goat dairy products. Where milk is generically mentioned, you can count on the fact in my kitchen I would be reaching for goat's milk. In most recipes, you can substitute your favourite dairy-free alternative. However, they do not have the same kinds of proteins (just like rice flour lacks the binding qualities of the protein gluten), so, particularly in bread, you will find degraded quality.

<sup>1</sup>see glossary, page 205 | <sup>2</sup>see flour mixes appendix A, page 209 | <sup>3</sup>see conversions appendix B, page 211  
<sup>4</sup>see equipment substitutions appendix C, page 213 | <sup>5</sup>see ingredient substitutions appendix D, page 221

# index

## A

almond waffles, 14  
angel food cake, 79

### apples

apple coffee cake, 53  
apple fritters, 15  
apple pie, 168

### apricot

apricot-vanilla jam, 136  
Eastern European kołaczki, 107  
Linzertorte, 188  
artichoke pesto, 143

## B

baklava, 171

### banana

banana brownies, 105  
banana chocolate chip cookies, 94  
banana cream tarts, 173  
banana pastry cream, 145  
basic banana muffins, 17

bars, see squares

blackcurrant Earl Grey compote, 137

blintzes, buckwheat, 21

blueberry muffins, 20

### brownies

ain't greenin' ya brownies, 105  
banana brownies, 105  
decadent brownies, 105  
red velvet brownies, 105  
buckwheat blintzes with baked egg, 21  
buckwheat pancakes, 25  
buttercream, see frosting  
butter tarts, no sugar added, 173

## C

### cakes

angel food cake, 79  
apple coffee cake, 53

carrot cake, 56  
cherry goat cheesecake, 57  
chocolate cake, high ratio, 73  
chiffon cake, vanilla, 83  
Christmas fruit cake, dark, 62  
Christmas fruit cake, light, 64  
citrus pound cake, 65  
coconut butter cake, 60  
cupcakes, ultimate chocolate, 82  
date-walnut protein cake, 67  
flourless sour cherry cake, 72  
high ratio chocolate cake, 73  
honey cake, sour cream, 78  
passion fruit opera torte, 75  
sour cream honey cake, 78  
strawberry shortcake, 79  
ultimate chocolate cupcakes, 82  
vanilla chiffon cake, 83

### Canadian cuisine

maple bacon granola, 38  
maple icing, 159  
Nanaimo bars, 122  
sugar-free date butter tarts, 198

canning, 135

carrot cake doughnuts, 28

celiac disease, 3

chai tea whipped ganache, 153

### cherry

cherry Danish filling, 138  
cherry goat-cheesecake, 57  
cherry pie filling, with cinnamon, 138  
cinnamon cherry Dutch baby, 29  
flourless sour cherry cake, 128

### chocolate

ain't greenin' ya brownies, 105  
banana brownies, 105  
banana chocolate chip cookies, 94  
chocolate chip cookies, 95  
chocolate cookie crust, 59  
decadent brownies, 105  
high ratio chocolate cake, 73

<sup>1</sup>see glossary, page 205 | <sup>2</sup>see flour mixes appendix A, page 209 | <sup>3</sup>see conversions appendix B, page 211

<sup>4</sup>see equipment substitutions appendix C, page 213 | <sup>5</sup>see ingredient substitutions appendix D, page 221

Nanaimo bars, 122  
 red velvet brownies, 105  
 ultimate chocolate cupcakes, 82  
 yum (for short), salted double chocolate cookies, 128  
 choux pastry, 178  
**Christmas**  
 Christmas fruit cake, dark, 62  
 Christmas fruit cake, light, 64  
 Eastern European kołaczki, 107  
 gingerbread cookies, 112  
**cinnamon**  
 cinnamon cherry Dutch baby, 29  
 cinnamon yeasted doughnuts, mini, 40  
 citrus pound cake, 65  
 cocounut butterless-cream frosting, 154  
 coconut macarons, 97  
**cookies**  
 banana chocolate chip cookies, 94  
 chocolate cookies, 128  
 chocolate chip cookies, 95  
 chocolate cookie crust, 59  
 coconut macarons, 97  
 cut out cookies, 100  
 double chocolate cookies, 128  
 Eastern European kołaczki, 107  
 gingerbread cookies, 112  
 ginger-cranberry cookies, 114  
 gluten-free “graham” crackers, 110  
 lavender shortbread, 118  
 macarons, coconut, 97  
 sugar cookies, see cut out cookies  
 Tato’s oatmeal cookies, 126  
 yum (for short), 128  
 crêpes with Meyer lemon cottage cheese, 31  
**curd**  
 lemon curd, 147  
 master curd/pastry cream instructions, 144

