



THE ULTIMATE GLUTEN-FREE GUIDE FOR BEGINNERS

DISCLAIMER:

This content is meant for informational purpose only. We do not provide specific nutritional or medical advice and always recommend you consult a healthcare professional for any symptoms or illnesses you may be experiencing.



Content

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

My Gluten-Free Journey	3
Tips On Becoming a Gluten-Free Foodee 101	4
Alternative Names For Gluten Glossary	6
7 Tips for Living Gluten-Free on A Budget	11
10 Basic Gluten-Free Shopping Tips to Make Shopping A Breeze	16
Reading Food Labels: What "May Contain" Vs. "Contains" Means	20
5 Of the Best Gluten-Free Apps to Make Your Life Easier	24
Connect with us	27



Hey there!
I'm Elyse,
the Gluten-Free
Foodee

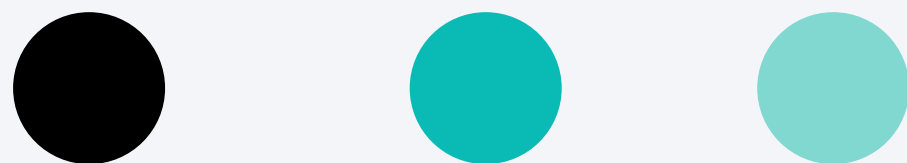
My Gluten-Free Journey

The gluten-free food chapter(s) of my life began after finding out I had non-celiac gluten sensitivity that was greatly increasing my inflammation levels. I quickly learned of the ubiquitous nature of gluten and it's been a discovery journey that I've been on ever since.

In The Ultimate Gluten-Free Guide for Beginners, I'll be sharing some of the basics (and not-so-basic) lessons I've learned along the way that will make adapting to a gluten-free lifestyle a little easier.

If you have any questions relating to anything in this guide, please feel free to reach out via [Linktree](#) or join our [Gluten-free Foodee Facebook group](#).

We'd love to hear from you and connect.



Tips On Becoming a Gluten-Free Foodee 101

Becoming a gluten-free foodee and/or maintaining a gluten-free lifestyle can be daunting. We know – we’ve been there. Learning all the alternative sources of gluten and where they are hiding is quite the challenge. It’s a journey we’ve been on for years and we are happy to share what we’ve learned so far. We thought we’d kick it off with a couple of the basics to help get you started and make going gluten-free easier.

1 Try to incorporate as many whole foods as possible into your diet.

Whole gluten-free grains, vegetables, fruits, legumes, dairy products, and . . . meats are very important. The less processed the products you eat are, the less chance of there being hidden gluten in them. This will mean more planning, preparation, and cooking in the beginning while you adjust.

Being gluten-free doesn’t mean being deprived of your favourite foods or traditional family recipes or compromising the quality or taste of what you eat. Our collective gluten-free goal should be to create food so good that no one would know it is gluten-free.

2 Read every label.

That’s right, you really need to read the ingredient list on the label of every product you eat. Yes, in the beginning this does extend the length of your time grocery shopping. If you are unsure of an ingredient, Google it or check out our [Alternative Sources of Gluten infographic](#). Just because you don’t think a product has wheat/flour/gluten in it, doesn’t mean that it isn’t in the product. Hidden gluten is a very real issue, so be careful, and read every single ingredient.

Sauces, chocolate bars, and dressings, can all have hidden gluten in them. Soy sauce (for example) is something you don’t think has gluten, but many brands contain wheat. This is why we can't rely on what we “think” is in a product. Since many different products contain soy sauce in them, you need to read the label to know for sure, if that product is gluten-free.



Alternative Names For Gluten Glossary

Gluten by any other name is still gluten. Knowing all or some of the alternative names for gluten or other items that contain wheat, is one of the steps to make “going” gluten-free easier.

Keep this Alternative names for Gluten Glossary handy as it will help you become more familiar with what to look for when reading labels. No one expects you to remember or memorize all these terms. However, if you can remember – or start to recognize some of them – it will make your life much easier.

