



Passing the TASTE TEST

Englewood's Orly Gottesman creates a line of gluten-free flour letting anyone bake all their favorite dishes

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The gluten-free baking industry is gaining traction to meet the growing demand for delicious dishes for those who can't digest the protein gluten, which is found in wheat, barley and rye.

For some people it is just a sensitivity or intolerance, but for others it is the more serious celiac disease, an autoimmune disorder that causes damage to the small intestine. In either case, gluten can wreak havoc on the body, resulting in gastrointestinal issues, as well as other physical ailments, such as migraines, extreme tiredness and even osteoporosis with prolonged exposure.

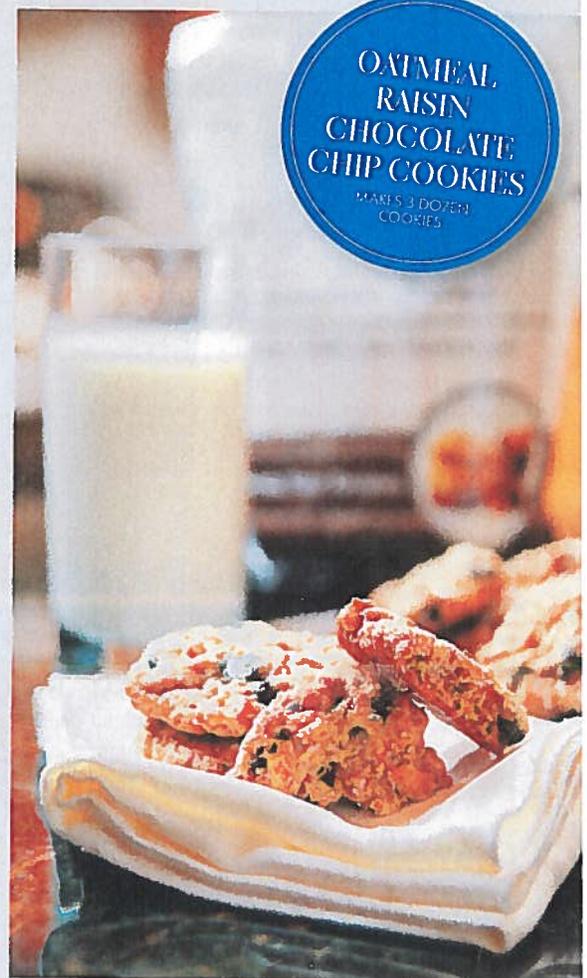
One in 100 people worldwide live with celiac disease, while it's estimated that as many as 18 million in America have sensitivity to gluten, according to the National Foundation for Celiac Awareness. It makes paying attention to food and its ingredients a daily necessity. However, making gluten-free versions of favorite dishes has its own challenges, including trying to make it taste good.

That's where Orly Gottesman of Englewood comes in. Blends by Orly, a line of five distinct gluten-free flours Gottesman created, are the answer to that burning question of whether gluten-free dishes can taste as good as their non gluten-free counterparts.

"My main objective is to have a product that makes people want to eat it," she says.

Gottesman, a trained vocalist and pianist, says gluten-free baking requires some blending of flours to get the "non gluten-free aftertaste." Unlike flours that contain wheat, there is no true "all-purpose" flour for gluten-free baking, she says.

What makes Blends by Orly different from other brands is its unique formulation of flours in different proportions in order to mimic a specific taste and category. The ratio is 1-to-1 for use as a replacement to wheat flour, though for some bread recipes she recommends adding 20 to 25 percent more water to prevent the dough from becoming too dry. ➤



INGREDIENTS

- 10 1/4 tablespoons butter
- 1 1/2 cups white granulated sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup honey
- 2 1/2 cups Blends by Orly "London"
- 2 cups oats
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 tablespoon cinnamon
- 1 cup raisins
- 1/2 cup chocolate chips

DIRECTIONS

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Line a large tray with parchment paper. In the bowl of a stand mixer with the paddle attachment, cream butter and sugar together on medium-high speed for three minutes until smooth and pale in color. Add eggs and vanilla and mix for two minutes. Add honey and mix until fully incorporated. In a separate bowl, mix together "London" blend, oats, salt, cinnamon, baking powder and baking soda. Add the dry ingredients to the mixing bowl and mix all ingredients together on medium-high speed for three minutes, or until fully incorporated. Add raisins and chocolate chips and mix for 30 seconds or until dispersed within the dough. Use an ice cream scoop or spoon to batch cookies onto the tray. Bake cookies for 12 minutes or until golden around the edges. *Bake one extra minute for crispier cookies.



GLOBAL FLAVORS

The gluten-free flour blends are named after cities Orly has lived in. Each one is good for a different type of baked good.

The ingredients vary depending on which blend is used, but typically include a few different flours, like brown rice, white rice, quinoa, soy, millet, sorghum and coconut flours. Potato starch is used in some blends and xanthan gum is included in each blend packet to add volume and viscosity to the dough.

