



GLUTEN-FREE FOOD SAFETY RESTAURANT PROGRAM

Downloadable Version

People who need to stay gluten-free will be hurt if they are “glutened” – exposed to even a tiny amount of gluten.

This guide describes the problem and how you can make sure that gluten-free foods and drinks do not hurt your restaurant’s guests.

Gluten is a protein found in the grains: barley, rye and wheat. Gluten is frequently found in oats because of cross contact with one of these grains.

Where can gluten be *found*?

In addition to barley, rye, wheat and some oats, gluten is found in ingredients which contain **any** of them.

How does gluten affect a person who is sensitive to gluten?

Depending on the person’s specific medical condition, damage can range from severe diarrhea and headaches to the body attacking itself, which can lead to heart disease or even cancer.

For the millions of Americans with the health condition known as celiac disease, gluten attacks the villi – parts of the intestine which look like fingers and process nutrition needed for health.

How much gluten can cause harm?

Even tiny amounts of gluten cause “glutening.” For example:

- A single sprinkle on a cupcake
 - An amount of gluten equal to one drop in a gallon of milk
 - A small bread crumb
 - A spec of wheat flour.
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Cross contact

Cross contact is when even a tiny amount of gluten is transferred from an ingredient or food containing gluten to a gluten-free ingredient or food.

Sometimes damage can take days or even weeks to appear.



Examples of common sources of contamination due to cross-contact are:

- Two items touching
- A knife or other utensil used for a food with gluten which is then used in a gluten-free food
- Airborne flour
- Boiling water and frying oil
- Dedicated storage or kitchen areas used for other purposes

What is a main source of cross contact? Being tired.

Over the course of a day, especially at busy times, work areas may bleed together. Tiredness can lead to rushing, skipping steps and not following procedures that keep people safe.

Keeping People Safe

Keeping people safe involves:

- ❖ Purchasing supplies
- ❖ Receiving and Storing supplies
- ❖ Food prep areas
- ❖ While cooking
- ❖ Front of house

Purchasing

Purchasing Guidelines

Every existing and new item used in cooking must be checked to be sure it is gluten-free – including checking all ingredients, spices and oils.

Check the label or wholesale sales material.

If it says “gluten-free,” check the ingredients. For assurance, look for certification.

You see the symbols of the three leading agencies.

When in doubt, ask the distributor or manufacturer.



Additional detailed information about purchasing ingredients, and food, safely is contained in the Charlie's Table Oasis Purchaser's Guide.

Always keep in mind

Particles such as a tiny crumb or a smidgen of airborne flour or a utensil such as a knife used with both gluten and gluten-free foods, can contaminate gluten-free supplies.

RECEIVING GUIDELINES

- ◇ Verify that the correct materials are received.
 - ◇ Check that all packing is secure from cross contact –with no holes or tears.
 - ◇ If you use products with gluten, clearly mark or otherwise identify gluten-free supplies with a colored tag or marker.
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STORAGE GUIDELINES

- ◇ Store gluten-free supplies separate from other supplies to avoid contamination by cross-contact.
 - ◇ If there is no separate gluten-free storage area or gluten-free refrigerator/freezer, make higher shelves gluten-free shelves (for instance by painting them a separate color).
 - ◇ Tight fitting lids or binding closures protect gluten-free supplies. Containers must be tightly sealed at all times when not in use.
 - ◇ Keep dedicated pots, pans, utensils (and dedicated gluten-free plates if your restaurant uses them) separate from those used with ingredients containing gluten – preferably on a top shelf.
 - ◇ Be particularly careful when opening or moving supplies that can spill or become airborne.
 - ◇ Contaminated supplies should be moved away from gluten-free supplies and gluten-free markings should be wiped out.
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KEEP IN MIND: THE TINY SPRINKLE THAT COULD CAUSE GREAT HARM

Even tiny amounts of gluten cause “glutening”.



FOOD PREP GUIDELINES

◇ All prep areas must be thoroughly washed and sanitized before starting to prepare gluten-free dishes.

◇ Keep in mind that chemicals and heat do not kill gluten.

Flour and dust:

◇ Follow procedures to control and monitor airborne dust in situations where this may present a risk of cross-contact.

◇ If flour settles on a prep area, dry wipe the area before cleaning and sanitizing to remove flour residue.

To clean a surface to be used for food:

◇ Wipe the surface clean of any visible debris – including the smallest crumbs. Preferably use single-use cleaner or paper towels. Then throw them away.

◇ Wash the area with water safe for drinking.

◇ Sanitize the surface with chemicals or heat.

