



### Simple and Inexpensive Gluten-Free Food Options

Gluten is the compound in many grains like wheat that makes it sticky when ground and made into flour for bread. This compound is often tough for folks to digest because of its thick, dense quality, especially when it is highly processed like for bread or pasta. Also, there is evidence that highly hybridized conventional (vs. organic) wheats are making gluten intolerance far more common with folks. If I am going to have grains with gluten in them (and not all grains have gluten in them, thankfully, as I love grains!), I have found that I do much better with the whole unprocessed grains, soaked overnight to make them easier to digest, then ground and made into my own flatbreads, or cooked like rice and used with recipes.

However, there are also plenty of naturally gluten free foods that you can make on your own, avoiding the expensive pre-made gluten free products. You just need to know what foods naturally do or do not contain gluten! For those who are super sensitive /allergic to gluten (i.e. Celiac's disease) rather than just trying to reduce / avoid it, you will want to look for the gluten-free label on these items as sometimes oats may be grown next to a wheat field or processed in the same factory as wheat, which can be a problem for someone with a serious food allergy. But for most folks, just eating naturally gluten free foods is sufficient.

A few naturally gluten free options you might try - oatmeal, corn grits, buckwheat, millet, quinoa, amaranth, and rice are all gluten free and delicious and easy to prepare. You can even buy a quinoa pasta in the bulk section at Ellwood's Local market in Richmond (or packaged in the organic section at most grocery stores) that cooks super fast and is yummy! Add some chopped veggies at the end of cooking like broccoli or spinach, tomatoes, carrots, add a little organic oil and sea salt, and you have instant pasta primavera!

Other gluten free carb / base options are potatoes, sweet potatoes/yams, cooked winter squash or pumpkin, cooked carrots or beets. You might try eating some yams or potatoes to help warm up your system and ease digestion. Just slice them across like a loaf of bread into thin slices, and boil in filtered water (with a little sea salt) until soft, about 10 minutes. I know you are not always feeling like cooking right now but this is super easy and very nourishing. Or you can make them in the crockpot, whole unpeeled, just wash well first. You can also drink the broth after cooking the yams, it's like a hot tea! I like to add a little more sea salt to help replenish my electrolytes. For extra protein, you can try adding flax seeds to your cooked base/starch, mixed with a little organic olive or coconut oil to make it yummy!



Enjoy!

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