

I am not intending these notes to be strict guidelines, nor necessarily the most accurate and up to date facts in regards to gluten-intolerance. I hope that my experiences thru the years will make this road a little easier to travel for newcomers to the GF way of life. I was highly motivated to eliminate gluten from my diet once I learned it was the source of 30 years of migraine headaches (and reaching a point of getting them once or twice a week average and lasting 3 days). I will never forget how difficult and seemingly 'impossible' GF seemed.

Gluten is a protein found in wheat, rye, and barley. Five years ago this list included oats. This summer I've learned that the "glutinous" protein in oats is molecularly *similar* to that in the other grains. This means that gluten-intolerant individuals **might** be able to eat oats. Because of the similar structures, some folks may still cross-react to oats (similarly like many folks who are allergic to peanuts cross-react to soy beans due to their similar structures). Another factor that might cause gluten-related reactions to oats is cross contamination that may occur if the oats have been processed in facilities that also process glutinous products.

I've learned I must read labels on absolutely *everything*. I would say that's my #1 rule. And don't assume prepared foods are safe. So I guess my #2 rule is if I don't know for certain what's in or not in it, I don't eat it (nothing is worth a 3-day migraine to me, even a few crumbs left from a crouton picked off a salad triggers a reaction in me). Gluten is used for numerous reasons and its application is pervasive in our culture. Some examples of unexpected foods that *may* contain 'hidden' gluten: cottage cheese, sour cream, yogurt, ice cream, seasoning mixes, canned beans, bacon, lunch or deli meats, sausage, rice noodles, corn bread, salad dressing, vinegar, soy sauce, potato chips, canned soups, candy, corn tortillas (sometimes have oats), rotisserie chickens from the grocery store, sodas (Mountain Dew!!!), and on and on. Bottom line: read the labels, even on products you've been using successfully (many times they change). And while on the topic of labels, I've noticed more food labels are beginning to identify if they're GF; and another help is that many food manufacturers have begun bolding or highlighting those ingredients that are common allergens, making label-reading much easier.

Following is a list of examples of what I generally look for in ingredients. This list is NOT complete nor is it comprehensive.

Wheat	Oats	Rye
Barley	Malt or malted	Modified food starch (that has not been specified must be assumed to be glutinous)
Hydrolyzed Vegetable Protein	Teriyaki (contains soy sauce)	Soy sauce (wheat is used in its processing)
Imitation Crab (contains wheat)	Flour (unless specified & known GF)	Vinegar (did it come from a glutinous grain)

Eating out.

- **In & Out:** Order your hamburger or cheeseburger "protein style" (no bun) and dry (no sauce, ketchup, or mustard). I always order grilled onions on mine. It comes "wrapped" in lettuce with a tomato slice. Their French fries are safe and not cross-contaminated. Their shakes are safe, too.
- **Outback:** Excellent for GF. Has become a favorite restaurant because they have a GF menu which makes eating out so much easier and risk free. Ask for their gluten-free menu and follow that. Most of their salad dressings are safe (I've been eating 'dry' salads when out for years!!!). Their BBQ sauce is GF (this summer was the first time I've been able to have BBQ sauce on anything since going GF). I felt like I was "eating normal" there.

- Applebee's: Not good. They cannot/willnot assure anything to be GF due to their continually changing suppliers and recipes.
- Maggiano's (at Santana Row): Excellent for GF. Once you let your server know, they send out the chef to work with you to figure out what you can/cannot have and determine how they'll modify things so you can have an enjoyable meal.
- IHOP (and other quick breakfast places). IHOP adds pancake batter to their scrambled eggs to fluff them up. I've gotten in the habit of ordering eggs that are NOT poached (notes on that further down) or scrambled, and not 'enhanced'.
- Slight change of location. Disneyland and DisneyWorld: both places have locations that serve GF. You need to get that information at the guest services. Our eating experiences there have been outstanding. In the sit-down restaurants, they send out the chef to work with you.
- Sushi has become a favorite of ours. Sushi-rice contains rice vinegar, no gluten. BUT, soy sauce is out. We take our own GF Soy Sauce with us (Tamari is a brand of soy sauce made without wheat).
- Other 'eating out' notes.
 - Anything fried: do they have a dedicated fryer where breaded or battered items are NOT fried. Cross contamination can be sneaky.
 - "Seasoned". Be careful. Many commercial seasoning mixes contain gluten. Same thing applies to commercial soup/stock mixes.
 - Any 'golden', 'crispy', 'breaded', 'gravy', 'fluffy' usually has gluten.
 - Ask about 'garnishes'. Many times breadcrumbs are used as a garnish.
 - Salads: no croutons. I also avoid pickles and peppers because of vinegar in their canning. Olives may be a gamble; some have vinegar, many do not.
 - Breakfasts are often a much easier meal to get GF and with less modifications.
 - At potlucks, when you've taken a dish to share that is safe for you: I've had occasions where I've not been able to eat my own dish because of cross-contamination by a serving utensil that had been previously used in an unsafe dish and then put in the GF dish.
 - My experience is most 'prepared' sauces are NOT GF.
 - Poached eggs: restaurants usually put vinegar in the water to help hold the eggs together. Chances are that is NOT GF vinegar.
 - Ketchup, Mustard, Mayonnaise, BBQ sauce typically contain vinegar.
 - Hash browns: many commercial hash browns have been treated to become a beautiful golden brown. These are NOT GF.
 - Cross Contamination and/or hidden gluten. Most reactions I've had through the years have been able to be traced back to either cross contamination or hidden glutens from when we've eaten away from home. Preparing all my own foods has been the most effective way to manage what I consume. But reality is I'd rather be doing other things than being in my kitchen all the time.
 - Prepared salad dressings: Oil and vinegar usually has vinegar I can't be sure of. 'Creamy' types of dressings usually contain gluten.