[Click/Tap for Alternative Sources of Gluten Infographic.](#)

A - C

- Atta: It is a wholemeal flour primarily used in flatbreads.
- Binder or binding: An additive used to hold food together. Unless labeled alternatively (corn) assume it is derived from wheat.
- Barley (flakes, flour, malt, pearl): A major cereal grain. It is used in the making of alcohol.
- Barley grass: A major cereal grain.
- Bran: It is the hard outer shell of cereal grain.
- Breadcrumbs: Assume they are derived from wheat, unless otherwise stated.
- Brewer’s yeast: It is a byproduct in beer making and contains barley malt.
- Bromated: It is when flour has been treated with potassium bromate to improve the elasticity of wheat flour.
- Bulgar: it is cracked, parboiled groats, that can be made from different varieties of wheat.
- Couscous: Made from wheat
- Cracker meal: It is made from flour.

D - F

- Dextrin: Assume this is made from wheat, unless a gluten-free alternative is named.
- Dinkel: This is another name for spelt.
- Durum: This is a type of wheat very commonly used for pasta.
- Einkorn: A type of wheat.
- Emmer: A type of wheat.
- Enriched flour: Is common in baked goods.
- Farina: Is a fine flour.
- Farro/Farro: Is a mix of three varieties of wheat Spelt, Einkorn, and Emmer.
- Filler: Unless stated from a gluten-free source, assume fillers are wheat based.
- Flour: It's ground wheat or other cereal grains.
- Freekeh or farik: A cereal "ancient grain" made from green durum wheat.
- Fu: A Japanese meat substitute made from wheat gluten.

G - I

- Gluten: Wheat proteins.
- Graham flour: A course ground wheat protein.
- Groats: The hulled kernels of cereal grains.
- Hordeum vulgare (barley): A type of barely which is a grass grain and a major cereal grain.
- Hulled barley: Minimally processed barley.
- Hydrolysed wheat protein: A liquid made from wheat germ.

J - L

- Kamut: A species of wheat.
- Khorasan wheat: Is an ancient grain and a type of wheat.

M - O

- Maida: A white flour primary found on the Indian subcontinent.
- Malt (malt extract, malt syrup, malt vinegar, malt flavoring): A germinated cereal grain.
- Matzo (flour/meal): Contains wheat, rye, and barley.
- Oats (Oatmeal, oat bran, oat flour, whole oats): This is a tricky one as oats in their pure form are gluten-free. However, oats are usually processed with or near wheat. There is a high chance of cross contamination, so if you are celiac or very sensitive, you should stick to oats that are labeled gluten-free. If you don't have a sensitivity, you may be fine with oats not specifically labeled gluten-free.
- Orzo: Can be listed as risoni- it is a short pasta derived from wheat.

P - R

- Panko: They are a Japanese type of breadcrumb and are derived from wheat unless otherwise stated.
- Pasta: Derived from wheat unless an alternative flour is listed.
- Pearl barley: Whole barley with the outer hull removed and it has been polished.
- Rye: This is a grain related to both wheat and barley.

S - U

- Secale cereale: Another name for rye.
- Seitan: A meat substitute made from wheat gluten.
- Spelt: A species of wheat.
- Semolina: A derivative of durum wheat.
- Soft wheat: This contains less gluten, but it is still wheat.
- Sooji/Suji: Another name for semolina.
- Spelt: Can also be known as dinkel wheat.
- Sprouted wheat: Sprouted grains have less gluten, but are not gluten-free.
- Thickener or thickening: Unless it is from a listed gluten-free source, assume that it is derived from wheat.
- Triticale: This is a cross between wheat and rye.
- Triticum spelta: Another name for spelt.
- Triticum vulgare: Another name for wheat.
- Udon: A thick Japanese wheat noodle.

