

# Converting Recipes Containing Wheat Flour

Compliments of Connie Sarros, author of  
*Gluten-free Cooking for Dummies*  
*Wheat-free Gluten-free Dessert Cookbook*  
*Wheat-free Gluten-free Reduced Calorie Cookbook*  
*Wheat-free Gluten-free Cookbook for Kids and Busy Adults*  
and the “*Newly Diagnosed Survival Kit*”

Available at bookstores or may be ordered through [www.gfbooks.homestead.com](http://www.gfbooks.homestead.com)

Alternative flours are heavier and less tasty than wheat flour. The finished baked product will still have the same taste and consistency of the wheat version by following these simple steps:

1. **Add Xanthan gum** to hold pastries together. No Xanthan gum on hand? Substitute unflavored gelatin. (1 tsp. Xanthan gum=2 tsp. unflavored gelatin)
2. **Tricks to make baked goods tastier:**
  - a. Substitute liquid called for in the recipe with fruit juices, pureed fruit or brewed coffee
  - b. Increase vanilla or almond flavoring 1 ½ to 2 times
  - c. Increase amount of spices used
  - d. Stir in dried fruits, chocolate, toasted coconut and nuts, or liqueurs for added flavor.
3. **Tricks to make baked goods lighter:**
  - a. Whip liquid ingredients in a blender for 30 seconds before adding to shortening mixture.
  - b. Add something acidic—Use buttermilk in place of regular milk or add a little cider vinegar, lemon or orange juice or molasses.
  - c. In place of half of the liquid, use a carbonated beverage (not sugar-free)
  - d. Use twice the amount of baking soda or baking powder called for in the recipe.
  - e. Add an extra egg or, even better, stir 1 tablespoon golden flaxseed meal into 2 tablespoons lukewarm water. Let mixture sit for a few minutes till it begins to thicken, then add this to the liquids in your recipe.
4. **Pie Crust tricks:**
  - a. To make a shiny crust, brush top crust with milk before baking.
  - b. To make a sweet crust, brush top crust with water then sprinkle with sugar before baking.
  - c. For a glazed crust, brush top crust with a combination of egg yolk whipped with a little water before baking.
5. **Cake tricks:**
  - a. Add 1 Tbsp. mayonnaise, plain yogurt or sour cream to cake mixes.
  - b. Reduce oven temperature slightly so product bakes through. (This also helps prevent cracks in the top of your cake.)
  - c. When baking muffins, fill unfilled tins half full with water. (This will help keep muffins moist.)
6. **Cookie tricks:**
  - a. Never bake cookies on a dark pan.
  - b. Place cookies on a baking sheet, then refrigerate for 20 minutes before baking to keep cookies from spreading.
  - c. You can't always judge when cookies are done baking by their color; they are done when no imprint remains.
  - d. Leave cookies on the hot cookie sheet for 2-3 minutes so they can settle before transferring to a cooling rack.
7. **Bread tricks:**
  - a. Add 1 tsp. cider vinegar to yeast bread recipes for lighter texture.
  - b. Flavor yeast breads with cinnamon, vanilla or almond flavoring, molasses, maple syrup or Parmesan cheese.
  - c. Replace some of the water with cold, brewed coffee or juice (pineapple, lemon, apple, or orange juice).
  - d. For a sweet and shiny crust, heat 1 Tbsp. sugar with 5 Tbsp. milk just to a simmer, then brush on hot loaves.
  - e. For a soft crust, brush hot loaves with melted butter, then cover with a towel to retain steam.
  - f. For a light crust, place a pan of hot water on the bottom rack of the oven while the loaf bakes.
  - g. For a medium crust, brush loaf with milk before placing in the oven; then re-brush when the bread is half done.
  - h. For a crunchy crust, whip an egg white with 1 Tbsp. water until frothy; brush on loaf before baking.

## Never throw away your mistakes!

If a GF bread, cake or cookie recipe doesn't turn out, dry it out and make croutons for salads, bread pudding, stuffing, or use for fondues... or add seasonings and make crumbs for use in crusts, to top casseroles, to bread chicken and fish, and to bind meatloaf.

COURTESY OF TINA TURBIN

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