My husband created some web-pages for me a few years ago. These links are to those. You'll find a few informative quizzes, some general gluten notes, and some GF specialty brands and locations.

<http://www.mixed-up.com/markb/notebook/20041119b/>

<http://www.mixed-up.com/markb/notebook/20041201c/>

<http://www.mixed-up.com/mary/gf/>

<http://www.mixed-up.com/markb/notebook/20041208a/>

<http://www.mixed-up.com/markb/health/>

Our favorite gluten free brands:

- Kinnikinnick
- Ener-G
- Glutino
- Glutano
- Pamela's
- Amy's (not all are GF, but there are quite a bit that are)

Our favorite health food stores:

- Draeger's in Los Altos
- Van's in Livermore
- Harvest House in Concord
- Whole Foods (all over the place)
- Nob Hill & Raley's are carrying more GF foods (the one near our home has started carrying some specific GF items at our request).

Recently we've discovered a few GF condiments. These are relatively 'new' to us.

- Annie's brand now has a GF ketchup and mustard.

13Aug2007 additional notes:

- *Pasta? Look for Rice or Polenta (corn) pastas.*
- *Marinades (store bought in a bottle, pre-packaged marinated meats, in restaurants, etc): read the labels and/or ask your servers. Most marinades contain vinegar and its likely grain-based/glutinous. By experience I've learned that menus describing marinades with citrus fruits have a good chance of being safe, inquire further with your server. Or for home marinades, substitute citrus juices for vinegars.*
- *Distilled Vinegars: I've had friends tell me that if the label indicates it's been distilled that it should be safe. My personal reactions to vinegar are the worst, so I have not gone out of my way to 'test' this theory.*
- My 'favorite' GF bread is from Kinnikinnick, their Italian Tapioca Cheese Bread. It's the "closest" flavor and texture-wise to "normal" bread as I remember it. An additional note, most GF breads are far more 'palatable' if lightly toasted before making sandwiches. Kinnikinnick is manufactured in Canada. A small number of health food stores carry it. We pick it up when we're driving through Concord or another store in Vacaville. Note that you can order from Kinnikinnick over the internet. Overall their products are on the 'better side' of GF taste & textures. Their url is: www.kinnikinnick.com
- A celiac acquaintance highly recommended the following flour to us as a very decent 1:1 substitute of GF flour for wheat flour. Cookies and cakes have been very acceptable (even to friends who CAN have gluten). Montina All-Purpose Baking Flour Blend (made up of rice & tapioca flours). The url we purchased this flour through: <http://www.theglutenfreelifestyle.com/montina.html> (we have never seen this line of GF product in any stores, yet). I noticed I had not included this company in the list of online stores. While I was looking for 'where' we ordered this flour from, I found their home page appears to have potential as a rich resource for anybody trying to keep GF tasty, palatable, and inviting: www.theglutenfreelifestyle.com

- Ener-G, Glutano, and Glutino. All can be found here: www.glutenfree.com We love their pretzels. Some of their cookies are difficult to stop eating. They also have breakfast bars (we like to carry these for when we're stuck somewhere and need to eat but nothing is safe). We find these brands more in health food stores, but can be ordered online.
- Pamela's. THE best cookies in my opinion. I often find these anywhere there is a health food section. Their site: www.pamelaproducts.com
- Today my husband made a new-to-us loaf of GF bread from a mix. It has by far exceeded anything else in the bread line we've had (still lightly toast it first). Their url: <http://www.giftsofnature.net/> I don't recall if my husband ordered this online or he found it in a store. I seem to recall some flour-mix from them was also a very good 1:1 GF substitute.

23Aug2007 additional notes:

- *Mark learned from the Vlassic Web site: their pickles are GF. Mark found on a web site that a person with celiacs inquired in writing & got this response: At the present time, Vlassic® Pickles, Sauerkraut, Relish, and Peppers and Log Cabin® Country Kitchen syrup are gluten-free. The vinegar used in production of these items is corn-based, rather than wheat-based.*
- *Here's a web site Mark found that's devoted to GF condiments!!!*
<http://www.kintera.org/site/pp.asp?c=ewK0LjP7E&b=2023811>
(Mark says our Worstershire Sauce is GF (sorry, I don't recall what brand we had in the cupboard; also French's mustard, Grey Poupon are also GF)
- *The above bullet's site also helps track product updates. You can also check out Beverages, Dairy, Pharmaceuticals, Salad Dressings, Sauces, Salsas, Marinades, Spices, Seasonings, Extracts, and the list goes on. I have not had the time as of THIS update to dig in, but I'm excited about this resource because many of these are the things that add zip and pizzazz. Also covers San Diego area Restaurants.*