## D

### dairy-free

almond waffles, 14  
 apple coffee cake, 79  
 apple fritters, 15  
 banana chocolate chip cookies, 105  
 banana cream tarts, 173  
 banana pastry cream, 145  
 basic banana muffins, 17  
 blueberry muffins, 20  
 buckwheat blintzes with baked egg, 21  
 carrot cake, 56  
 carrot cake doughnuts, 28  
 Christmas fruit cake, dark, 62  
 Christmas fruit cake, light, 64  
 chocolate chip cookies, 95  
 chocolate cookie crust, 59  
 cocounut butterless-cream frosting, 154  
 coconut macarons, 97  
 cut out cookies, 100  
 date squares, 104  
 Earl Grey royal icing, 154  
 ginger-cranberry cookies, 114  
 gluten-free ‘graham’ crackers, 110  
 lavender shortbread, 118  
 lemon-rosemary loaf, 35  
 Linzertorte, 188  
 honey-lemon squares, 115  
 maple icing, 159  
 Nanaimo bars, 122  
 passion fruit opera torte, 75  
 pumpkin pecan muffins, 43  
 quinoa puff granola bars, 123  
 rosemary glaze, 159  
 rose water royal icing, 159  
 sugar-free date butter tarts, 198  
 Tato’s oatmeal cookies, 126  
 ultimate chocolate cupcakes, 82  
 vanilla chiffon cake, 183  
 zucchini-almond flourless muffins, 46  
 Danishes, 179  
**dates**

<sup>1</sup>see glossary, page 205 | <sup>2</sup>see flour mixes appendix A, page 209 | <sup>3</sup>see conversions appendix B, page 211

<sup>4</sup>see equipment substitutions appendix C, page 213 | <sup>5</sup>see ingredient substitutions appendix D, page 221

Christmas fruit cake, dark, 62  
Christmas fruit cake, light, 64  
date butter tart, no sugar added, 198  
date squares, 105  
date-walnut protein cake, 67

decadent brownies, 105

**diabetic**, all recipes in this book can be made diabetic by substituting sugar for one of the low glycemic substitutes mentioned on page 223 and by using a low-carb flour mix, such as gf almond pastry flour mix or gf bread flour mix on page 209

apple pie, 168  
cut out cookies, 100  
date-walnut protein cake, 67  
gluten-free ‘graham’ crackers, 110  
Nanaimo bars, 122  
flourless sour cherry cake, 72  
Tato’s oatmeal cookies, 126  
quinoa puff granola bars, 123  
zucchini-almond flourless muffins, 46

### **doughnuts**

apple fritters, 15  
carrot cake doughnuts, 28  
mini cinnamon yeasted doughnuts, 40  
dulce de leche pastry cream, 145  
Dutch baby, cinnamon cherry, 29

## **E**

Earl Grey royal icing, 158

### **Eastern European cuisine**

date-walnut protein cake, 67  
Eastern European kołaczki, 107  
honey sour cream cake, 67  
Linzertore, 188  
whipped sour cream, 79

Eccles, petite cakes, 190

### **English cuisine**

petite Eccles cakes, 190  
equipment, scales and measuring cups, 5  
equipment substitutions, 213  
Eastern European kołaczki, 107