Working with food mixers:

◇ If there is space, place food mixers away from the prep area.

◇ If this is not possible, one way to prevent cross-contact is to use a shop-vac to clean in and around the mixer before wiping down and sanitizing.

COOKING GLUTEN-FREE

◇ If there is no dedicated prep area, be sure the area is cleaned thoroughly before starting preparation.

◇ Prepare gluten-free items before other items.

Follow recipes exactly.

◇ Recipes are to be written down and kept up to date.

◇ All personnel are to be informed of any changes in a recipe at the time a change is made.

Only use gluten-free ingredients in foods your restaurant tells people are gluten-free.



- ◇ If there is a question about a particular ingredient, ask the person in charge of purchasing.
- ◇ If there is a question about a particular meal, ask the chef or manager.

Pots and pans:

- ◇ Preferably, use dedicated gluten-free pots, pans and utensils.
- ◇ Non-dedicated items must be thoroughly cleaned before each use.
- ◇ Do not use scratched non-stick pans or materials that are porous such as wooden spoons.

Other utensils:

- ◇ **Mixers:** Thoroughly clean and sanitize mixers to remove all residue before use.
- ◇ **Mixing bowls and beaters:** Rewash all mixing bowls and beaters that may have had contact with gluten before using.
- ◇ **Convection oven:** Remove crumbs from floor of a convection oven and sanitize before heating.
- ◇ **Toasters:** Only use dedicated gluten-free toasters for gluten-free toast.
- ◇ **Colanders:** Only use dedicated gluten-free colanders.

Large cooking equipment and appliances:

- ◇ Clean thoroughly before each use.
- ◇ If any pieces cannot be sterilized, do not use them for cooking gluten-free food.

Clothing worn while handling/preparing gluten-free food:

- ◇ Wear clean gloves used solely for cooking gluten-free food.
- ◇ Aprons and clothing must be clean to avoid cross-contact.

Completed gluten-free meals:

- ◇ Must be kept separate from bread and meals with gluten to avoid cross contact.
- ◇ **If lids are used to keep food warm,** be sure to clean and sanitize after each use. Store in a safe gluten-free location.
- ◇ **After use,** wash all utensils thoroughly. Return to a gluten-free area.

IF you think a meal could be contaminated due to an ingredient or cross contact, ask your manager whether to destroy it or to hold



it for staff or people who are food insecure.

PASTA AND FRIED FOODS

When cooking pasta:

- ◇ Do not use the same water in which you boiled pasta that is not gluten-free.
- ◇ Use a colander dedicated to gluten-free use only.

When cooking french fries or other fried food:

- ◇ Only cook in oil dedicated to gluten-free.
 - ◇ Do not use oil that has been used for any breaded or battered items that contain gluten.
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PIZZA

Dough: Make gluten-free dough separately with protection against cross contact.

Oven: Ideally, gluten-free pizza is to be cooked in a separate, dedicated oven. If that is not possible:

- ◇ Dedicate a top shelf in the oven to only cooking gluten-free pizza.
 - ◇ If there is no shelf, place the crust on tin foil that is used exclusively for gluten-free crust.
 - ◇ To avoid possibility of cross contact, use each foil only once.
 - ◇ Change gloves before starting to make a gluten-free pizza.
 - ◇ Gluten-free toppings must be stored in a separate area, with lids securely fastened, and used exclusively on gluten-free pizzas.
 - ◇ Do not take toppings from the same container where toppings for gluten containing pizzas are stored.
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BAKED FOODS

Cooking Oven: Ideally, baked gluten-free foods should be cooked in a separate oven or at least on the top shelf. If this is not possible:

- ◇ Cook all baked foods on one-time use tinfoil, parchment paper, or dedicated gluten-free sheets.



◇ Even dedicated gluten-free sheets must be thoroughly cleaned between each use.

Cleaning:

◇ Always provide a thorough cleaning after baking and before starting production of gluten-free foods.

Scheduling:

◇ Cleaning time can be reduced if you only bake gluten-free once or twice a week. Foods can be frozen until needed.

◇ If there is not enough baking to have a dedicated baking day, schedule gluten-free baking time first thing in the morning to avoid airborne wheat flour.

Keep in Mind:

◇ Flour can stay in the air for 12-24 hours or more depending on the amount of flour in the air and ventilation.

◇ Using an electric mixer can disburse flour and create a light film on a prep table, equipment and plates.

OTHER AREAS OF CONCERN

Condiments and Dressings:

◇ Reduce risk by placing condiments and dressings in squeeze bottles. Label the ones that are gluten-free. Store the bottles in a dedicated gluten-free area.

