

Going gluten-free: Creative & delicious dishes perfect for those with gluten sensitivity

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Published: Tuesday, April 22, 2014 at 16:25 PM.

Think of some of the foods you regularly indulge in. Chances are, if you check the nutrition label, gluten is an ingredient in them. Bread, crackers, pasta, cereal, cookies and beer are just a few of the items that contain this protein, which is in wheat, barley and rye.

Gluten is of little consequence to the majority of people; but for those who suffer from gluten intolerance or sensitivity, mealtime is not so simple. According to the National Foundation for Celiac Awareness, 1 percent of the American population, or 1 in 133 people, has celiac disease.

A diet free of gluten can be challenging, but it can be done with a little creativity and research. Thankfully, there are many online resources to help out, such as Simply Gluten Free. This blog comes from Carol Kicinski, a professional recipe developer, TV chef and cookbook author who is also gluten intolerant. Here are three gluten-free recipes that she created. For more gluten-free dishes, visit simplygluten-free.com.

Gluten-Free Crispy Chicken Wings

Makes about 30 wings

- 1 cup gluten free barbecue sauce – use divided
- ½ cup honey – use divided
- 4 pounds chicken wing drumettes
- Gluten free, non-stick cooking spray
- 2 (4.5 ounce) packages Crunchmaster Multi Grain Sea Salt Crackers

Pour ¾ cup of the barbecue sauce and ¼ cup of the honey in a large plastic storage bag and mix. Add the chicken wings, close the bag and toss several times to coat the wings with the sauce. Let sit in the refrigerator for at least 30 minutes or up to 24 hours.

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Spray two baking sheets with gluten-free, non-stick cooking spray.

Grind the crackers in a food processor or blender to fine crumbs and pour onto a dinner plate. Remove a chicken wing from the marinade, roll in the cracker crumbs to coat and place on prepared baking sheet. Repeat with remaining chicken wings. Discard the marinade. Spray the tops of the wings lightly with gluten free, non-stick cooking spray. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes or until browned and cooked through (registering 165 degrees on an instant read thermometer inserted into the thickest part of the wing).

Combine the remaining ¼ cup barbecue sauce with the remaining ¼ cup honey and serve with the wings for dipping.

Gluten-Free Creamy Sun-Dried Tomato Pesto Pasta

Serves 4 to 6

- 1 pound gluten free vegetable rotini
- ½ cup sun-dried tomato pesto

5.2 ounces garlic and fine herb cheese (such as Boursin)
3 cups baby spinach
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
½ cup parmesan cheese, grated (garnish)
¼ cup pine nuts, toasted (garnish)
Crushed red pepper flakes (garnish)

Bring a large pot of heavily salted water to a boil. Cook the pasta according to the directions. Reserve about 1½ cups of the pasta cooking water, drain the pasta and return to the hot pot. In a large skillet, heat the sun-dried tomato pesto with the garlic and herb cheese and about ¾ cup of the pasta cooking water over medium heat.

Add the spinach and cook until the spinach is wilted and the sauce is hot. Add to the pasta and toss to coat. Add more pasta water if needed. Taste and season with more salt and pepper if needed. If desired, serve the pasta with grated parmesan cheese, pine nuts and crushed red pepper flakes.

Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free S'mores Doughnuts

Makes 12 doughnuts

Gluten free non-stick cooking spray
1¼ cups gluten free flour with xanthan gum (if your flour does not include xanthan gum, add ½ teaspoon)
¼ cup cocoa powder
2 teaspoons baking powder
½ teaspoon baking soda
¾ teaspoon kosher salt
¾ cup sugar
2 large eggs
½ cup grape seed oil (or other neutral flavored oil)
¾ cup rice milk
2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
1 tablespoon cold coffee (optional)
4 gluten free graham crackers
¾ cup Toasted Marshmallow Crème

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Spray 2 (6 count) doughnut pans with cooking spray. In a mixing bowl, whisk together flour, cocoa powder, baking powder, baking soda and salt. In another mixing bowl, whisk together sugar, eggs, oil, rice milk, vanilla and coffee. Add wet ingredients to dry ingredients and whisk. Spoon the batter into doughnut pans, filling each mold about ¾ full.

Bake 7 to 9 minutes or until doughnuts spring back when lightly touched and a tooth pick inserted into a doughnut comes out clean. Let cool in pan for 3 minutes. Remove and finish cooling on a rack. Place graham crackers in a small plastic bag and crush with a rolling pin until you have some larger pieces (about ¼ inch) and some crumbs. Place on a small plate. Spread 1 tablespoon of Toasted Marshmallow Crème on top of each doughnut then dip into crushed graham crackers.