V - Z

- Vital gluten: An additive to add more gluten to flours.
- Vital wheat gluten: An additive to add more gluten to flours.
- Wheat: A cereal grain.
- Wheat berries: A whole wheat kernel.
- Wheat bran: The hard outer shell of a wheat kernel.
- Wheat germ (oil or extract): A byproduct of milling grains.
- Wheat protein: A liquid made from wheat germ.
- Wheat Starch: A simple starch extracted from wheat.
- Whole wheat flour: Made from milling the whole grain of wheat berry.

This glossary for alternative names for gluten, is here to help you better decipher ingredient labels on gluten-free food packaging.

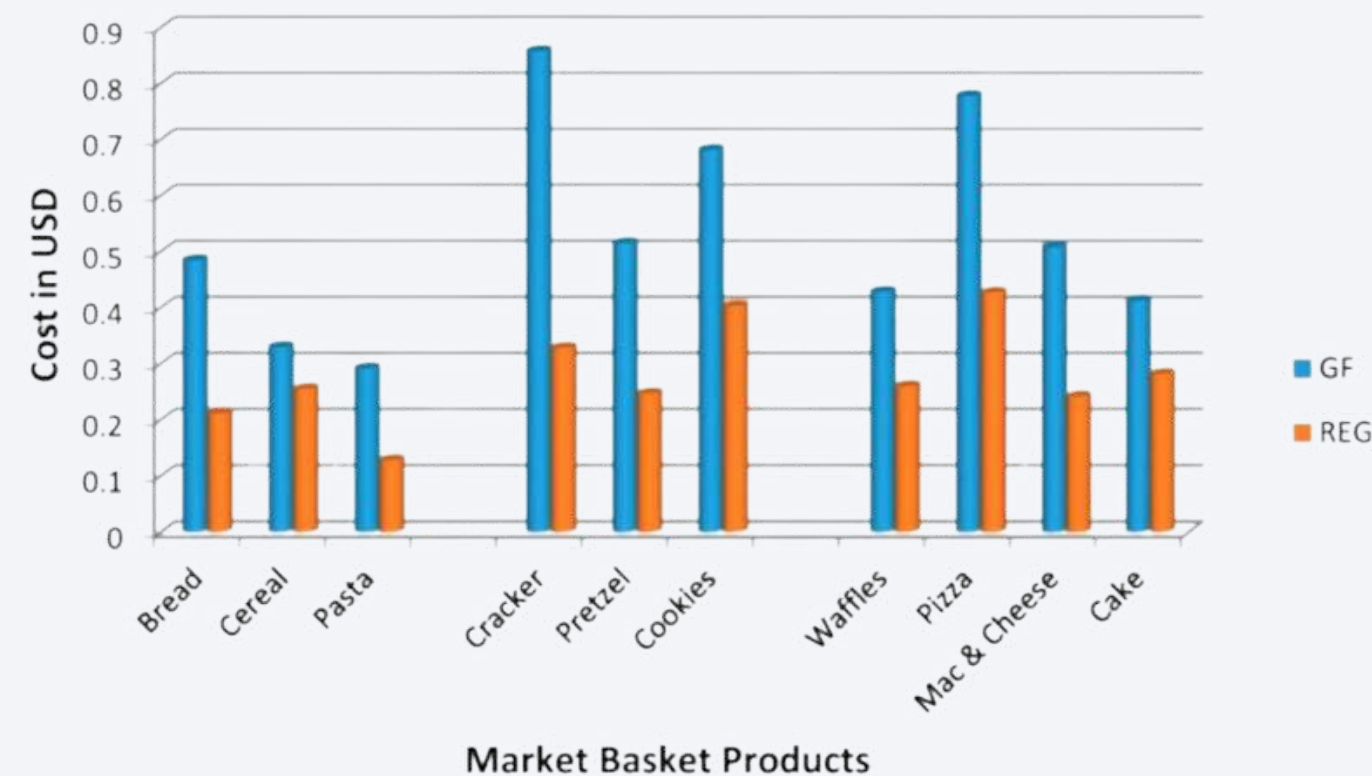
[Click/tap here to download the Alternative Sources of Gluten infographic](#)



7 Tips for Living Gluten-Free on A Budget

The gluten-free food market has exploded in the past 5 five years and, in the process, has become a mainstay on more and more shelves at local grocery stores everywhere. The popularity of gluten-free food is expected to continue growing in the coming years too.