◇ Keep in mind that any dressing with malt is likely made from barley with gluten in it. For example, marinades and dressings made with malt vinegar. Distilled vinegar is safe.

Eggs: Do not use pancake batter for scrambled eggs or omelets.

Foods with a binding agent generally use flour which has gluten in it. For example, imitation crab and meat substitutes.

Garnishes must not contain, or have come into contact with, gluten. For example, do not serve sauces with gluten or garnishes that include something that has been fried if the frier is not gluten-free.

Seitan is a vegan meat alternative made from hydrated gluten.

Soups: Do not use flour or roux to thicken soups.



Soy Sauce: When using any item with soy sauce, keep in mind that most soy sauces contain gluten. Check to see that the item is gluten-free before use.

Veggie Burgers: Manufacturers generally use gluten. Double check before using.

MISTAKES

If a mistake is made when preparing a meal:

- ◇ Do not try to fix a mistake. A new meal must be made. As you are aware by now, even the smallest amount of gluten can cause a problem. For instance, removing a crouton from a salad does NOT remove the amount of cross-contact.
- ◇ Immediately let the server know about the mistake and how long until a gluten-free replacement will be ready.

SAFETY FIRST. SPEED SECOND: ALWAYS KEEP IN MIND THE TINY SPRINKLE AND THE HARM IT COULD DO

THE NEED FOR SPEED CAN NEVER COME BEFORE THE NEED FOR SAFETY.

Front of House

BEFORE YOU START

In case a customer asks, know:

- ◇ The procedures used in purchasing, storage areas and in the kitchen to assure food that is said to be gluten-free actually is gluten-free.
- ◇ Which items on your menu do and do not contain gluten.
- ◇ Know which items on the menu can be modified to be made gluten-free.
- ◇ Which drinks served from the bar contain gluten - as well as gluten-free substitutes.

WHEN GUESTS ARRIVE

- ◇ If a reservation was made, and you were advised that one of your customers eats gluten-free, confirm that “Your party includes a person who eats gluten-free, is that correct?”.
- ◇ If no reservation was made, ask whether any member of the party has an allergy or special dietary needs. If yes, be sure to inform the server.



◇ Check to be sure that the table and everything on it is clean before seating.

BEFORE TAKING AN ORDER

Keep in mind:

- ◇ What even the smallest amount of gluten can do to people.
- ◇ That celiac disease and gluten sensitivity are medical conditions. The **ONLY** treatment for these conditions is gluten-free food.
- ◇ Everyone who wants to eat gluten-free must be treated the same whether the reason is because of a medical condition or because of a lifestyle choice.
- ◇ Guessing about an answer is not okay.
- ◇ It is okay to say that you do not know the answer to a question and that you will ask the chef.
- ◇ If a person orders a dessert with gluten after eating a gluten-free meal, let the person know the dessert contains gluten and offer gluten-free alternatives – then respect their choice.

TAKING AN ORDER

Sequence of service:

- ◇ Before taking any order, including drinks, ask all guests whether anyone has a food or other allergy to note.
- ◇ For a more comfortable dining experience, take the order of the person who eats gluten-free first or last.

Treat all customers with respect:

- ◇ A customer does not need a medical diagnosis to want to eat gluten-free. All people who request a gluten-free meal should be treated as if they have celiac disease.
- ◇ If a customer indicates a need to avoid gluten, and then orders a beer or drink with gluten, respectfully advise the person about that fact and suggest gluten-free alternatives.

If you do not know an answer to a question, ask the chef or a manager.

WORKING WITH THE KITCHEN

Putting in an order:

- ◇ Be sure to let the kitchen know which meals **MUST** be gluten-free.



- ◇ Before leaving, wait until the chef responds an awareness of the order.
- ◇ If you convey information to the kitchen by speaking or delivering a ticket, be sure the person who gets the order hears or reads if a meal is to be gluten-free.

Picking up an order:

- ◇ Confirm with the kitchen that the meal is gluten-free.
- ◇ Look at the food to be sure it is the meal you ordered and that there is no obvious contamination - for example, a crouton on a salad.
- ◇ If there is a mistake, ask how long the delay will be in making the correct order so you can let the customer know.

DELIVERING A MEAL

If a food with gluten in it is touched by a food that is gluten-free, it must be assumed that the gluten-free food has become contaminated.

