



## GrowNYC Grains Interview

### Sarah Magid of Knead Love Bakery

**GrowNYC:** How did you first get into baking? Did you start out gluten free?

**Sarah:** I am a life-long baker. My baking practice started very young. I grew up in Southern California and we were kosher. There was nothing fresh that was kosher in the area so we cooked and baked everything on our own for holidays and Sabbath. Then I went to school for jewelry design, and worked in the fashion industry while baking on the side. At that point, I was just baking for friends and co-workers. When I was pregnant with my second daughter I started making organic wedding cakes, combining my loves of baking and art. An agent asked me to write a cookbook, and I wrote "Organic and Chic: Cakes, Cookies, and other Baked Goods that Taste as Good as They Look", and continued to work in the fashion industry. Then, six years ago I was diagnosed with ulcerative colitis (an autoimmune disease). I had to shift the way that I ate, and found that I felt better after cutting out gluten and refined sugar. I have been able to regulate my disorder without conventional medicine; just from changing my diet. I was completely inspired after taking a couple of baking classes with Sarah Owens. I started baking bread a couple times a week, and discovered this amazing community of people looking for tasty, nutrient dense bread.

**GrowNYC:** What are some obstacles of gluten free baking?

**Sarah:** To put it simply, not having gluten is the largest obstacle for GF baking. This becomes a texture and a crumb issue. I mostly avoid starches and gums, but that's just a preference. With GF baking, rising is a complicated issue. A natural fermentation process is helpful for this. Also, simple pantry ingredients like baking soda and apple cider vinegar can help to create a more open crumb.

**GrowNYC:** Do you have tips for people who want to make the switch?

**Sarah:** A lot of GF starches mimic white flour, and that's often where people find it easiest to start. It is important to be an interpretive and intuitive baker. Using freshly milled flours, especially while being GF, means it's important to be open to experimenting. If you understand the flavors that you're working with, you can alter recipes to focus on more whole ingredients. For example, oats can be tricky to mill, so I started toasting the Maine Grain oat groats before milling them. It brings out a nuttiness in the oats, really highlighting their flavor. For me, it is less about trying to copy other recipes and make them gluten-free, and more about reinterpreting all the things I bake. I focus on using quality ingredients that will make a difference in flavor, and in digestibility.



**GrowNYC:** What is your favorite bread you have been baking lately?

**Sarah:** My gluten free tie dye sourdough with purple sweet potato and turmeric. Because bread is available year-round, I really like to focus on getting seasonal ingredients in there as well to add to the flavor and nutrition. I have also been experimenting with different ferments. I have been making my own amazake and koji and cross fermenting. I am also working on a kimchi loaf. It is definitely a challenge to bake with what is available in the market now, but it is a fun creative challenge.

**GrowNYC:** What do you love about baking?

**Sarah:** Baking bread is an amazing way to connect people. I am now in touch with a community of people willing to barter, and share ideas about cooking/ baking. I have found a very different way of communicating and existing in the world. It feels like people are starting to care more about the traditional ways of doing things. I need to work creatively and use my hands, and people are starting to care about things being handmade again. I don't bake for an audience, but for the purpose of nourishing my friends and family. At one point, shelf life became more important than nutrition, and I am seeing that shift again. Everyone should have their joy—and my joy is baking.