

Preparation for Dining Out

This document provides questions to ask when you are looking for a safe dining experience outside of your home.

- Call ahead to get the information you need. Be considerate and call in an expected slower time. You may wish to speak to the manager.
- Do not assume. Ensure the waiter understands your issues and double check when your meal arrives. Ask questions until you are comfortable. You have the right to safe food.

Starting the Conversation on Celiac-Friendly Dining

1. Communication

- What items do you normally recommend to diners who request a GF meal?
- How are kitchen staff alerted to a GF order?
- When I receive the order, is there anything that identifies it as gluten-free (different colored plate, colored toothpicks)

2. Ingredients

- What ingredients will be used to make my order?
- In order to assess if the ingredients are safe for a person with celiac disease:
 - Says so on labels? Does it have a gluten-free claim on the label? This is especially important for high risk items like grains, nuts, seeds and lentils.
- Could GF ingredients / toppings become contaminated while they are waiting to be used?
- Will you use pure spices, prepared seasonings or soy sauce made from wheat to make my meal?
- Are deep fried items cooked in oil that has been used to deep fry breaded, battered gluten food items?
- How do you thicken sauces, dressings and soups?

3. Procedures

- Do you wash your hands / change gloves / change aprons before or in between preparing regular food?
- How do you ensure that all utensils used in preparing my food are free from traces of gluten?
- What other precautions do you take to minimize / prevent cross contamination?
 - Separate or scrubbed frying pan?
 - Griddle?
 - Pot?
 - Colander?
 - Fresh aluminum foil?
- Will my food be prepared in an area separate from the regular flow of the kitchen?

Food Cautions – if unsure or uncomfortable

Avoid fried foods, sauces, stews, pot pies, and soups unless you are assured, they are gluten-free.

Buffets are extremely risky. Utensils can be moved from gluten to gluten-free dishes or ingredients can be dropped from one container to another. Request a separate plate with only gluten-free items that is prepared prior to others receiving the buffet.

Keep it simple if unsure: salad (carry your own dressing or use oil and vinegar), unseasoned, grilled or broiled meat, baked potato and fresh fruit for dessert.

Gluten In Restaurant Foods

Items	Concerns
Salads	Croutons, wheat-based Asian noodles, wontons, pasta, or taco shells containing wheat
Salad Dressings	Wheat flour, wheat starch, soy sauce (made with wheat), or malt vinegar
Marinades	Teriyaki sauce or soy sauce (made with wheat) or beer to marinate meat, fish, poultry
Soups and Sauces	Soup bases, soup cubes, and sauces often contain wheat flour, wheat starch, or hydrolyzed wheat protein
Meat, Fish, and Poultry	Dusted or dredged with flour or bread crumbs before grilling or frying. Some burger patties may contain wheat flour, wheat starch, bread crumbs, soy sauce, or seasonings with wheat.
Pasta	GF pasta may be cooked in the same water as wheat-based pasta and/or used in the same colander to drain pasta
Rice or Rice Pilaf	Cooked in broth or with seasonings containing hydrolyzed wheat protein, wheat starch, or wheat flour. May contain bulgur wheat or barley in pilaf.
Fried Foods	Non-breaded items (e.g. French fries, nacho chips) may be cooked in the same oil as breaded items. High temperature does not destroy gluten!
Vegetables	May be prepared in sauces thickened with wheat flour or wheat starch. May be stir-fried or sautéed with seasonings or soy sauce that contains wheat.

Source: Shelley Case, RD

Follow-Up

If you had a bad experience, tell the chef or manager as soon as possible. If you had a good experience, let the chef, server and manager know.

Other

- Use a restaurant application or on-line help to narrow the selection of restaurants (Honeycomb.ai is a new application and Find Me Gluten Free is another example).
- Bring a “restaurant card”, like those offered by the Canadian Celiac Association or those that can be downloaded on-line.

Remember, you are an ambassador for the gluten-free cause!

References:

Starting the Conversation on Celiac-Friendly Dining | Ellen@theceliacscene.com | www.theceliacscene.com
 - 892 Woodhall Drive Victoria BC Canada | Ph: 250-475-6275 | Fx: 250-727-1574

Gluten in Restaurant Foods – Shelley Case, RD | Medical Advisory Board: Celiac Disease Foundation and Gluten Intolerance Group | Professional Advisory Council: Canadian Celiac Association