THE GRAIN-FREE SNACKER

70+ GRAIN-FREE SNACK RECIPES

Carol Lovett
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I’m Carol, founder of Ditch the Wheat, a blog devoted to grain-free, real food-based recipes and health topics. Since I was a teenager I have been dealing with irritable bowel syndrome (IBS). One Christmas, I had enough with IBS and was ready for a solution. I marched into my doctor’s office and asked him, “Should I consider eliminating gluten?” After a discussion, he uttered the words, “Ditch the wheat.” I did ditch the wheat—around the holidays(!)—and I survived. After one week, I felt amazing. My bloating was gone, my mood issues disappeared, and I got a bonus I didn’t expect: weight loss. Since then, I have been compelled to seek a healthier way of life. However, I had to relearn how to cook and bake. I enjoy passing this knowledge on to you to help you with your journey. I started my journey on the Atkins diet. Currently, I consider myself someone who strives to eat real food that benefits my body and a follower of the Paleo/primal/ancestral diet movement.

I want to empower you with these recipes from The Grain-Free Snacker. Too often, I hear about people who give up on a grain-free diet because they lack an easy recipe for their favorite cookies or they feel they can’t deal with the idea of never eating bread again. They go back to their old lifestyle and continue with their food sensitivities and the consequences. There is an easier way and I want to show you.

I created The Grain-Free Snacker because my struggle on a grain-free diet was finding snacks that I enjoyed. I knew what to eat for dinner; that was easy and usually involved chicken and a salad, but snacks were hard for me. I couldn’t wrap my mind around how to make a cookie without flour and I cried over the idea of never having cupcakes again. There is a way to enjoy a grain-free cookie or cupcake or almost any snack that you want. For this cookbook, I created recipes for cookies, doughnuts, dairy-free ice cream, and so much more. I hope you never have to grieve for your old lifestyle again, but instead rejoice in the possibility of something more nourishing for your body.

Enjoy,

Carol Lovett
MY VIEW ON SNACKING

Many health gurus say snacking is unnecessary and hinders your weight loss goals. Instead, they recommend increasing the size of your meals to avoid hunger between meals. I believe there is a lot of truth to that. I also don’t feel it’s the end of the world to have a craving for something sweet or crunchy, and to indulge that craving. For me, snacking is an occasional indulgence. It can bring a sense of balance to your lifestyle, where you are not depriving yourself, but instead finding healthy ways to deal with your cravings.

MUNCHIES WHEN YOU ARE AT HOME

When you are at home, you have 100% control over your food. If you are like me and have a gluten sensitivity, you’ll want to avoid snacks containing gluten and any other ingredients that you react to (also consult with your doctor). After considering what you can’t have, the list of foods you can eat seems very small. You have to rethink your snacks. Before, you might have snacked on Doritos while watching a movie. Consider trying out one of my homemade chip recipes from Chapter 2 (page 28), which are made with different types of veggies and cooked with healthy fats like olive and coconut oils. If you miss dipping something crunchy into a dip, think about slicing vegetables like carrots or cucumbers into thin chip–like shapes and making one of my aioli–based dips from Chapter 1 (page 14).

MUNCHIES WHEN YOU ARE OUT

Do you need a grab–and–go snack to keep you full while you’re out for the day? If you have an on–the–go lifestyle, make snacks you love in larger batches and portion into snack–size servings. Great to–go snacks include: any of the Fruit and Nut Bars from Chapter 9 (page 132), Paleo Maple Granola (page 74), Paleo Party Mix (page 72), or the gelatin snacks in Chapter 4 (page 62). When I was a university student in Toronto, I would be stuck in class for hours and needed a snack to get me through the three–hour lectures. Most often, I packed cut–up vegetables and a homemade dip.
SNACKS FOR ENTERTAINING

If you’re a social butterfly and host your own parties, you have 100% control over the food you serve. You can provide as many gluten-free options as you want. When I’m hosting a party, I serve my guests shrimp with cocktail sauce, veggies and dip, a cheese and meat tray, and munchie snacks like Paleo Party Mix (page 72). You can also consider serving more party-like snacks included in this cookbook, like Watermelon Basil Bites (page 90), Maple Balsamic Meatballs (page 98), Melon & Prosciutto (page 84), and Roasted Figs (page 88).

