

# Bagels, Buns & Beyond

## THE BEST WHOLE GRAINS

BY WAYNE HURLEY &amp; BONNIE LIEBMAN

**T**hey're the best thing since sliced (whole-grain) bread. Whole-grain bagels, English muffins, hamburger buns, pita (pocket) breads, tortillas, and wraps are showing up everywhere.

Whole grains are higher in vitamins, minerals, and fiber than refined grains. And people who eat more whole grains have a lower risk of heart disease and diabetes.

But some companies are still using claims like "wheat," "multigrain," and "made with whole grain" to pass off (mostly) refined-flour versions as whole-grain. If you know what to look for, though, you can make all your grains whole...without breaking your sodium bank.

Information compiled by Kate Sherwood, with help from Kirsten Bokenkamp.

### BAGELS THAT NEED A SHRINK

What have they done to bagels?

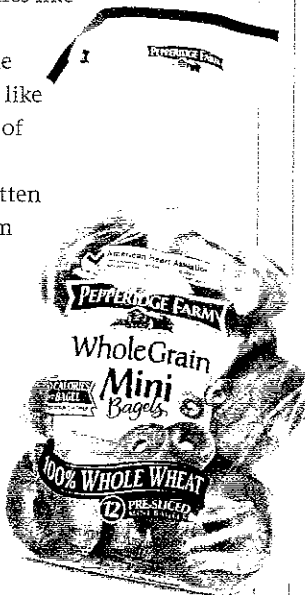
Anyone who's eaten a New York bagel knows that it has a distinct crust that forms when the dough is first boiled and then baked. Bagged bagels from companies like Pepperidge Farm, Thomas', and Lenders may have started out that way, but by the time they reach your table, they're more like bagel-shaped rolls with all the character of Wonder Bread.

Taste and texture aside, bagels have gotten too big for your britches. Pepperidge Farm and Thomas' bagels are approaching the 4-to-5-ounce monsters you get at Starbucks or Einstein Bros.

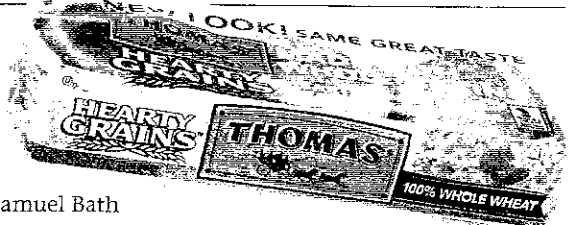
The good news: both companies now make 100% Whole Wheat Mini Bagels. Instead of the 250 to 300 calories in a regular-size bagel, minis have only 100 to 120. (Try them with hummus, cucumber, tomato, and red onion instead of cream cheese.)

It's time to shrink bagels—and our backsides—down to size.

The antidote to big bagels (and backsides).



### THE MUFFIN MAN



Samuel Bath

Thomas would have been mystified by the array of claims on his—and other companies'—English muffins and breads today. Here's what they mean:

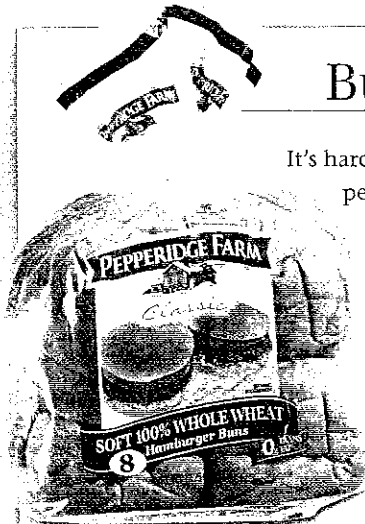
Look for the words "100% whole wheat."

- ☒ **Made with whole grain.** Contains some whole grain. Most companies add at least 8 grams, which isn't much in a 50-to-60-gram muffin. (Some companies have decided that 8 grams are enough to justify putting "good source of whole grain" on the package, though the FDA has asked them not to.)
- ☒ **Hearty grains.** Contains some grain, either refined or whole. (Ditto for "wheat," "country grains," etc.)
- ☒ **Multigrain.** Contains more than one grain, either refined or whole.
- ☒ **May lower your cholesterol.** Contains enough added plant sterols to lower cholesterol by about 10 percent, according to the FDA. (That's if you eat 0.8 grams of sterols a day—two muffins' worth.)
- ☒ **Excellent source of fiber.** Contains at least 5 grams of fiber, but not necessarily from whole grain. It could be an "isolated" fiber from chicory, soy, oat hulls, or some other source. Isolated fibers may help prevent constipation, but they're missing the nutrients and phytochemicals in whole grain, and there's no evidence that they lower the risk of heart disease or diabetes.
- ☒ **Light.** Has one-third fewer calories than a non-light version. Most bakers cut calories by adding oat hull fiber or other isolated fibers. The FDA allows packages' Nutrition Facts to subtract the calories in isolated fibers because the fibers pass through the digestive tract largely unabsorbed.
- ☒ **100% whole wheat or 100% whole grain.** Contains no refined flour (which could be present if the label doesn't say "100%").