Hopefully, the increased market competition will result in more affordable gluten-free products being readily available. Until then, we have to deal with the reality that eating gluten-free isn't cheap. Actually, whenever you get into food products that cater to any specialty/niche diet (like gluten-free), you are generally going to pay more for less. It's not fair, but that's just how the gluten-free cookie crumbles. Rather than spend time on why it costs more, or whether the added cost is justified, we are going to focus on tips for living gluten-free on a budget that will offset the extra expense.



Source: [The National Center for Biotechnology Information](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6744441/)

A 2019 study published in the [Journal Nutrients](https://doi.org/10.3390/11010018) found that gluten-free products were overall 183% more expensive than normal gluten-containing products and were 139% more expensive from mass-market producers than the wheat-based version of the same product.

1 Only those with celiac disease or non-celiac gluten sensitivity, need to eat gluten-free.

We realize it's much easier cooking one meal for everyone, but that is a luxury that most of us can't afford when going gluten-free. It is much more economical to purchase as many gluten-based staples like bread, pasta, and flour whenever possible. Keep the gluten-free products for those that require them only.

A HUGE concern with cooking both gluten and gluten-free food in the same environment is cross-contamination. Every person who enters the kitchen must be aware of the health hazards of not keeping all foods separate and the importance of cleaning cooking areas and not sharing any cooking tools/utensils without thorough washing.

2 Sales, coupons, samples and apps.

- **Sales:** Before going shopping, always research sales online and check your local flyers for sales at your neighbourhood stores. It is now common for sales to feature “specialty” diet items like gluten-free so make a point of knowing what's on sale and stock up.
- **Coupons:** Many brands make coupons available to encourage new customers to buy their products (or solidify loyalty from those that are already fans). Reach out to the company and inquire if they have coupons.
- **Samples:** Samples give you the chance to try before you buy. They are a great way to avoid wasting money on a new product you may not like. Search online or contact the manufacturer for a sample or a free coupon.
- **Apps:** Apps are a great way to check product ingredients, sales, samples, and rebates/coupons.

3

Plan your meals.

When you leave deciding what to cook to the last minute, you are more often than not, going to spend more money on ingredients. Menu planning allows you to consider how you can incorporate the most natural, gluten-free foods, what's in season, what's on sale, and what you have on hand to create delicious (and economical) meals.

4

Shopping.

- Always create a list that considers your planned meals. Never go shopping in-person or online without first creating a list based on your meal plans. This will save you from adding things to your physical or virtual shopping carts that you don't need.
- Buy whole foods that are naturally gluten-free, as they will most likely be cheaper and will have better nutritional value. Whole grains like brown rice, wild rice, and quinoa are readily available at most stores. Potatoes are a great carb to add to most meals.
- Buy fresh seasonal fruit and vegetables at peak season when they are at their cheapest and most delicious. Stop by your local farmer's market to buy the best of what is locally grown. There are generally deals to be had especially if you buy in bulk.
- Buy in bulk when you find a product you like on sale or when produce is at its seasonal best. Minimize the number of prepared gluten-free specialty/snack foods like crackers, cakes, cookies, and cereals as they are costly.

5

Cooking.

Make recipes that use the food:

- you have on hand;
- that is seasonally abundant (and economical);
- that is on sale that week; and/or
- that is naturally gluten-free and readily available. For example, recipes that include rice or potatoes or quinoa.

Cook in batches. Recipes for soups and stews made with seasonal vegetables, potatoes, beans, and rice are economical, and easy to cook in larger batches. They can be frozen for fast, heat and serve meals when you need them.

