



Naked  Baking
Susanne Wells

INTRODUCING NAKED BAKING 2!

As more and more people are being encouraged, either by necessity or choice, to omit gluten from their diets, many products and recipe books have sprung up to cater for this need.

As a private gluten free baker in my business *Godiva's Naked Fare* in Brisbane, my customers would ask me about helping them to expand their thinking and creativity in baking gluten free. In this way The Gluten Free Cooking School was created to fill this need.

The last five years have seen hundreds of people benefit from private instruction, lots of variation ideas, and heaps of fun. The school has also taught professional chefs in a class specially designed to teach, not just baking, but what gluten intolerance and coeliac disease is all about. Not to mention those budding home chefs wanting to open their own food establishments all over the country.

If you are new to baking, Welcome! The recipe instructions are, hopefully, all clear and there are many tips and explanations to help you along the way. Being on 'old-fashioned cook', I use only pure ingredients. If you have an intolerance to anything other than gluten - like dairy, sugar or egg, you may substitute ingredients that you would already use in place of these, and there are also other suggestions included.

Naked Baking 2 is distinctive because it not only offers simple and practical recipes, but also variation tips and how-to hints I have gathered over many years of baking. Though there are some different ingredients that are used in gluten free baking, the basic baking methods are the same as they have always been.

What also sets this book apart from the crowd is that it is available as a downloadable PDF document. This is very appealing as it encourages an eco-friendly approach to a published recipe book through the use of technology that we all use every day, i.e. our computers or our smart phones.

Use this book as a paperless recipe book in your kitchen via your computer, or one of the many forms of technology that are hand held. Or if you prefer, you can print selected favourite recipes for your own personalised *Naked Baking 2* book, thus doing your bit to help the environment. If you would like to give this book as a gift for a friend, please resist the temptation to just copy it, and buy another personal copy for them.

It's all up to you ... that's NAKED BAKING 2!

PANTRY STAPLES

The first step in getting ready to bake for your good health? Remove all wheat, oats, barley and rye from your pantry and replace them with different flours.

The following ingredients are the most commonly used in gluten free baking. Even though these are safe to use, *you must always read the labels* to ensure that there has been no contamination during production. Do this to reassure yourself about the quality of ingredients that you are purchasing. I would also recommend that, once you are familiar with your favourite products, to occasionally still look on the packaging for sources of gluten. I am finding more of MY favourite products now contain disclaimers eg may contain traces of gluten. This may just mean that their hoppers cannot be guaranteed to be thoroughly decontaminated. If you are very sensitive to gluten, these disclaimers must be adhered to.

Luckily there are more products becoming available now in the prepared sauces and marinades items that are devoid of gluten. It shows how much more intolerant we are becoming, and the need for producers to make better choices in the thickeners that are used. Also, in the small goods areas, many butchers and producers are stopping the practice of pumping with wheaty water, thus enabling better quality products that can be enjoyed by all.

USING GUMS

There are many different thickeners available to you. While all the flours and starches will give you this thickening effect, only gums will give structure to your non-gluten containing flours and give you a bouncy consistency to your baking, by keeping your breads and cakes moist and not crumbly.

My preference is guar gum (412) as it comes from a natural product - the guar bean; but Xanthan gum (415) will do the same thing. You will notice I have included the E number. As these are food additives, they need to have this number included on packaging. Even guar gum, though it's a natural product. Not all additives are necessarily bad for you.

To give you some idea of gum's action in your baking, imagine adding Metamucil to a glass of water. The fibre in the product swells and becomes jelly like. As gums are 100% pure fibre, their action is the same.

My recommendation is to add a level $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon to a cup of flour, as a starting point, then add more if you want to knead and handle it. It makes a world of difference and will improve your baking.

ENGLISH MUFFINS

1¼ cups lukewarm water
1 tablespoon sugar
2 tablespoons active dry yeast
2 cups fine white rice flour
⅓ cup potato flour
½ cup tapioca flour
1 ½ teaspoons guar gum
¼ cup skim milk powder
1¾ teaspoons sea salt
¼ cup olive oil
1 teaspoon white vinegar
Coarse polenta to sprinkle

METHOD

Preheat oven to 220°C and dissolve sugar in warm water in a medium sized bowl and then add the yeast. Set aside to foam while you combine the other ingredients.

Grease about 10 foil pie tins and sprinkle polenta inside the tin and up the sides and tap out excess.

Combine in the bowl of a mixer the flours, gum, milk powder and salt. Mix until combined. Add oil and vinegar, then egg whites. Finally blend in yeast mixture and mix on high speed for 2 minutes.

Spoon 120g of dough into prepared tins and sprinkle more polenta over the top. You may prefer a thicker English Muffin; in which case add as much dough as you like. Place immediately into the oven and bake for 10-15 minutes. Turn out onto wire rack to cool.