Attending a party when you have food sensitivities is really scary and intimidating. I remember my first few parties thinking I would have nothing to eat and in fact that was very true. The parties were usually held at my sister-in-law’s home and she would serve everything except something gluten free; even the chips were usually Doritos which are not gluten free. This is my advice for you: Whether you have been asked to bring an item or not, bring something! Make something you love and make enough to share. You’ll be a lot more comfortable knowing you have something you can eat.

SNACKING WHILE TRAVELLING

You’re going on a trip or you’re going to be away for the day, what’s your snack strategy? Consider making snacks that are travel friendly, or think about what will be available wherever it is you’ll be. Snacks that travel well include: Fruit & Nut Bars (page 132), Paleo Maple Granola (page 74), and Chocolate Chip Cupcakes (page 114). Avoid packing snacks that require refrigeration and keep in mind the mess factor. You don’t want a snack that is going to leave a mess in your car if you’re on a road trip.
The focus of The Grain-Free Snacker is to bring you recipes made with natural ingredients that cater to individuals on a grain-free diet. Grain-free diets are part of the movement found within the Paleo diet, primal diet, ancestral diet, real food movement and an overall desire to eat gluten free with an emphasis on foods that decrease inflammation. I chose ingredients that reflect the principles within these diet movements: natural, mostly dairy-free, low inflammation and grain-free.

**ALMOND FLOUR & ALMOND MEAL**

You run to the grocery store looking for almond flour because you are desperate to enjoy cookies and bread again. In the health food aisle, you see almond meal. Scratching your head, you figure it’s all the same, ground almonds, what could possibly be the difference? While it’s true there is no difference in ingredients, each of these products will result in a different baked good. Almond meal is coarser and thus results in a lumpy, heavier end product. Almond flour is finely ground, so the results more closely resemble “regular” baked goods.

Almond meal is typically available for sale everywhere but where is the elusive almond flour? Don’t worry, you can make almond flour in your kitchen by grinding blanched almonds or almond meal in your coffee grinder until you get an extremely fine flour. You’ll love the results. You can also purchase almond flour by Honeyville. They produce the finest almond flour I am aware of. Ideally, you should store your almond flour in your fridge or freezer. The fat in the almonds can go rancid if you store it at room temperature long term.

**ARROWROOT FLOUR OR STARCH**

Arrowroot flour and arrowroot starch are the same thing. Arrowroot comes from the arrowroot tuber. The flour is white and fine like regular flour. I use arrowroot in recipes to add lightness to the texture of the finished baked goods. You can also use arrowroot as you would cornstarch. I use it to thicken sauces and fruit jams.

**COCONUT BUTTER**

Coconut butter is made from shredded coconut flakes and it is delicious. It is made like almond butter; you put the coconut flakes in a food processor and blend until it’s smooth. This is an item I usually purchase. You can also heat coconut butter and use it like an icing. Keep coconut butter stored in your pantry.
COCONUT FLOUR
Coconut flour is my favourite flour to work with and yet so many people shudder at the thought. This is usually because they have had a bad experience using it in the past and ended up with soggy, dense and/or grainy-tasting products. This finely ground flour made from dried coconut meat is not the enemy people think it is based on their bad experiences. When used in proper ratios, it can produce the lightest and—dare I say—fluffiest cupcakes you’ve ever experienced in your grain-free baking adventures. Coconut flour has the highest fibre content of any flour. When working with coconut flour you must use more liquids than you would normally use. For example, many cakes featured in The Grain-Free Snacker include four eggs per ¼ cup coconut flour. I walk you through my special technique of fluffing the egg whites with a mixing machine, creaming the coconut oil and sweetener, and then wrapping it in egg yolks. This technique gives you pleasing results every time. You can store coconut flour at room temperature in your pantry.

COCONUT MILK
Coconut milk is made by mixing shredded coconut meat with water to produce a milk. It is naturally thick. You’ll notice in the recipes that I often suggest using coconut cream. Coconut cream is the cream that rises to the top when you refrigerate coconut milk over night. I recommend searching for a pure and organic coconut milk free from added ingredients, such as guar gum. I personally prefer the brand Aroy-D, which you can find in most grocery stores.