6

Limit the times you eat out at restaurants or pick up take-away.

Just as gluten-free products are more expensive in grocery stores, they are also more expensive in restaurants. I mean, check out the pricing at your local pizza shop. If they offer gluten-free, you are generally going to pay the same price for a small/medium gluten-free round pizza as you would for an extra large one made with gluten dough..

7

Build a network.

Join our [Gluten-free Foodee Facebook group](#) or other social media groups. You can also build your own networks with other gluten-free foodees you know. You can share shopping tips (current deals and coupons), recipes and other helpful gluten-free living tips and info.

Don't feel like you have to adapt all of these tips for living gluten-free on a budget . Having said that, the more you can do, the greater the cost-savings to you.



10 Basic Gluten-Free Shopping Tips to Make Shopping A Breeze

When you first start gluten-free shopping, you quickly realize there is a complexity to it that was not there during your gluten shopping days. Suddenly, all the shelves you used to happily pluck products off of, are mostly off limits. At first, it sort of feels like there is nothing left to buy and you're reminded of the words of the late great comic, John Pinette.

“Do you know what has gluten in it? EVERYTHING!”

John Pinette, Stand-up comedian, actor, and Broadway performer

Luckily, that is not the case. Over the past 5 years, the demand for gluten-free products has exploded so they now occupy more shelf space at grocery stores everywhere. The popularity of gluten-free food is not slowing down either. With the increased demand, more and more gluten-free products are now available but we still need a strategy to ensure we are optimizing the time and money we spend shopping to get the best, gluten-free products for us. These 10 basic gluten-free shopping tips will help get you started and make shopping a breeze.

1 Always start with a list.

Your list will keep you on track and make sure you get all the ingredients you need to make the gluten-free recipes you have planned. Menu planning allows you to take advantage of seasonal produce at peak freshness, sales, coupons, and helps you plan nutritionally balanced meals. This is a key tip especially for those of us living gluten-free on a budget.

2 Do your research.

Research specific products while you're making your list so you know exactly what to get and can pre-confirm that it's gluten-free. You can look up ingredients on manufacturer websites and call, chat or email questions if you can't find the information you wanted. It is your right to know what's in the food you eat.

You can also join gluten-free groups - like our [Gluten-Free Foodee Facebook group](#) - so you have a community to consult. The more informed you are, the less time you will spend looking for product and reading labels in the grocery store aisle.

- 3 Shop the outer aisles.**
This is where some of the products that are naturally gluten-free are stocked. Items like vegetables, fruit, deli, dairy, meat, and fish. Stock up on these items – especially when produce is seasonally in their prime both taste and price-wise. If purchasing deli meat or prepared meat products like burgers, confirm that there is no gluten in the filler or breading. In other words, read the label!
- 4 Check for a gluten-free section.**
Some grocery stores will combine “specialty diet” and “health food” items in specific areas of the store. Within those areas, there may be a gluten-free section. Ask an associate at the store if they have a section for specialty diet items like gluten-free or ask for assistance in locating gluten-free items.
- 5 Look for Gluten-Free certification.**
Gluten-Free certification can give you some assurance that the production of the product meets the strictest of gluten-free standards. Having said that, you still have to give the label a glance to confirm? See tip #6.
- 6 Always read ingredients on the label.**
You must always read the ingredients on the label. It’s just worth repeating again and again. Learn the names of alternative sources of gluten and the the difference between “contains” and “may contain” so you fully understand the listed ingredients on products before you buy them. Even if it’s a product that appears to be gluten-free – it’s better to take the extra minute to review the label rather than take it home and potentially make yourself or a loved one feel ill.

