



# 10 TIPS FOR A GLUTEN FREE CHRISTMAS

By Becky Excell

★  
Make  
someone's  
Christmas

WITH  
**coeliacuk**  
live well gluten free

## 1. Mix cooking from scratch with easy-to-prepare festive products.

There's no need to cook everything from scratch, even if you're gluten free. Make sure you take full advantage of all the products that will pop up in supermarket free from sections during the festive season. The offerings in 2021 are SO much better than what they were five years ago and Coeliac UK have a fab Christmas Food List to help!

## 2. Prepare whatever you can ahead of time

The best gift you can give yourself at Christmas is preparing as much as you can ahead of time. For example, you can easily prep all your veg and leave them in saucepans filled with cold water overnight; then, they'll be ready to boil the next day. Making gluten free Yorkshire puds from scratch? Whip up a batch beforehand and once cooled, freeze them, then simply bake from frozen.

## 3. Have go-to, fail-safe recipes that everyone will enjoy.

It's a good idea to have a tried and tested, crowd-pleasing recipe in your back pocket. This particularly applies if preparing dessert on the big day. And how does a recipe become tried and tested? By making sure you've made it at least once as a test run!

## 4. Waste not, want not.

In our house, the best part of Christmas lunch is the leftovers. I usually use them to create a festive bubble and squeak or a turkey and ham pie - both of which easily rival the best of Christmas lunches. Trust me, gluten free food is too precious to waste!

## 5. Don't let cross contamination crash your party.

Christmas day can be hectic, but ensuring you keep cross contamination in mind before you even start cooking, right up to serving it, is essential. Don't let all your hard work be ruined by serving utensils finding their way from gluten containing food to gluten free food, or dunking gluten containing breadsticks in gluten free dip. Always keep gluten free food as far away from any gluten containing food as possible and have separate serving utensils too.

## 6. Briefly inform your guests of gluten free etiquette

For most gluten eaters, it's very unlikely they'll have cross contamination in mind... unless they've been politely informed beforehand, of course! Even something as simple as saying, 'the gluten free food is over here, so make sure no gluten containing crumbs, food or utensils make their way over here, thank you.' will usually suffice. Or you could simply...

## 7. Make your entire Christmas gluten free.

I was sceptical at first. Would my family even allow it?! However, the first time I hosted Christmas at my house, everything edible was gluten free, yet nobody even noticed. There was no worrying about cross contamination and I could actually just relax and enjoy myself for the first time in years!

## 8. Ask your host to keep as much of the packaging from any products used as much as possible.

It's all too easy to grab a handful of this or that, then later discover the hard way that it contained gluten. Even something as seemingly innocent as crisps can contain wheat in the seasoning and that's not to mention 'may contain' warnings too. Ideally (just like you would any other day of the year) you'd be able to have the packaging of what you're eating to hand to check yourself, so if that's at all possible, make sure it happens.

## 9. If you're not sure, don't risk it!

If you're not sure if something is gluten free or can't check the packaging yourself, then don't risk it. No matter what food is in question, I can assure you that it's most definitely not worth it!

## 10. Don't forget to enjoy yourself.

As much as it's a top priority to ensure that you're feeling well on Christmas day, don't forget that it's supposed to be fun and enjoyable too! It can already be very easy to get stressed at Christmas, let alone being gluten free on top of that too.

For more Christmas ideas including recipes, gluten free products, great gift ideas and exclusive giveaways, check out [www.coeliac.org.uk/christmas](http://www.coeliac.org.uk/christmas)



Photo: Hannah Rose Hughes