Ways to prevent contamination from cross contact include:

- ◇ Clean your hands to remove any risk of cross contact.
- ◇ Deliver plates containing food with gluten separately. Do not carry them on a tray with other plates containing food with gluten. Ask another person to deliver the gluten-free food.
- ◇ Serve the gluten-free customer first if possible.
- ◇ If your restaurant uses different color or shaped plates and/or utensils for gluten-free foods and glasses for gluten-free drinks, check to be sure that the meal which was ordered is on such a plate and the drink is in such a glass.
- ◇ Serve the person who ordered gluten-free first.
- ◇ Do not mix serving utensils while serving guests.
- ◇ If bread with gluten is to be placed on the table, place it as far away from the person who ordered a gluten-free meal as possible.
- ◇ When delivering soy sauce as a condiment, check to be sure it is gluten-free.
- ◇ Confirm with the guest that everything is okay.

MAKING SALADS



If you will make a salad at the table:

- ◇ Use clean gloves.
 - ◇ Make the gluten-free salad first using a clean bowl and clean utensils.
 - ◇ Be sure the dressing is gluten-free.
 - ◇ Start over if croutons or other items with gluten touch the salad.
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Mistakes happen

IF THERE IS A MISTAKE

- ◇ If a meal becomes contaminated, do NOT try to fix it. For instance, removing a crouton from the top of a salad does not remove the gluten.
 - ◇ Let the customer know there will be a delay while you replace the meal.
 - ◇ Leave the offending meal at the table or otherwise visible to the diner until it is replaced so the diner is assured that a contaminated meal is not just “fixed” – because it cannot be.
 - ◇ Now is the time to learn about your restaurant’s emergency procedures just-in-case.
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IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, DO NOT HESITATE TO ASK YOUR MANAGER

There is no such thing as a dumb question

BARTENDERS

- ◇ Most hard alcohols that are not flavored, wine, champagne and prosecco are gluten-free.
- ◇ Mixed drinks may contain gluten because of additional ingredients which do not change the name of the drink.
- ◇ While most beer contains gluten, there are varieties which are gluten-free. However, gluten removed beer may not be safe for people with celiac disease.
- ◇ Know which of your ingredients and additives contain gluten and which do not. If you have a question, speak with the distributor.



- ◇ If there is no separately designated equipment for gluten and gluten-free drinks, equipment used to make a drink must be thoroughly cleaned after each use with gluten.
- ◇ Know which of your alcohols, beers, ingredients and additives contain gluten and which do not.

If a customer lets you know a desire to avoid gluten:

- ◇ If the customer orders beer, offer the gluten-free beer while letting the person know it may not be safe for people with celiac disease.
- ◇ If the person orders a mixed drink that has gluten in it because of the ingredients used in your restaurant, be sure to let the person know.
- ◇ When making a mixed drink without gluten, do not use the same equipment to make a mixed drink with gluten.

IF YOU SEE SOMETHING THAT COULD “GLUTEN” SOMEONE, DO AND SAY SOMETHING

- ◇ Do what you reasonably can to stop contamination.
 - ◇ If you cannot stop it, DO NOT deliver contaminated food to a customer who asked to eat gluten-free.
 - ◇ Inform your manager without delay.
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A QUIZ – Which of the following are correct?-(answers are at the end of the quiz)

1. Celiac Disease

- a. Celiac disease is not a serious disease
 - b. Celiac disease only affects children
 - c. Celiac disease can cause serious illnesses such as cancer
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2. Gluten

- a. Gluten can be removed with high heat
 - b. Gluten is a protein in wheat that can harm a lot of people
 - c. A little bit of gluten every now and then is okay for everyone
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3. Cross Contact

- a. A knife used to butter bread can contaminate a gluten-free roll
 - b. Gluten-free pasta can be cooked in water that boiled regular pasta
 - c. Air borne flour containing gluten cannot cause contamination by cross contact
 - d. Storage containers can remain open as long as they are on a top shelf
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4. More about Cross Contact

- a. Equipment must be thoroughly cleaned once a day
 - b. If you see a potential problem, say something to your manager
 - c. An apron with gluten cannot contaminate food
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5. Keeping a person who wants to eat gluten-free safe means:

- a. Leaving it up to the customer to know what food does and does not contain gluten
- b. Thinking about gluten when purchasing supplies, storing them, cooking AND serving food



- c. Telling the chef a customer wants gluten-free without having to double check on the meal
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6. Mistakes

- a. Mistakes cannot be fixed by removing the gluten from a meal or salad
 - b. A tiny amount of gluten is not a problem
 - c. Mistakes can be overlooked during rush hours
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7. Customers

- a. Know which foods and drinks contain gluten
 - b. Must be treated with respect even if they order a desert with gluten
 - c. It doesn't matter who gets served first
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Answers:

1a, 2b, 3a, 4b, 5b, 6a, 7b