COCONUT PALM SUGAR
Coconut palm sugar is produced from the sap of cut flower buds from coconut palm trees. It tastes very similar to brown sugar and you can use it in a 1:1 ratio to brown sugar. Coconut palm sugar is harder to digest if you have gut problems and therefore is not recommended in diets with a focus on healing the gut. If you are unable to consume coconut palm sugar, simply replace the quantity requested in the recipe with raw honey.

RAW HONEY
Raw honey is unprocessed and unpasteurized honey. Many real food experts believe that honey left in a raw state provides antioxidants, minerals, vitamins and enzymes. Also, because of raw honey’s 1:1 ratio of fructose to dextrose, it is easy to digest. Those who have a harder time digesting fructose can often tolerate honey. This sweetener is often allowed on diets for treating gut-related problems such as GAPS.
NATURE’S SNACKS

SATISFIES THAT SWEET CRAVING

FRUIT OF THE GODS
THE PERFECT DIPPER

NATURE'S ORIGINAL GUMDROP

THESE ARE ALL GREAT FOR WHEN YOU'RE ON THE GO!

THIS + GUACAMOLE = HEAVEN

A SCOOP FOR DIP

NATURE'S SNACKS

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I love using coconut flour as the base of my grain-free cupcakes and muffins. The texture is amazing if you use the correct ratios. These cupcakes will remind you of the light and fluffy cupcakes from your pre-grain-free life. And the chocolate chip cookie icing adds extra indulgence.

**INGREDIENTS**

- 4 eggs, separated
- 2 tablespoons maple syrup
- ¼ teaspoon cream of tartar
- ¼ cup extra virgin coconut oil
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ⅛ teaspoon sea salt
- ¼ cup, plus 1 tablespoon sifted coconut flour
- ⅛ teaspoon baking soda
- ¼ cup semi-sweet chocolate chips

**Icing**

- 1 cup palm shortening
- 2 tablespoons almond butter
- 2 tablespoons coconut palm sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ⅛ cup semi-sweet chocolate chips

**DIRECTIONS**

1. Preheat oven to 350° F. Line a six-count cupcake pan with cupcake liners.
2. In a large bowl, using a mixing machine, combine the egg whites, maple syrup and cream of tartar. Whip the egg whites until stiff peaks form.
3. In a separate bowl combine the egg yolks, coconut oil, vanilla, and salt until mixed. Add the sifted coconut flour and baking soda to the egg yolk mixture. Mix until smooth.
4. With the mixer on, slowly add the egg yolk mixture to the whipped egg whites. Last, add the chocolate chips. Mix until well combined. Pour the batter into the cupcake pan, about half full.
5. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes until the tops are firm to the touch and a toothpick comes out clean.

**ICING**

1. Place the ingredients except the chocolate chips in a large bowl. Use a mixing machine to whip the ingredients until the icing is light and fluffy. Spread the icing on fully-cooled cupcakes. Sprinkle chocolate chips on top.
2. Consume the cupcakes immediately or store in an airtight container for no longer than 2 days. You can also freeze the cupcakes.
I love Larabars and these recipes are my answer to making my favourite bars at home. My all-time, must-have flavour is the lemon bar. I go crazy over these bars!

**FRUIT & NUT BARS**

**BARS DIRECTIONS**

Place all the ingredients in a food processor.

Pulse until the ingredients are mixed well and the nuts are in small pieces.

Place parchment paper in a loaf pan. Press the bar mixture into the loaf pan. The bars should be a ½ inch thick and 3 inches wide.

Cut the bars into 1 ½ inch bars.

Store in the fridge or freezer.

**INGREDIENTS**

**COCONUT CREAM**

1 cup pitted Medjool dates
1 cup shredded coconut
½ cup almond slices
½ cup cashews
¼ cup coconut butter

MAKES 8 BARS

**CHERRY**

1 cup almond slices
1 cup pitted Medjool dates
1 cup dried unsweetened cherries

MAKES 6 BARS
I love Larabars and these recipes are my answer to making my favourite bars at home. My all-time, must-have flavour is the lemon bar. I go crazy over these bars!

