

Hi, this is Mary Frances with Gluten Free Cooking School Welcome to the 3rd video in my Joy of Gluten Free Baking video series. Thank you so much for the tremendous response to the first two videos. I've read a lot of great comments and emails from readers over the past few days - messages about the meals you want to bake for your family, recipes that you want to recreate, and the actions that you're taking right now to make those dreams a reality.

In the first video, I told you about how you need to start getting your mind ready for successful gluten free baking. I challenged you to stop thinking negative thoughts about being gluten free and start filling your mind with thoughts and images of making amazing gluten free foods, and seeing your friend and family enjoy it.

In the second video I shared the two big takeaways from my "aha" moment, when a mistake led to me making the best batch of gluten free biscuits I'd ever had. The first takeaway was that mistakes are amazingly useful...if you know what mistake you've made. And I shared two ways that you can make sure you always know what mistake you've made. The second takeaway was that there is no magic gluten free flour mix - and that this is not a bad thing at all. Your family is used to the best, because you're an amazing cook. Crafting a recipe with the flours that will work best for that recipe is the secret to creating the amazing gluten free recipes that are as good as you are used to.

Combining those takeaways with the super simple technique we're going to cover today will immediately improve the results you get with your gluten free baking. Recipes will start to make more sense; your results will get better and better, and you will soon be the confident baker that you used to be.

Let's take a minute to look at a comment that I received on the 2nd video.

Stevi writes, "I have the scale. I have a notebook. I have lots of flours. I'd like to sign up for your classes, but I also have to be dairy free. How do you deal with substitutions for milk, butter, etc. "

Stevi, thanks a lot for the comment. I love that you already have your scale and your notebook, and I can tell from your comment that you are determined and ready to this. That's great! Dairy substitutions are very common, and not a problem at all. What you're going to substitute in depends on the recipe, but many of my students have used almond or coconut milk in place of cow milk, and vegan butter or shortening in place of butter - with great results.

It's also important for you to know that you are not alone. At least 50% of my students are gluten free plus something else - dairy, corn, rice, yeast, etc. Its easy to get more discouraged about gluten free baking as the list of things that you need to be "free" of gets longer. You start to think that no recipe is going to work for you because you always have to substitute something in. This could't be further from the truth.

Here's the thing about substitutions. The reasons that substitutions are problematic is that you have to know the role that each ingredients plays in the recipe, and then know enough about each potential substitution to know whether it can fulfill that role well enough. So, let's say you wanted to make a bread recipe that called for milk. You need to know enough about bread recipes in general to know why milk is used in this recipe - what role is it playing? Once you know that, then you can look at the available substations and make an educated choice as to

which to use. No more throwing darts blindfolded!

In the previous video, I mentioned that I hear from readers every day asking why a particular recipe didn't turn out right. 90% of the time, I'm able to pinpoint the reason for the failed recipe as one of these three common mistakes. You'll probably find yourself nodding your head as we discuss them, but don't worry - we've all been there.

First is a mistake that is so sneaky most people don't even realize they're making it. I talk to readers all the time who swear they didn't do this, but then in their next breath reveal that they actually did.

What is that mistake? "Not following the recipe exactly". There are lots of ways to make this mistake! Maybe you didn't read all of the recipe's instructions and therefore couldn't follow them exactly. Perhaps you don't measure all of the ingredients accurately. Or maybe your oven doesn't heat to the temperature that it should. Any one way of "not following the recipe exactly" could cause the recipe to fail.

The bigger problem with this, besides the loaf of bread you just made that could be used as a wrecking ball, is that we don't want recipes to fail for unknown reasons. Like I explained in the previous video, we have to know what mistakes we've made, so that we can learn from them. If you've "not followed" the recipe 5 different ways, then you have no way of knowing why the recipe didn't work out. It could be that it's a bad recipe, but it's just as likely that the recipe didn't work because you didn't bake the recipe in front of you. You baked the recipe with 5 different adjustments that you're not aware that you made.

Does this mean that you can never make substitutions? No. It just means that you can't make substitutions willy-nilly. And that's the 2nd mistake that people make. You make substitutions on the fly, with whatever you have on hand, and without writing down what you're doing. Then the recipe doesn't turn out, or turns out phenomenally well, but you can't replicate it, and you can't learn anything from it.

Substitutions are an essential part of gluten free baking. There's really no way around them since most people are having to deal with multiple allergies or sensitivities. But substitutions have to be done carefully. It's easy to handle substitutions in a way that makes everything more confusing, but if you're careful, subbing in new ingredients can not only improve your results but help you learn at the same time.

Substitutions need to be planned, and research is generally required. And once you've decided on the substitution, you need to write out a new recipe, with all of the substitutions included, in your kitchen notebook. Now you have a clear recipe to follow, a place to write your observations, and a solid bit of data to come back to later.