Individual blends (\$9) can also be purchased locally at Cedar Market, Best Glatt and Glatt Express in Teaneck; Grand & Essex in Bergenfield; and Healthway Natural Food Center and Tenafly Gourmet Farm in Tenafly. They are also available as packages of five (\$45) on Amazon and Gottesman’s website, blendsbyorly.com.

Gottesman says that price tag is more expensive than other brands, but Blends by Orly is dairy-free, nut-free, corn-free, and vegan and kosher-certified. Two of the blends are also soy-free and some are non-GMO.

While they were launched out of her Englewood residence, they were perfected overseas – inspired by the places she’s lived and spent a lot of time, like London, Tuscany, Manhattan, Paris and Sydney. The blends channel a particular region’s signature dishes and are intended to allow the gluten-free foodie to be creative with dishes using their own recipes from the comforts of home.

For example, her Manhattan blend is best for achieving fluffy bagels and has a higher amount of proteins than other blends. The Paris blend uses coconut flour to produce delicately flavored desserts. Sydney is the most versatile but is also great for quick breads and muffins.

Her husband, who was diagnosed with celiac disease in 2007 and must avoid gluten at all times, was her inspiration.

“Food is his life, so when he couldn’t find true substitutes that tasted the same, it took the joy out of enjoying food,” she says.

They were called to the Paris, several years ago due to his job and everything changed. When Gottesman couldn’t get a work visa, she had to figure out how to spend her time.

“I did a lot of soul searching,” she says.

In that time she found inspiration in baking. Quickly, she found her place and started interning with French pastry chefs, making everything from lemon tarts to macaroons. But her husband was frustrated with the lack of options in Paris and started eating gluten-laden foods again – only to get sick once more. For Gottesman, it became a mission to perfect gluten-free cooking so that her husband – and others like him – wouldn’t feel trapped by their gluten issues.

However, straying from the traditional cuisine was not so easy in Paris, so gluten-free baking wouldn’t come until later when they moved to Sydney, Australia. There, she got a chance to receive formal patisserie training from Le Cordon Bleu, a culinary arts institute, and created a manual of gluten-free flour blends as part of her independent study. Those blends would be published in the cooking institute’s “alternative baking class” curriculum.

A year after completing her studies, she developed and perfected the blends and recipes. Last August, she launched her online store on her website and is in the process of working with high schools to use the Tuscany blend to make gluten-free, Italian-inspired dishes for lunch. Gottesman says the fact that she can eat gluten-rich foods but likes the gluten-free versions better, made possible by her blends, gives additional credibility to her line.

“It started with basic cooking principles,” Orly says, “and making the best version of gluten-free French pastry baking and it went from there.” ❖

CINNAMON
BUNS WITH
CREAM CHEESE
FROSTING
MAKES 8
CINNAMONS

INGREDIENTS

DOUGH

- 3 eggs
- 3 tablespoons plus 1 tsp sugar
- 3 tablespoons butter, melted
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup plus 1 tablespoon warm buttermilk
- $1\frac{1}{4}$ cups Blends by Orly "Manhattan"
- $1\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoons dry yeast
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon baking powder

FILLING

- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup packed light brown sugar
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 tablespoon butter melted

ICING

- $1\frac{1}{2}$ ounces cream cheese
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoons whole milk
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup icing sugar

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to a temperature of 350 degrees F. In the bowl of a stand mixer with the paddle attachment, combine the warm milk and yeast and let sit for five minutes until bubbly. Add the eggs and sugar and mix on low speed to combine. Add the flour along with the salt and baking powder and mix on medium speed until combined, for five minutes. Lastly, add the melted butter and mix through the dough. Dough should feel soft, slightly stretchy, and moist, but not wet like a batter. Add more "Manhattan" blend, if necessary. Turn the dough out onto a work surface floured with "Manhattan" blend and kneed into a ball. Lightly oil a large bowl. Transfer the dough to the bowl, lightly oil the top of the dough, and cover with plastic wrap. Let sit in a warm place (80 to 100 degrees F) until it doubles in size.

Combine the brown sugar, cinnamon and salt in a medium bowl. Mix well and set aside. Grease a round or square glass baking dish and coat the inside with parchment paper. Turn the dough out onto a heavily floured work surface. Shape the dough into a rectangle by hand, with the long side nearest you. With a rolling pin, stretch the dough into a 9 inch by 6 inch rectangle. Brush the surface of the dough with melted butter, leaving $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch border along the top edge. Generously sprinkle the filling mixture over the dough, leaving a $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch border along the top edge and press the filling into the dough with your rolling pin. Beginning with the long edge nearest you, roll the dough into a tight cylinder. Using a serrated knife, slice the cylinder into six evenly sized rolls. Arrange rolls cut side down in the baking dish. Cover with plastic wrap and let sit in a warm place (80 to 100 degrees F) until it doubles in size, approximately 45 minutes.

Place the dish in the center of the oven and bake for 30 minutes or until golden brown. While the rolls are cooling, make the icing by whisking the cream cheese in the bowl of a stand mixer until creamy. Add the milk and whisk until combined. Sift in the powdered sugar, and whisk until smooth. Spread icing over the rolls.