Place all the ingredients in a food processor. Pulse until the ingredients are mixed well and the nuts are in small pieces.

Place parchment paper in a loaf pan. Press the bar mixture into the loaf pan. The bars should be a ½ inch thick and 3 inches wide.

Cut the bars into 1 ½ inch bars. Store in the fridge or freezer.

**BARS DIRECTIONS**

**COCONUT CREAM**

MAKES 8 BARS

- 1 cup almond slices
- 1 cup pitted Medjool dates
- 1 cup dried unsweetened cherries

**CHERRY**

MAKES 6 BARS

- 1 cup cashews
- 1 cup pitted Medjool dates
- 1 cup dried blueberries
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice, plus 2 teaspoons

**BLUEBERRY PIE**

MAKES 6 BARS

- 1 cup cashews
- 1 cup pitted Medjool dates
- 1 cup dried blueberries
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice, plus 2 teaspoons

**LEMON**

MAKES 4 BARS

- ½ cup almond slices
- ½ cup cashews
- 1 cup pitted Medjool dates
- 3 tablespoons lemon juice, plus 1 teaspoon

**BANANA**

MAKES 4 BARS

- 1 ¼ cup pitted Medjool dates
- 1 cup almond slices
- 1 cup dried banana chips
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
These popsicles are simple to make and do not contain added sugar. The popsicles rely only on the natural sweetness of the fruit. You can also sweeten them up by adding raw honey or maple syrup.

**BASIC INSTRUCTIONS**

In a medium-sized bowl, add all the ingredients. Mix until combined and then pour it into your popsicle molds.

Freeze the popsicles immediately.

When the popsicles are frozen, remove them by running warm water over the popsicle mold.

Pull the popsicle out of the mold.

**POPSICLES**

**CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIE DOUGH**

3 ¾ cups puréed banana  
½ cup, plus 2 tablespoons semi-sweet chocolate chips  
1 ¼ teaspoons vanilla extract

**STRAWBERRY CANTALOUPE**

2 cups puréed strawberries  
2 cups puréed cantaloupe

Pour the puréed strawberries and cantaloupe into the popsicle molds in layers, alternating the flavors.

**CANTALOUPE**

4 cups, plus 6 tablespoons puréed cantaloupe (or preferred fruit)
3 ¾ cups puréed banana
½ cup, plus 2 tablespoons semi-sweet chocolate chips
1 ¼ teaspoons vanilla extract

**CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIE DOUGH**

2 cups puréed strawberries
2 cups puréed cantaloupe

Pour the puréed strawberries and cantaloupe into the popsicle molds in layers, alternating the flavors. Lightly swirl both ingredients and then pour into your popsicle molds.

3 ¾ cups puréed banana
½ cup, plus 2 tablespoons almond butter

**ALMOND BUTTER BANANA SWIRL**

Lightly swirl both ingredients and then pour into your popsicle molds.

3 cups, plus 2 tablespoons coconut cream*
3 teaspoons raw apple cider vinegar
1 ¼ teaspoons vanilla extract
1 ¼ cups puréed strawberries

**STRAWBERRY CREAM**

In a medium-sized bowl, add the coconut cream, raw apple cider vinegar and vanilla. Mix until combined. Then add the strawberry purée, lightly swirl them and pour the mixture into your popsicle molds.

Note: To make coconut cream, place a can of coconut milk in your fridge. The next day, scoop out the cream that has risen to the top, and you have coconut cream.

4 cups, plus 6 tablespoons puréed cantaloupe (or preferred fruit)

**3-COLOUR POPSICLES**

Pour the puréed strawberries into the bottom of a popsicle mold. Pour the cantaloupe next, and then top it off with the banana.

2 ½ cups puréed banana
1 cup puréed cantaloupe
¾ cup puréed strawberry

**STRAWBERRY BANANA**

Lightly swirl both ingredients and then pour into your popsicle molds.

3 ½ cups puréed banana
½ cup, plus 2 tablespoons puréed strawberries

**STRAWBERRY BANANA**

Lightly swirl both ingredients and then pour into your popsicle molds.