

Beyond Wheat Sheet

Ready to move beyond the same old, same old in your diet? Read on to discover 10 nutritious whole grains that can take your meals and baking to a delicious new level!

1. Quinoa

Identity: Very tiny white or red pearls

Flavor Profile: Mild and nutty

Plant Energetics:¹ Warming

Ayurvedic Action:² Lowers Kapha & Vata, Increases Pitta

Nutrition Profile: Completely gluten free. High in calcium, protein, iron and phosphorous.

Cooking Time: Quick: 20 minutes or less

Cooking Tip: Watch it to make sure it doesn't overcook! When the pearls become translucent, it's done.

2. Millet

Identity: Light yellow pearls

Flavor Profile: Buttery and mildly nutty

Plant Energetics: Warming

Ayurvedic Action: Lowers Kapha & Vata, Increases Pitta

Nutrition Profile: Completely gluten free. Very starchy, but high in iron and phosphorous. Comparable in protein to wheat and corn.

Cooking Time: Fairly quick: 30 minutes or less

Cooking Tip: Toast in a skillet until fragrant before cooking in your recipe.

¹ Plant Energetics refers to the plant's tendency to be either cooling or warming to the body. It's a concept used in Eastern medicine, including Ayurveda. Read more about energetics at SharonFloyd.com.

² Ayurvedic Action refers to the effect that this food has on a particular body type, or Dosha, as it's called in Ayurveda. Read more about the Doshas at SharonFloyd.com.

3. Amaranth

Identity: White to darker yellow, slightly oval grains

Flavor Profile: Closer to quinoa than wheat and oats

Plant Energetics: Warming

Ayurvedic Action: Increases Pitta, Lowers Kapha & Vata

Nutrition Profile: Completely gluten free. Higher in protein than rice, sorghum and rye.

Cooking Time: Quick: 30 minutes or less

Cooking Tip: Because of its strong flavor, amaranth flour is usually mixed with other flours. Mix up to 15% amaranth in your flour mixes.

4. Oats

Identity: Groats (whole oat berries), steel-cut oats (cut groats), rolled oats (steamed and rolled groats), and instant oats (thin, finely cut oats) are available in various sizes and textures.

Flavor Profile: Sweet

Plant Energetics: Warming

Ayurvedic Action: Lowers Vata & Pitta. Increases Kapha

Nutrition Profile: Technically a gluten free food, but cross contamination with gluten containing crops does occur. Checking the source of the grains is important for gluten sensitivities (Bob's Red Mill is a good brand to try).

Baking Worthiness: Oat flour is delicious and versatile.

Cooking Time: 5-10 minutes for bran and rolled oats, up to 60 minutes for whole grains

Cooking Tip: Soak the oats overnight for a no-cook breakfast.

5. Spelt

Identity: Golden brown long grains

Flavor Profile: Rich and nutty

Plant Energetics: Warming

Ayurvedic Action: Lowers Pitta & Vata, Increases Kapha

Nutrition Profile: Containing gluten, spelt is a type of wheat, but with that identity comes wheat's famous high protein and fiber content.

Baking Worthiness: Spelt is excellent for baking. Look for spelt flour and use it like wheat flour.

Cooking Time: Cooking time varies depending on the desired tenderness, anywhere from 30 to 90 minutes.

Cooking Tip: Set it and forget it in a crock pot!

6. Farro (aka emmer wheat)

Identity: Similar in flavor and texture to spelt, richly colored long grains

Flavor Profile: Nutty with a chewy texture

Plant Energetics: Warming

Ayurvedic Action: Lowers Pitta & Vata, Increases Kapha

Nutrition Profile: A type of wheat, farro contains gluten, but is higher in protein and magnesium. It comes in a semiperlato (semipearled) variety which has more fiber than perlato (pearled).

Cooking Time: 25-40 minutes

7. Barley

Identity: Creamy white, short grains.

Flavor Profile: Distinctive, malty nutty rich taste

Plant Energetics: Cooling

Ayurvedic Action: Lowers Pitta & Kapha, Increases Vata

Nutrition Profile: Contains gluten; good for diabetics; promotes friendly intestinal bacteria. Choose whole grain over pearled (without hull) varieties.

Cooking Time: 45-90 minutes

8. Buckwheat (aka Kasha if toasted)

Identity: Golden brown, triangular grains

Flavor Profile: Spicy and earthy

Plant Energetics: Warming

Ayurvedic Action: Lowers Kapha, Increases Vata & Pitta

Nutrition Profile: Completely gluten-free, but with a high glycemic profile.

Cooking Time: 15 minutes (toasted)-30 minutes (untoasted)

Cooking Tip: Toasting is highly recommended to increase flavor.

9. Rye

Identity: Copper brown, long, rice-shaped grains

Flavor Profile: Distinctive nutty flavor like walnuts and chewy texture

Plant Energetics: Warming

Ayurvedic Action: Lowers Kapha & Vata, Increases Pitta

Nutrition Profile: Lower in gluten, but very nutritious with manganese, selenium, phosphorous, and magnesium.

Baking Worthiness: Rye flour is excellent in baking.

Cooking Time: 60 minutes

Cooking Tip: Buy the whole grain rye berries for maximum nutrition and flavor.

10. Teff

Identity: The tiniest, dark brown ancient grains hailing from Ethiopia

Flavor Profile: Nutty and aromatic

Plant Energetics: Warming

Ayurvedic Action: Lowers Kapha & Vata, Increases Pitta

Nutrition Profile: Completely gluten free and very rich in iron.

Baking Worthiness: Use the flour for crusts, cakes, muffins, and breads; use the whole grains in puddings and porridges.

Cooking Time: Quick: 20 minutes

Cooking Tip: Toast it up until fragrant just before cooking.

Where To Buy?

Try the bulk bins at Whole Foods, your neighborhood co-op, or local health food store. On most grocery store shelves, look for Bob's Red Mill brand of flours and whole grains. Online, visit Organic Sprouted Flour Company Bluebird Grain Farms or True Foods Market.

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