Bottom line: try 100% whole wheat English muffins by Thomas', Pepperidge Farm, Trader Joe's, or others.

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## BUNDERFUL



It's hard to know what most people think of Wonder Made with Whole Grain White Hamburger Buns. Are they whole-grain or white?

The package's "Good Source of Whole Grain" claim is also ambiguous.

According to the small print on the back, "USDA recommends consuming 48 grams of whole grains per day. One Wonder Made With Whole Grain White Hamburger Bun

**Really (not "made with") whole grain.**

is the equivalent of 8 grams of whole grains."

So, can you follow the USDA's advice by eating six buns? Not quite.

The Agriculture Department also says to "make half your grains whole." And Wonder's buns are nowhere near half whole-grain.

We estimate that, along with the 8 grams of whole grains, each 43-gram bun supplies about 15 to 20 grams of refined grains.

Solution: forget Wonder. Pick up a package of 100% whole wheat hamburger (or hot dog) buns by bakers like Pepperidge Farm, Oroweat, Roman Meal, Schmidt, or Trader Joe's.

Throw some burgers (veggie, turkey, or whatever) on the grill and you're in business.

## PICK THIS POCKET

"Stone ground whole wheat flour, water, salt, yeast, malted barley flour, and calcium propionate (added to retard spoilage)."

That's the entire ingredients list for Toufayan Whole Wheat Pita Bread. (In contrast, Toufayan Whole Wheat Mini Pitettes have both whole wheat and white flour...go figure.)

And when you've emptied Toufayan's 8-inch pita bag, you're left with just the bag, rather than a bag plus the hard plastic landfill-clogging container that companies sometimes use to keep their pitas from bending.

Whole wheat pita breads abound.

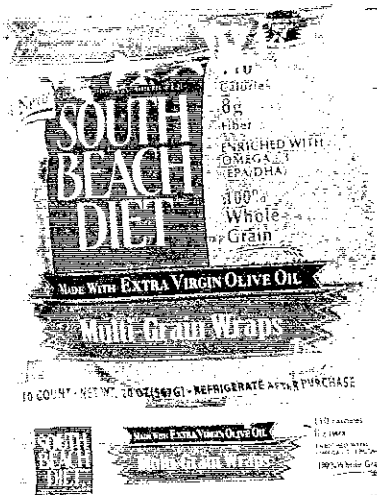
Thomas' Sahara, Weight Watchers, Trader Joe's, and other companies offer them in sizes that range from 2 or 3 inches in diameter (for minis) to 7+ inches. (Heads up: some brands, like Trader Joe's, give calories and other Nutrition Facts for just half of their larger pitas.)

Why buy pocket breads? Apart from the taste, they make it easier to keep the veggies from falling out of your sandwich. And the midsize, 4-to-5-inch pitas keep calories at 100 to 150, rather than the 200 calories you typically get in two slices of ordinary bread.



**No refined flour...or hard plastic.**

## READY TO WRAP



**Fortified with fish oil.**

Oops. The Food and Drug Administration denied an industry request to make that claim for alpha-linolenic acid (ALA), which is the omega-3 fat in Mission's tortillas. (In contrast, the agency *does* allow foods that contain the

Wraps and tortillas are complicated these days. Labels are loaded with claims that may or may not be legal.

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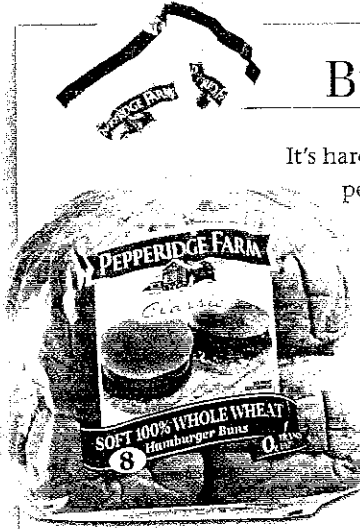
omega-3 fish oils EPA and DHA to make a claim. But even that one is qualified: "Supportive but not conclusive research shows that consumption of EPA and DHA omega-3 fatty acids may reduce the risk of coronary heart disease.")

