



Adopt a Gluten-free Blogger: Carol Kicinski Simply Gluten-free Desserts

August 6th, 2011 yum

Posted in [Adopt a Gluten Free Blogger](#), [Gluten Free Blogs](#), [Gluten Free Cookbook Recipe Review](#) | [4 Comments](#) »



This month I decided to adopt Carol Kicinski of the blog Simply Gluten-free. I'd heard about her cookbook Simply Gluten-free Desserts and thought it sounded lovely. When Carol sent me a review copy, I thought that the timing was perfect. I needed someone to adopt, and here was this great recipe collection and gluten-free blogger ready and waiting! Carol's book is truly a delight to look through. There are so many recipe that sound perfect for company, or perfect for a special family treat, from red velvet cupcakes to No-bake Chocolate Truffle Cake to creme brulee. There are also some very creative recipe, from dairy-free cream puffs (on my to-do list!) to peanut-butter and jelly ice cream sandwiches, to dairy-free pumpkin creme brulee. You can also tell that Carol is very familiar with the gluten-free community and its resources as she shares classic forum

favorites as black bean brownies and the ubiquitous flour-less peanut butter cookies. The range of recipes really makes this book a treasure trove for the newly diagnosed as well as the long-time veteran in the gluten-free trenches. The only slight hiccup was just as I was all set to make some recipes from Carol's cookbook and blog, the DH went traipsing off on a week long business trip to Florida. He is the major sweet tooth in our household. Granted, my mother has a not-so-secret sweet tooth of her own, but she is perpetually on a diet, so not always helpful at consuming goodies. And Toddler Yum does like sweets but I limit her sugar pretty heavily- this kid loves snap peas and artichokes and I'd like to keep it that way! So I hesitated, and waffled, and thought long and hard about what to make from Carol's cookbook. Interestingly, while Carol's main flour blend is a white-flour blend, she has quite a few grain-free recipes in her cookbook, like chestnut flour crepes and nut flour muffins.



I buy natural products and gluten-free stuff at Iherb.com. Do you?

Contact me by email or post a comment on the relevant post. I love comments!

Recent Posts

- ★ [Gluten-free Rice-Free Dairy-free Wholegrain Naan Recipe](#) August 2, 2013
- ★ [Gluten-free Dairy-free Chunky Apple Muffin Recipe](#) April 3, 2013
- ★ [Gluten-free in San Francisco: Mariposa Ferry Building](#) February 22, 2013
- ★ [Gluten-free Restaurants in San Francisco: Hot Spud](#) February 20, 2013
- ★ [Gluten-free Vegetarian Dining in Disneyland 2013](#) February 4, 2013
- ★ [Adopt a Gluten-free Blogger](#) February 2013 February 1, 2013



I decided to make her almond-flour based apple cinnamon muffins because they sounded so darned good and I could feel good about sharing them with Toddler Yum as they were only sweetened with Agave nectar. The recipe yielded twelve moist, sweet but not overpoweringly sweet muffins. Everyone that tried them, from Toddler Yum to my Mother to the intrepid JM liked them, and I was happy to have tried them.

I also tried her chestnut flour crepes from the cookbook. It was a good way to break into the bags of chestnut flour I'd been hoarding in my cupboard, and it sounded simple and tasty. I didn't make the filling, though, because I didn't have whipping cream and so I may have missed out on the full experience. Nevertheless, Toddler Yum nibbled on them happily enough. I had never used chestnut flour before and so I was surprised by the toasted-nut fragrance in the flour. It reminded me of *kinako*, toasted soy flour that is used in Japanese sweets recipes as a topping, and I wondered if I could use *kinako* in recipes interchangeably with chestnut flour. Ultimately, I wasn't sure that the taste of straight chestnut flour was quite my thing, but I appreciated that Carol had a recipe that I could try, and now that the bag has been opened perhaps I can find other recipes that just use it as a complementary flour that would suit our household.

The final recipe I tried from Carol's cookbook was her famous cinnamon rolls.



