

HOW TO CONVERT RECIPES

Gluten Free Mess to Masterpiece: Lesson 4

WHAT WE'VE COVERED SO FAR:

Lesson One: The kinds of gluten free flours and how to mix them to make them into mixes for different kinds of recipes.

Lesson Two: The practical aspects of one sort of recipe. This is “technique” and learning it for even one kind of recipe is valuable.

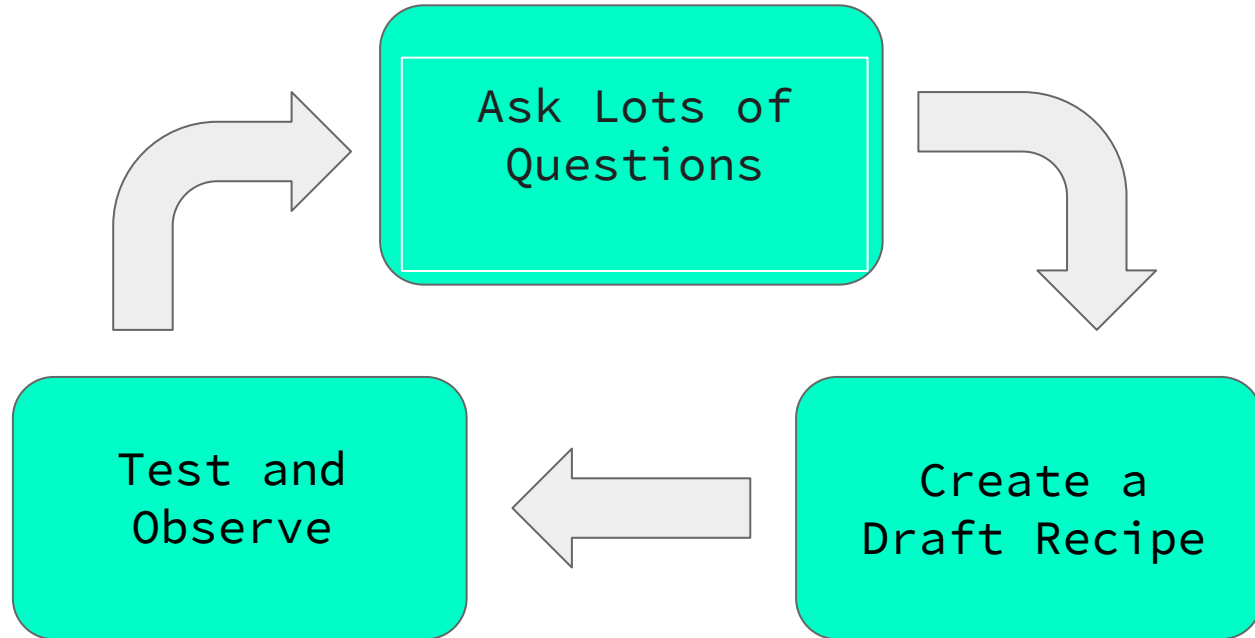
Lesson Three: We learned how to “see” a recipe and identify its master recipe formula.

THE THREE STEPS OF RECIPE CREATION & CONVERSION

1. Identification of the three steps.
2. Go through the three steps with examples
3. Potential Stumbling Points
4. Your Final Assignment

THE RECIPE CREATION PROCESS

THE RECIPE CREATION CYCLE



WHAT IS A _____?

This is how our research starts.

Can you define the thing that you want to make?

STEP 1: ASK YOURSELF QUESTIONS

1. What is a brownie? Think about all of it's characteristics. Define its brownieness.
2. Off the top of your head, can you list off the major ingredients in a brownie?
3. To what is a brownie similar? How is it different from that same thing?
4. What ingredients are essential? Which are non-essential?
5. What makes a brownie have a shiny-crackled top? Is it caused by something in the recipe or something in the technique?

EXERCISE 1: WHAT IS A PRETZEL

1. What is a pretzel? What make a hot pretzel different from other food?
2. What family of recipes would a pretzel fit into? What does that tell you about the essential ingredients?
3. What aspect of a pretzel are you particularly curious about?
4. Do you think that the recipe defines the pretzel or does the baking technique define the pretzel? Or both?

HOW TO ANSWER THE QUESTIONS: RESEARCH!

So at this point, off you go to find the answers to your questions.

1. Look at and compare a lot of recipes. (They don't have to be gluten free recipes.)
2. Look for the answers to your questions.
3. Look for writers or cookbooks that explain how a recipe works.
4. Look for clues about the master recipe and the technique
5. Write down the answers to all your questions and any other important things you learned during your research.

THINGS TO NOTE

1. You may not have a lot of answers to these questions. That's okay! The point is to generate a list of thoughtful questions that will guide your research.
2. Blogs are not generally the best place to get accurate information. They are a great place to find out what doesn't work.
3. A good collection of quality cookbooks and cooking texts are a great asset.
4. The key to recreating a recipe is generally in the master recipe formula AND the technique.

AT THE END OF STEP 1

1. You will know what a brownie is.
2. Because you know what a brownie is, you will quickly be able to spot imposter brownie recipes.
3. This knowledge may be enough for you to find a good recipe that is already GF.
4. But if not, you're definitely ready to start creating your own recipe.

CREATE A DRAFT

This is where we take what we've learned and start turning it into a recipe. In other words, we create a hypothesis.

FIND A COUPLE OF REFERENCE RECIPES

1. A reference recipe is a good recipe that you will use as a guide in creating a GF version.

N.B. If you are wanting to convert a family recipe, you still need a good reference recipe.

2. A “good” recipe should include the essential ingredients and techniques that you’ve learned about during your research or have some other proof that the recipe writer knew what they were doing.

COMPARE YOUR REFERENCE RECIPES

You should have two (or three) reference recipes. If you're converting a family recipe, that should be one of the references, but not the only one.

Lay the recipes out side-by-side and compare. What is alike? What is different? You may have to convert them to weights in order to really "see" them.

*take note of the size of the recipes!

QUESTIONS TO ASK

For the differences in the recipes, can you explain them?

Based on what you know about this kind of recipes are they important differences?

DRAFTING YOUR RECIPE

1. Create a third column and start writing down your draft recipe.
2. Choose a flour mix based on Lesson 1.
3. Determine whether the flour: water ratio needs to be adjusted. (GF recipes can help with this, but use discernment)
4. Decide which binding agent to use and how much - again GF recipes may provide some guidance.
5. Write in the recipe instructions. Be sure to include important techniques you discovered in your research.

TEST YOUR RECIPE

Once you've drafted your recipe and feel you've answered all your questions, it's time for testing.

IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER

1. Take notes of your weights and temperatures.
2. Use all of your senses to observe what is going on.
3. Write down your observations.
4. Watch what happens.
5. Take note of what worked, what didn't, why you think it didn't work, and what questions that raises.

POTENTIAL STARTING POINTS

1. Just an idea - I want a gluten free _____.
2. Converting a family recipe.
3. Adjusting a GF recipe so that you can have it.

What usually happens...

Why you're not going to do that anymore...

OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES

1. Only change one thing at a time, if at all possible. For a non-GF recipe, this is usually going to be the flours.

What should you do if you can't have other ingredients?

2. Knowledge that you discover yourself is exponentially more useful and meaningful.
3. Always take notes.
4. Be curious.
5. Expect that some recipes won't work. These are not failures, if you look for what they can teach you.