



22 Gluten-Free Dinners & Soups

Healthy & Flavorful Delicious Year-Round Meals All Natural • No Added Salt • 5 Minute Prep Time **Budget-Friendly** • Serves 8-11





Chick-fil-A rolls out gluten-free bun nationwide

ON JUNE 19, Atlanta-based Chick-fil-A restaurants became one of the first fast-food chains to make a gluten-free bun available to its guests. The new bun, which comes individually wrapped, was created for gluten-intolerant/sensitive customers who should not have to sacrifice taste due to dietary restrictions. It is a welcome addition to the current plethora of gluten-free menu options, such as grilled chicken breasts, waffle fries, fresh-cut fruit and salads.

The nationwide rollout is the result of successful test markets in Washington, Idaho and Mississippi in 2016. "During the test, about three-quarters of customers who ordered the new gluten-free bun said they were highly likely or very likely to return to Chick-fil-A because of the option of the new bun," said Leslie Neslage, senior consultant of menu development at Chick-fil-A. "We are excited that we can finally offer a glutenfree bun option to our guests who may not have been able to eat at Chick-fil-A before."

It took about three years and 30 bakeries before Chick-fil-A settled on its current gluten-free bun supplier. Made with a blend of ancient grains like quinoa, sorghum, amaranth, millet and teff, the certified gluten-free bun is an extra \$1.15 and is enriched with vitamins and minerals. The buns are 150 calories, individually wrapped and stored frozen. Once thawed, the bun is served sealed alongside a container with grilled chicken and condiments. Guests assemble their own sandwiches to prevent cross-contamination with wheat in the shared kitchen.

My first bite of a grilled chicken sandwich on a gluten-free bun was hearty and delicious. The bun is soft but retains its texture and doesn't crumble or tear when eating. It is also big enough to hold a chicken breast without any spilling off the sides. The buns are not heated prior to serving because there is no safe way to do so. There is no microwave at Chick-fil-A, and the only bun toaster is used for wheat buns, leaving the only safe option to thaw them for a few hours and serve them at room temperature.

The time and dedication invested by Chick-fil-A allows those of us who are gluten intolerant/sensitive to pull up to a drive-through window and order a grilled chicken sandwich on a bun—a filling meal when combined with those crispy waffle fries.

—Jennifer Harris