This recipe used Carol's classic white-rice, sweet rice, potato starch and tapioca starch flour blend. I think the DH would heartily approve, as he always liked using a similar white-rice mix from Bette Hagman. I hadn't baked with white rice or sweet rice flour in a while, so it was good to get out those



flours and look forward to recipes using a "normal" white flour blend that would emulate its gluten counterpart. I loved how easy it was to make. You whisk the dry ingredients together and then blend the wet dairy ingredients together in a food processor. Toddler Yum got a huge charge out of pressing the pulse button on my food processor. Next you add the dry ingredients to the food processor and pulse it together. This resulted in more joy from the toddler- a happy perk. The dough that comes out of the food processor is amazingly easy to work with.

Carol says that the strength of this recipe is not just in the ingredients, but in the technique, and I have to agree. I love that Carol gives us the chance to knead the dough, and her technique of rolling the dough between two layers of parchment sprayed with oil is just brilliant. Now, her recipe calls for a 9 or 10 inch springform pan. I'm embarrassed to admit that I had to look up springform pan. Sure enough, I didn't have one. Instead I used an 8 inch cake pan lined with two long strips of parchment set together to form a cross, so that you can easily remove the cinnamon rolls out of the pan. I couldn't fit one of the cinnamon rolls in the pan and so I baked it separately. As a bonus, this became my first "tester" cinnamon roll that I could gobble up right away hot out of the oven. I did let it cool for about 5 minutes first. Anyway, not only was this dough very easy to work with, but it produced an excellent cinnamon roll.

My Mother was reminded of her childhood, when a visiting great-grandma would mix up a batch of cinnamon rolls for her parents, she and her two sisters at their farm. She said this gluten-free version was delicious, and while it was not quite as fluffy as the gluten-version, the taste was spot on. The dear Toddler Yum gobbled up a bit and asked for more. And as for me, well, I had one for breakfast with my latte and then had another as I was writing this post. This could be addicting! I do feel a bit bad having made this while the DH was away. The last time he was away I made (raw, nut-based) cheesecake. This time I made homemade cinnamon rolls. Cruel? A little bit... I may have to make this recipe again when he is home, since I don't think we will have any left by the time he gets home...tomorrow.

The next recipe I plan to make from Carol's book is her Lemon Bar recipe. This is something I always enjoy ordering at gluten-free bakeries, but never make myself. I think it is time to change that! Also, my Mother loves lemon in any form, but lemon bars in particular, so it would be nice to make some to share. But after that, those dairy-free cream puffs are fair game, as soon as I figure out how to adapt Carol's flour blend to be potato-free so that I can share them with my allergic friend JM.





Since this is an "Adopt a gluten-free BLOGGER" event and not just an "adopt a gluten-free cookbook author" event I wanted to make sure to make some recipes from Carol's blog. I had such a good time looking through Carol's photos of her recipes. I was delighted to find some vegan and vegetarian savory recipes that Carol made for her son and family. I bookmarked Carol's Recipe for

African Vegan Sunbutter Stew and loved reading about her travels in Africa. However, I simply could not resist her recipe for Gluten-free Vegan Spoonbread with a Mess of Greens. She had me at greens... and spoonbread intrigued me as well. As a Yankee... am I a Yankee? No, ok, as a Northwestern native from Seattle, I had never heard of spoonbread. What was it? At first I assumed it was corn bread, but the dough was so liquid I knew that it had to be different. In fact, I was so worried about how liquid the batter was that I sent Carol a message asking if that was normal! Poor Carol. Anyway, I also did a little research on my own and found out that spoonbread is like a cross between "polenta, cornbread and a souffle" and should be soft enough that you can eat it with a spoon. Well, that explains the name! We enjoyed the spoonbread.



Toddler Yum gobbled it up plain like candy, and I covered it with a mess of Carol's spicy greens. Oh how I do love Southern-style greens... when they are vegetarian! I'd made them before, but I enjoyed Carol's version so much that I can't wait to make it again, maybe with a few changes just for fun. I was thinking some seared mushroom bites would be a tasty savory addition to the recipe... or maybe toasted nuts. Yum! I've bookmarked another of Carol's vegan recipes for Creamy Brussel Sprouts and plan on making them in the next day or so.





As always, this adoption was a true pleasure, and I am grateful to have had the chance to review Carol's wonderful book. It is a wonderful resource, and I know it will come in handy whether I need to make a glutenoid-approved dessert for an event or just a sweet treat for our family. You can watch Carol on [youtube](#) and hear more about her fascinating story, and I hope you will check out her [blog](#) and [cookbook](#) too!