

Passover: Great GF Selection!
By Cheryl Harris, MPH, RD, LD

Passover isn't here until the end of March, but many of the products are already starting to appear in grocery stores. Not all Passover foods are gluten free, but many are, and there's a much wider selection than usual at the grocery store. This can be a good time to stock up on GF cakes and mixes, cookies, macaroons, "bread" crumbs and supplies like potato starch. As an added bonus for people with multiple restrictions, most Kosher for Passover products contain no corn or soy products, either.

In a nutshell, the basic rule of foods for Passover is no leavened foods, which eliminates normal breads, cakes etc. Matzo, (an unleavened bread usually made from wheat) is eaten, and some products contain products Matzo and matzo meal, (also potentially listed as cake meal or farfel). However, many products don't contain gluten. Or, if you find products labeled "non-gebrok or gebroktz or grebrochts" (or another spelling variation) they're non-grain containing and therefore have no gluten containing ingredients. Often Kosher for Passover products and cakes are made of potato flour or nut meals rather than wheat or glutinous grains.

- As always in the GF world, read labels carefully. Kosher and Kosher for Passover are two different things entirely. Kosher for Passover foods will be labeled "May be used for Passover" or have a symbol that says OUP. I have often seen "regular" Kosher foods in the Passover section at grocery stores, so please do check the labels for gluten containing ingredients.
- Keep in mind that some of the foods are imported from other countries, and therefore not under the 2004 FALCPA US labeling laws. So a label will still say matzo, but may not say wheat explicitly or have the disclaimer stating that it contains wheat.
- Most Kosher for Passover products will have to adhere to strict standards for cross contamination from a religious perspective, but again, buyer beware and no guarantees. "Made in a factory" claims are still not regulated.
- From a gluten free perspective, possibly the best part of Passover is AFTER Passover, when all of the great GF goodies are on sale! Passover ends April 5th, so mark your calendars, because the word has gotten out in GF circles.

Here's a link to the GF products from Manishevitz:
http://www.manishevitz.com/health_corner/index.php

Back when you really couldn't get GF prepared foods in the regular grocery store, this was a much bigger deal. But it's still nicer to have an expanded selection, and nicest of all is AFTER Passover, when all of the products are on sale!

For people who DO celebrate the actual holiday of Passover, not just the GF food, here are some great recipes and information:

<http://www.elanaspantry.com/passover-round-up/>

<http://www.recipezaar.com/cookbook.php?bookid=112835>

<http://iamglutenfree.blogspot.com/>

<http://glutenfreebay.blogspot.com/2007/03/gluten-free-passover-recipe-roundup.html>

<http://recipemom.com/recipes/Writermom77/> and click on holidays. There are quite a few Jewish holiday recipes, and they are all gluten and dairy free

You can also buy GF oat matzoh made from certified GF oats. The only downside is that it is insanely expensive!. Shmura Oat Matzah <http://www.glutenfreeoatmatzos.com/>
Lakewood Shmura Matzo Lakewood, NJ Phone: (732) 364-8757

Shabtai Gourmet products are made in a dedicated GF facility, they're and Kosher for Passover AND often they have free shipping deals <http://www.shabtai-gourmet.com/>

Kids with Food Allergies put out a booklet last year on Passover with food restrictions. <http://tinyurl.com/3ser4k>