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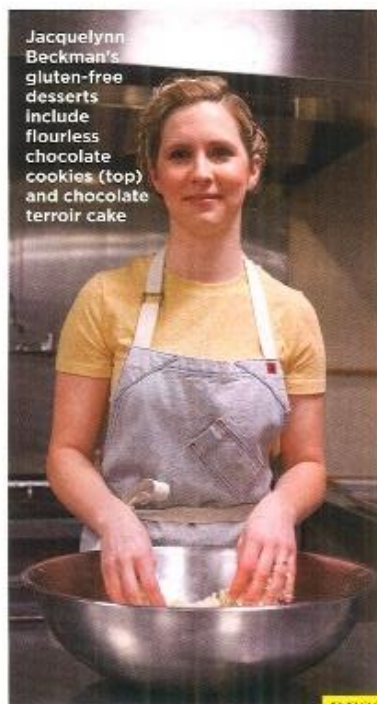


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Jacquelynn Beckman's gluten-free desserts include flourless chocolate cookies (top) and chocolate terroir cake



DESSERTS

Glute Work Out

A Kirkland pastry chef's flour blends are making Trellis a gluten-free dessert hot spot

BY AMY PENNINGTON

WE'RE ALL FAMILIAR WITH THE SAYING that necessity is the mother of invention, though few may experience this as directly as pastry chef Jacquelynn Beckman. When the 26-year-old moved from California to Washington in 2015 to oversee the pastry department at Trellis Restaurant in Kirkland's Heathman Hotel, she quickly ran into a challenge: Her boss was gluten intolerant.

"He basically avoids desserts," explains Beckman. For a young pastry chef wanting to wow her new boss, this just wouldn't fly. "I would make something and wanted his opinion, but he couldn't eat [the desserts]. It was really frustrating," she says. To create confections he could eat meant finding the perfect gluten-free flour, which turned out to be equally frustrating for Beckman. With gluten-free baking, flour blends are especially helpful to achieve a particular texture or flavor. She found most available mixes to be "super elastic and leave a taste on your tongue that's nasty." Beckman explored a range of readily available gluten-free flour mixes before deciding to make her own.

Through trial and error, Beckman created several blends that she uses in the pastry kitchen. She combines a mix of gluten-free flour—such as coconut, rice and brown rice flours—with varying proportions of nut meals, as each has a different purpose. Almond flour produces a lot of fat, which works well for dense cake, like her popular gluten-free chocolate terroir cake, but can also leave dough feeling greasy. For a leaner, lighter cake, she opts for pistachio nut meal. If she wants flaky layers and volume in a dough mix (as she does for the macarons that accompany Trellis' afternoon tea), she'll opt for ground hazelnuts.

"I would [dine] out with gluten-free friends and they [were always limited to]

GLUTEN-FREE BAKING TIPS

» WANT TO EXPERIMENT WITH GLUTEN-FREE BAKING AT HOME?

"Start simple, with an easy cookie, quick bread, scones or muffin recipe," says Beckman. A simple recipe with high fat and egg content tends to be more forgiving and "allows you to familiarize yourself with how gluten-free flours interact," Beckman says. She also suggests steering clear of recipes for bread or rolls that require gluten for strength in the dough.

» BECKMAN'S DIY GLUTEN-FREE MIX

You can substitute gluten-free flours in recipes, but not all flours are created equal. "During my trials, I noticed that coconut flour has an amazing flavor profile and blends well with almond meal, which is what I use in one of my cake recipes," says Beckman. "It produces a rich, brownie-like flavor." Her favorite flours for blending? Almond meal, coconut flour (Trader Joe's makes a coconut flour that Beckman loves) and hazelnut meal, though she suggests running the flours through a food processor first, "which creates more volume and a lighter, well-blended texture."

This flour mix is good for a simple cookie, cake or scone recipe.

- ½ cup coconut flour
- 1 ½ cups white rice flour
- ¼ cup nut meal (such as almond meal, though any nut meal will do), super fine
- ¼ cup tapioca flour

» NOT SO ADVENTUROUS? BUY COMMERCIAL.

Beckman recommends Bob's Red Mill Gluten Free 1-to-1 Baking Flour, which can be substituted for all-purpose flour, cup to cup, in most recipes. For bread, she likes Manini's Gluten-Free Multi-Grain Flour.

PAIGE SMITH

RECIPE

FLOURLESS CHOCOLATE COOKIES

These cookies are terrific on their own and also can be used for pastry chef Jacquelyn Beckman's chocolate terroir cake (see seattlemag.com for full cake recipe).

- 1 ounce cocoa nibs (available at Theo Chocolate)
- 2 ounces soft butter
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup plus 3 tablespoons brown sugar
- ½ cup plus 3 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 8 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
- 6 ounces 70 percent chocolate, melted (Beckman uses Valrhona Guanaja 70 percent, or you can use a bittersweet)
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups gluten-free flour (such as Beckman's DIY blend or a commercial brand; see page 132)

- » In food processor, grind nibs to rice-size grains.
- » In mixer with paddle, cream butter, baking soda, salt and cocoa nibs on low for 2–5 minutes, until soft.
- » With mixer off, add sugars and cocoa powder. Mix on medium speed for 1–2 minutes, until fluffy. Add melted chocolate and vanilla extract. Mix 1 minute. With mixer off, add flour. Mix on low only to combine. Scoop cookies into about 1 tablespoon-size balls and place on a sheet pan, leaving at least 1 inch between them. Bake at 325 degrees for 20 minutes; let set until cool, at least 1 hour.

the same dessert options—crème brûlée, sorbet or maybe a molten chocolate cake,” Beckman says. “They were never treated as important diners.” At Trellis, she has changed that, although she no longer calls out “gluten-free” desserts, which make up about one-third of the dessert menu, and instead leaves it to staff to chat with customers. “You’d never know these desserts are gluten-free unless we told you.” ☛