## **F**

fibre, see source of fibre

flaky pie dough, 181

### **flourless**

coconut macarons, 97  
coconut butter cake, 60  
date-walnut protein cake, 67  
flourless sour cherry cake, 72  
Nanaimo bars, 122  
passion fruit opera torte, 75  
quinoa puff granola bars, 123  
zucchini-almond flourless muffins, 46

fritters, apple, 15

### **frosting**

coconut butterless-cream frosting, 154  
vegan cashew frosting, 160

## **G**

ganache, chai tea whipped, 153  
gingerbread cookies, 112  
ginger-cranberry cookies, 114  
glutenous grains, 3  
gluten-free “graham” crackers, 110  
gluten-free substitutes, 3  
“graham” crackers, gluten-free, 110

### **granola**

granola bars, quinoa puff, 123  
maple bacon granola, 38  
goat-cheesecake, cherry, 57

## **H**

high ratio chocolate cake, 73  
honey-lemon squares, 115  
how to cook with this cookbook, 2

### **Hungarian cuisine**

flourless sour cherry cake, 72  
Linzertorte, 188

## **I**

### **icing, also see frosting**

Earl Grey royal icing, 158  
maple icing, 159  
rosemary glaze, 159  
rose water royal icing, 159  
introduction, 2

## **J**

jams, see preserves

<sup>1</sup>see glossary, page 205 | <sup>2</sup>see flour mixes appendix A, page 209 | <sup>3</sup>see conversions appendix B, page 211

<sup>4</sup>see equipment substitutions appendix C, page 213 | <sup>5</sup>see ingredient substitutions appendix D, page 221

## K

### keto

- coconut butter cake, 60
- Nanaimo bars, 122
- kitchen tools, 6
- kołaczki, Eastern European, 107

## L

**lactose-free**, all recipes can be lactose-free by using lactose-free milk and lactose-free butter where regular is called for. For further dairy substitutions see page 221

lavender shortbread, 118

### lemon

- citrus pound cake, 65
- crêpes with Meyer lemon cottage cheese, 31
- lemon curd, 147
- lemon meringue tarts, 183
- lemon-rosemary loaf, 35
- honey-lemon squares, 115

Linzertorte, 188

**low glycemic**, all recipes in this book's glycemic index can be lowered by substituting sugar for one of the low glycemic substitutes mentioned on page 221 and by using a lower-carb flour mixes, such as gf almond flour mix and gf bread flour mix (page 209)

- almond waffles, 14
- apple coffee cake, 53
- basic banana muffins, 17
- blueberry muffins, 20
- coconut butter cake, 60
- date-walnut protein cake, 67
- gluten-free 'graham' crackers, 110
- Linzertorte, 188
- pumpkin pecan muffins, 43
- sugar-free date butter tarts, 198
- Tato's oatmeal cookies, 126
- ultimate chocolate cupcakes, 82
- zucchini-almond flourless muffins, 46

## M

macarons, coconut, 97

- maple bacon granola, 38
- maple icing, 159
- master canning procedure, 135
- master curd/pastry cream instructions, 144
- mealy, pie dough, 195
- measuring, 6
- mini cinnamon yeasted doughnuts, 40

### muffins

- basic banana muffins, 17
- blueberry muffins, 20
- pumpkin pecan muffins, 43
- zucchini-almond flourless muffins, 46

## N

Nanaimo bars, 122

## O

- oatmeal cookies, Tato's, 126
- oats, about, 90
- opera torte, passion fruit, 75

## P

- pancakes, 42
- passion fruit opera torte, 75
- passion fruit preserves, 199

### pastry cream

- banana pastry cream, 145
- dulce de leche pastry cream, 145
- pastry cream, instructions, 144
- vanilla-almond pastry cream, 144

pears, poached in red wine, 141

pesto, artichoke, 143

petite Eccles cakes, 190

### pie

- apple pie, 168
- flaky pie dough, 181
- pie dough, mealy, 195
- pumpkin pie, 196

plum butter, 140

poached strawberries, 79

pie dough, mealy, 195

pound cake, citrus, 65

puff pastry, 193

### pumpkin

- pumpkin pecan muffins, 43
- pumpkin pie, 196

<sup>1</sup>see glossary, page 205 | <sup>2</sup>see flour mixes appendix A, page 209 | <sup>3</sup>see conversions appendix B, page 211

<sup>4</sup>see equipment substitutions appendix C, page 213 | <sup>5</sup>see ingredient substitutions appendix D, page 221

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