

● Seasonal cook



Photo: Quentin Jones

Rise and shine

STEVE MANFREDI bakes crusty bread minus the gluten.

Thirty years ago, dietary restrictions were not that common. But rates of food allergy and intolerance appear to be on the rise.

The Victorian government's Better Health Channel website states that about one in 20 children and one in 100 adults have food allergies. Gluten-related disorders are among the most common in guests at our restaurants. These include gluten intolerance, coeliac disease and wheat allergy.

All this makes it difficult for a large number of people to go out to restaurants and enjoy the sort of choice many of us take for granted. Bread is one of the foods I love most, so I know I would profoundly miss it if I had to give it up. The same

applies to pasta, gnocchi and pastries. Gluten-free substitutes are available but often these are crumbly, mealy and lack the sort of fluffy soft texture and chewy crust that are features of great bread.

One of the relatively new assistants in gluten-free bread making is psyllium husk.

This fibre has a similar effect as gluten in bread dough, giving it the lift needed to produce a light, aerated crumb. And, if you make your own, you'll have fresh gluten-free bread on hand all the time.

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GLUTEN-FREE BREAD

This recipe is from baker Dan Lepard. The loaf can keep for 2-3 days. It can also be frozen whole or sliced for convenience to enjoy later.

- 4 tsp soya flour
- 50g potato starch
- 300g cornflour
- 25g psyllium husk powder
- 2 tsp instant yeast
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tbsp castor sugar
- 2 tsp vinegar
- 15ml extra virgin olive oil, plus extra for oiling surfaces and brushing
- 2 tbsp plain yoghurt
- 325ml warm water
- 30ml milk

Put dry ingredients in a bowl. Whisk liquids separately then mix the two well for 1 minute into a soft dough. Leave for 1 hour, then lightly oil worktop and hands. Line a 19cm loaf tin with non-stick baking paper. Shape dough into a log and fit, seam side down, into tin. Cover and leave for 90 minutes until almost doubled. Gluten-free dough doesn't have "oven spring", so a very hot oven helps. Preheat to 240C or 220C fan-forced. Brush top of dough with oil and bake for 50 minutes. Remove from oven and from tin. Cool on a wire rack covered with a cloth to help keep bread soft.

Makes one large loaf (pictured)

GLUTEN-FREE PASTRY

This is a recipe adapted from Maggie Beer's television show, *The Cook and The Chef*.

- 1 cup water
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 90g unsalted butter
- 150g gluten-free flour plus 1/2 cup for rolling
- 2 tsp xanthan gum
- 2 medium eggs

In a heavy-based saucepan combine water, salt and butter. Bring to a simmer and add flour and xanthan gum. Stir vigorously with a wooden spoon. Lower temperature and continue to cook until mixture thickens, comes away from the sides and is well combined. Remove from heat and cool to room temperature. Whisk eggs then add to mixture a little at a time, roughly kneading to incorporate fully before adding more. Turn out onto a surface on which you have placed 1/2 cup gluten-free flour. Knead until shiny. You won't need all the flour; just use enough to make it easy to knead. Wrap in cling-film, chill for 1 hour then use a rolling pin to roll pastry between two pieces of baking paper greased on both sides. Roll to desired thickness and proceed. To make sweet pastry, add 2 tsp icing sugar when adding flour.

Makes enough for one large tart

● Full bottle

QUAFFING

MONTEVECCHIO BIANCO 2011, \$23



I love everything about this wine, from the label to where the fruit is grown (Heathcote) and the varieties – a co-fermented blend of vermentino, fiano and moscato giallo. Montevocchio means "old mountain", a reference to the vineyard's ancient soils. The result is super-bright and fresh, with a touch of phenolics adding to its weight. The fiano brings texture, the vermentino adds lively acidity and the moscato giallo has lovely aromatics, from ginger spice to musk. A balanced, harmonious drink.

CELLARING

THOMAS BRAEMORE SEMILLON 2011, \$28



Andrew Thomas scooped the pool at this year's Hunter Valley wine show and for good reason: he crafts extraordinary wine from fruit grown on excellent sites including Braemore, a special patch of soil producing fruit that goes into making linear, precise semillon. The 2011 vintage is fabulous. It has plenty of zingy lime juice with a touch of zest, spice, an appealing waxy character and crisp acidity tempered by softness on the palate. It has the hallmarks of a long-lived semillon. Put it away for 10 years or drink now with salt and pepper squid.

CELEBRATING

CROSER LATE DISGORGED 2000, \$50



Australia is starting to produce some terrific aged sparkling wines with complexity and detail. This pinot noir is dominant blend at 63 per cent. The remaining chardonnay has spent nine years on lees ageing slowly and building up layers of flavour. It is incredibly fresh and lively. There is super-fine bead and creamy mousse with citrus, nuts and honey plus honeysuckle floral notes and almond nougat. Overall, it is reined in by bracing acidity and super-dry, persistent finish.

Jane Faulkner