- 7** **Wheat-free DOES NOT mean gluten-free.**
Some products will make the fact that it is wheat-free very prominent on the label, but it can still contain barley, rye, or spelt which contain gluten. Always read the label (see tip #6).
- 8** **Buy whole gluten-free grains that are naturally gluten-free.**
Grains like brown/white rice, quinoa, corn meal, buckwheat, and wild rice are readily available and gluten-free. You don't have to worry about hidden gluten or paying a premium for them, so win-win.
- 9** **Avoid Bulk Food Sections.**
Unless the bulk food section is dedicated to gluten-free products, there is a high chance of cross-contamination. You don't know if items containing gluten have made their way into the gluten-free bin, if the same utensils were used to take products from both gluten and gluten-free bins, or if the bins themselves have been used for both gluten and gluten-free products without proper sanitation. It's just safer to skip the bulk section if it does not contain gluten-free items only.
- 10** **Use gluten-free shopping apps.**
Gluten-free apps can find sales on the products you are looking for and they can also help scan the label to look for gluten in the ingredients. I recommend you still confirm ingredients on labels. Some of these apps rely on crowd-sourced info and (sometimes) the way a product is manufactured/ingredients used can change frequently especially when they are new on the market.

If you are unsure about a product, don't buy it. Take the time to research before investing your hard-earned money. Even though shopping for gluten-free food can be overwhelming at first, it gets better. It gets easier. It all becomes second nature with practice.



Reading Food Labels: What "May Contain" Vs. "Contains" Means

People turn to a gluten-free diet for many different reasons. Some do so because they have Celiac disease, a serious autoimmune disorder triggered when gluten is ingested. Others, like myself, do so because they have non-Celiac gluten sensitivity. For me, living a gluten-free lifestyle, helps control my issues with chronic pain and inflammation. And others turn to a gluten-free diet as they are looking for a healthier way to eat.

Adapting to a gluten-free diet can be a daunting – but doable – challenge. One of the most important tips for going gluten-free is reading food labels to determine if the ingredients contain any alternative sources of gluten. Sometimes, labels will use the terms “may contain” and/or “contains” and we explain what that can mean.

FAST FACT:

For a product to be considered gluten-free, it must not have intentional sources of gluten added to it, and any cross-contamination must be less than 20 parts per million (ppm) of gluten. This is an internationally recognized standard.

Reading Food Labels: What Does "Contains" Mean?

This may seem obvious, but it means that an allergen is present in the product. Below the ingredient list, is where you’ll generally see the word “contains” label. It will list which major allergens are present like soy or wheat or dairy or peanuts, etc. This is information you could find yourself by reading the label but sometimes wheat and its derivatives (other gluten products) are labeled under other names you may not be familiar with, or they are not easily recognizable.

The "contains" list is there to make reading food labels easier for people who have to avoid allergens. If you see “contains: wheat” after the ingredients you know you don’t have to spend any more time reading the label. You know it contains gluten so no need to Google unknown words. Basically, this saves you a lot of time and hassle when shopping for food and keeps you safe from allergens.

What Does "May Contain" Mean?

Basically, it means that an allergen MAY be present in this product. The manufacturer can't guarantee that it isn't present, even though the allergen is not listed in the ingredients. The manufacturer wants to voluntarily let the consumer know that they do not have a dedicated gluten-free facility for producing the product. Thus, "may contain" labels boils down to cross-contamination potential. The product was either made in a facility that also makes products containing wheat, or that equipment and/or employees are used to produce both wheat and gluten-free products.

It is a warning that there could be trace amounts of that allergen present in the product and it is probably more than 20ppm. An example could be a bag of rice that says "may contain wheat" on the label. Now, rice is inherently gluten-free, but depending on how and where it is produced, there is a possibility for cross-contamination. This could be true of any product from frozen fruit/vegetables to beans or corn meal. This is why you must always read the labels, on products.

Gluten-Free Tip:

You can always call the manufacturer and ask about the product, to find out why it "may contain" wheat/gluten. Sometimes knowing what the risk of cross-contamination is, can help you make an informed decision.

Those who are Celiac or are very sensitive should definitely stay away from "may contain" products, as that trace amount could be triggering.

