



Blog of the month – May 2016

Six things you need to know about barley flour

When you think of barley, the pearled kernel type is probably what comes to mind. Historically, it's been the most available and recognized barley food product. But barley comes in other forms as well, including barley flour. And that's the focus of this month's blog. Here are six things to keep in mind when using our favorite flour:

1. Barley flour is easier to find than you might think. These days, it can be found in many supermarkets – both in the packaged goods aisle and in the bulk foods section. Barley flour is also sold online from major cereal grain suppliers and flour millers.
2. Want to add more fiber to your baked goods? Barley flour is the way to go. One-half cup of barley flour contains over seven grams of total dietary fiber. That's more than you'll find in a half-cup of whole wheat or brown rice flour. *Source: USDA National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference Release 28*
3. Let's clear up the barley flour and gluten question: Yes, barley flour contains gluten, a protein that helps baked goods rise. But the type of gluten found in barley flour is different from that found in other flours like wheat and is not as effective in the rising department. So, depending on its use, you may need to combine barley flour with other flours. In other cases, you can use it alone.
4. For baked goods such as cookies, muffins and quick breads which do not require significant rising, you can use mostly or all barley flour.

If you use all barley flour, the ending result will be a denser, chewier product. If you'd like a less dense end product, start by substituting barley flour for about half of the total flour used.

5. For baked goods that require rising like yeast breads, it's best to begin by substituting barley flour for about a quarter of the total flour used.

6. Remember, barley flour yields a sweet nutty flavor, so keep that in mind when using it in your favorite recipes. And speaking of recipes, here's one we think you'll love:

Ricotta Orange Barley Pancakes

1 cup barley flour
1/3 cup all-purpose wheat flour
1/4 cup granulated sugar
2 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1 cup part skim milk ricotta
1/2 cup 2% milk
1/2 cup orange juice
1 teaspoon grated orange peel
2 large eggs, beaten
3 tablespoons butter, melted
1 teaspoon vanilla
Warm syrup and butter, for toppings

In large bowl, combine flours, sugar, baking powder and baking soda; set aside. In another large bowl, beat together ricotta, milk, orange juice, grated orange peel, eggs, butter and vanilla. Mix liquid ingredients into dry ingredients until well blended. Heat griddle or frying pan until hot. Spray with non-stick cooking spray. Spoon about 3 tablespoons batter per pancake onto griddle. Cook cakes until bubbles appear. Turn and cook until golden brown. Serve with warm syrup and butter. Makes about 12 pancakes.

Nutrients per serving (2 pancakes): calories 262, protein 10g, carbohydrates 32g, fiber 2g, fat 12g, cholesterol 101mg, sodium 409mg.