The third mistake that people make without knowing it has to do with expectations. You have very high expectations for your baking, and that's great. You should expect that gluten free recipes will work just as well as the wheat recipes you're used to. But the mistake that I see so often is that people expect a recipe to work the very first time they try it, and then give up when it doesn't.

You should expect a recipe to not work the first time. And most of the time they won't - but

that's totally OK. Mistakes and failed recipes are how you're going to learn.

Last year when I began the Great Pie Crust Experiment, I knew that the first pie crust that I made would most likely not be that great. And it wasn't. In fact, it was awful. But it was a starting point - a data point. After that first pie crust I knew that the flour mix that I had chosen was wrong, and so I adjusted it and tried again. And then tried again, and tried again and within four or five iterations I had a gluten free pie crust that was simply amazing.

Most recipes won't take that long. Sometimes new recipes that I try work perfectly the very first time. And while an unexpected success like that makes me want to dance with joy, I always learn ten times more from the recipes that don't work at first. So cherish your mistakes, just make sure you know what mistake you made so that you can learn from it.

Now that I've told you about common mistakes to avoid, let's talk about something easy to do. This super simple technique is going to seem a bit obvious, but very few people actually take the time to do it. Don't be one of those people! This one technique will accelerate your learning and help you start developing a gluten free baker's intuition - so that you "just know" what flours to use, or how much xanthan gum to add, or when the dough is just the right consistency.

Okay, are you ready for it? Here it is:

Make lots of mistakes in small batches.

Yep, you heard that right. In order to develop a gluten free baker's intuition, you have to know your ingredients and your recipes. You need to focus in on one "master recipe" and learn it inside and out. Change one thing in it at a time and see what happens. Take notes, Have fun. Be curious. But all of those trials will use a lot of flour right? And potentially waste a lot of flour? Not if you do all of your trials in small batches. Like one muffin size batches. Or a mini-loaf of bread that's just big enough for one sandwich.

All you have to do is take the recipe that you want to try. Divide it by 4 or 8. Find an appropriately sized container to bake it in, and you're all set. Using a digital scale for this makes it even easier - you get accurate measurements and you don't have to think in fractions or figure out how to measure $\frac{1}{5}$ of a Tbsp. Just set your scale to grams and you're good to go.

Now I know a lot of you are probably reeling from all the information I've given you over the past few days. I've talked about thermometers and digital scales and kitchen notebooks. I've told you that there's not one magic flour mix, and that you should expect to make mistakes multiple times on the same recipe. I know it's a lot to process. I remember feeling exactly the way that you're feeling right now. There is a lot to learn. And it's incredibly humbling when you're accustomed to being competent in the kitchen.

I know the challenges of re-learning your baking skills and making recipes work for multiple intolerances. I know this intimately both from my own baking experience, and from walking my students through the process in my cooking classes. Since 2011, I've coached hundreds of students as they learned to bake gluten free and I have developed strategies and techniques that have allowed them to make gluten free food that their families truly love.

In the next few days, you'll be hearing more about my new Joy of Gluten Free Baking program. It's an exclusive online experience, featuring "master recipes" pulled from the classes that I've taught over the last two years. You heard Victoria share her experience with my cooking classes in the last video and soon I'll share more stories from students, just like you. who've taken part in my group classes - and who are now experiencing the same success with gluten free recipes that they used to get with wheat recipes.

These students are baking amazing homemade birthday cakes, making pies for Thanksgiving and enjoying homemade pizza whenever they want. And it's not surprising. They have a stash of reliable recipes to pull from and they've learned the skills that they need in order to be competent and confident gluten free bakers.

I've designed the Joy of Gluten Free Baking program for students who were asking for a more in-depth, guided, and step-by-step course that teaches you how to make my master recipes, but then goes beyond that to teach you how to craft custom recipes that work with your specific food requirements. You'll even learn how to convert your own family's recipes to gluten free versions.

You'll get full access to the systems and techniques that I've developed and used over the past decade. This program puts me directly into your kitchen for 6 full weeks with step-by-step tutorials, private forums, one-on-one chats, live coaching sessions, and so much more.

Space in this program will be very limited, so make sure to check your email for more information

My challenge for you today, is to take a minute to listen to what your mind is saying. I know that when I want to do something big, my mind starts making up reasons why I shouldn't, or why it won't work for me. These are "buts", as in "I really want to do this, but....." As you've listened to these videos what excuses did your mind start throwing out there. Go down to the comments sections below this video and tell me what your "buts" are.

This is Mary Frances at Gluten Free Cooking School, and I hope you've enjoyed this video series as much as I have. I can't wait to talk to you again soon.