Here is a link to [The Canadian Celiac Association page on Labelling: Guidelines for Individuals with Celiac Disease Following a Gluten-Free Diet](#)

What's The Deal With Oats?

Oats are inherently gluten-free. However, when oats are processed they are often processed using the same equipment/lines/machinery/factory as wheat. So with oats, there is a high chance of cross-contamination. If you are Celiac or particularly sensitive to trace amounts of gluten, you should only purchase certified gluten-free oats or products containing certified gluten-free oats.

Reading food labels can be very confusing especially when you first change your diet. However, much like with anything else, it gets easier with time and familiarity. So you'll be quickly evaluating products and scanning labels like a pro in no time.



5 Of the Best Gluten-Free Apps to Make Your Life Easier

Apps are generally designed to make our lives easier and/or more enjoyable. They manage to add even more functionality to our smartphones as they make specific information available to you at a moment's notice.

Disclaimer: Keep in mind that while gluten-free apps make every attempt to provide users with the most comprehensive and reliable information, they can be limited. Many apps are based on a crowdsourcing model so the accuracy/validity of the information may not have been tested or there could be gaps in the information. Also, occasionally ingredients and facilities differ between countries, so that adds a layer of complexity to the information vetting process. Ultimately, it's important to be able to vet places and products yourself as you are your own best advocate.

1

Find Me Gluten Free:

This free app allows you to find restaurants in your area, no matter where you are. You can even look for restaurants in areas where you will be travelling. By being able to search other areas you can better plan your trip(s), and outings. Planning ahead lets you take the guesswork out of where you can safely dine, and allows you to just relax and enjoy yourself.

Reviews are user-generated, so you get an honest opinion on the food, service, and if customers had any reactions afterwards. Be sure to read multiple reviews of the restaurant to get a varied perspective so you can determine if a good/bad experience was a one-off or the norm. Find Me Gluten Free is a website, and it is available for both iOS and Android. Remember, if you have any other questions reach out to the restaurant themselves, and/or access their website. Keep our [tips for gluten-free dining out infographic](#) handy for quick reference when needed.

2

Yelp:

This might seem like an obvious choice, but you can select gluten-free as an option when searching for restaurants. Yelp can help you plan more than just meals too. So, if you are traveling, this app might help you plan other areas of your trip as well. Yelp is a website, and it is available as an app for both iOS and Android.

3

The Gluten-Free Scanner:

This is a scanner you can use in the grocery store to scan products and find out if they are gluten-free. This scanner is available for both iOS and Android. The downside of this app is that sometimes products aren't in the scanner. Also, some consumers complain that the information in the app is the same on the box. The scanner does hope to point out hidden gluten, so it goes beyond what is on the box. This would be helpful if you are shopping somewhere new, looking for a new category of product, or are new to gluten-free living.

4

Shopwell:

This app gives you a way to personalize your allergen profile. Thus, when you scan an item, it tells you if multiple allergens are present, not just gluten. So, if you have a nut or dairy allergy as well, this app might just be for you. After inputting your goals and needs into the app, this app can even tell you if another brand's version of the product you want can better suit your needs. So, if you need to be low sodium or sugar-free (for example), this app helps you make healthier choices for the items you need. This app is free and available for both iOS and Android operating systems.

5

Eat! Gluten-Free:

This app is from the Celiac Disease Foundation, and it helps with living your best gluten-free life. This is a "hub of gluten-free products, recipes, services, and companies." It also has news and research. Eat! Gluten-Free would be a great introduction to the world of living gluten-free. This information is not just for those with Celiac disease, as anyone with non-Celiac gluten sensitivities will find this a very handy resource. This app is available for both iOS and Android-so everyone can use it.



CONNECT WITH US

If you have any questions relating to the content of this guide, or if you want to just say hi, please feel free to reach out to us via:

[Linktree](#)

Join our [Gluten-free Foodee Facebook group](#).

We'd love to hear from you and connect.