La Tortilla Factory Whole Wheat Low-Carb/Low-Fat Tortillas also break the rules. It's illegal to call a food "low-carb," because the FDA has never defined the claim. And the feds have never agreed that companies can simply subtract the carbs in oat fiber, as La Tortilla does.

In contrast, South Beach Diet 100% Whole Grain Multi-Grain Wraps, which are "enriched with omega-3 (EPA/DHA)," seem to abide by the law. However, the label doesn't disclose how much omega-3 fats are in them. (It's 35 milligrams per wrap, versus some 1,500 mg for three ounces of cooked salmon.) And although they're "made with extra virgin olive oil," there's too little oil in them to matter.

Bottom line: labels aside, whole wheat wraps or tortillas are far better than their white-flour counterparts.

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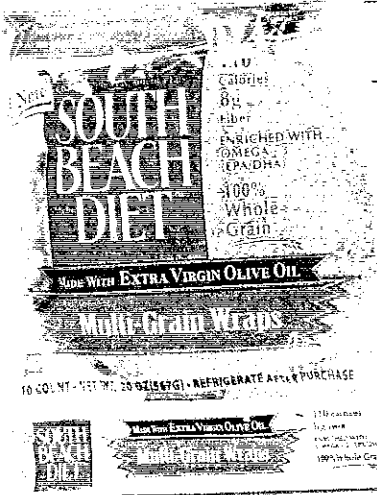
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# WITH THE (WHOLE) GRAIN

The first grain in our **Best Bites** (✓✓) is whole grain and they contain no more than a trivial amount of refined flour. **Honorable Mentions** (✓) have more than a trivial amount of refined flour, but it comes after whole grain, or they have more "isolated" fibers (like oat hull fiber) than whole grain. Best Bites and Honorable Mentions have no more than 350 mg of sodium.

## ENGLISH MUFFINS (2 oz.)

	Calories	Fiber (g)	Sodium (mg)
Thomas'—Light Multi-Grain or 100 Calories <sup>1</sup>	100	7	200
✓ Weight Watchers Wheat	100	6	210
Weight Watchers	100	5	230
✓✓ Trader Joe's British Muffins—Whole Wheat <sup>1</sup> *	140	5	230
✓✓ Pepperidge Farm Whole Grain 100% Whole Wheat*	140	3	210
✓✓ Thomas' Hearty Grains 100% Whole Wheat*	130	3	240
✓ Thomas' Hearty Grains—Honey Wheat or Multi-Grain <sup>1</sup>	140	2	180
Thomas'—Original Made with Whole Grains or Hearty Grains Oatmeal & Honey <sup>1</sup>	130	2	200
Sara Lee—Made with Whole Grains or Heart Healthy Wheat <sup>1</sup>	140	2	240
Thomas' The Original	120	1	200

## ROLLS & BUNS

✓✓ Oroweat 100% Whole Wheat Hot Dog Buns (2.5 oz.)*	160	6	320
✓✓ Schmidt Whole Grain 100% Whole Wheat Rolls—Hot Dog or Sandwich (2 oz.) <sup>1</sup> *	130	4	250
Oroweat Cracked Wheat Buns (2.5 oz.)	190	4	350
Sara Lee Heart Healthy 100% Whole Wheat Buns (2.5 oz.)*	210	4	360
✓ Toufayan Snuggles Whole Wheat (1.5 oz.)	175	3	180
Pepperidge Farm Bakery Rolls Soft Wheat Kaiser (2.5 oz.)*	200	3	370
✓✓ Roman Meal Whole Grain—Hamburger or Hot Dog (1.5 oz.) <sup>1</sup> *	110	2	200
Sara Lee Heart Healthy Wheat Buns (1.5 oz.) <sup>1</sup>	110	2	210
✓✓ Pepperidge Farm Classic Soft 100% Whole Wheat Buns (1.5 oz.) <sup>1</sup> *	130	2	210
✓✓ Trader Joe's Whole Wheat Buns—Hamburger or Hot Dog (1.5 oz.) <sup>1</sup> *	110	2	220
Wonder Wheat Buns—Hamburger or Hot Dog (1.5 oz.) <sup>1</sup>	110	2	220
✓ Arnold or Brownberry Select—Multigrain Kaiser, Wheat Hot Dog, or Wheat Sandwich Rolls (2 oz.) <sup>1</sup>	150	2	260
Wonder Whole Grain White Buns—Hamburger or Hot Dog (1.5 oz.) <sup>1</sup>	110	1	220
Pepperidge Farm Farmhouse Sandwich Rolls Country Wheat (3 oz.)	220	1	310

## BAGELS

Weight Watchers Original (2.5 oz.)	150	9	360
Thomas' 100% Whole Wheat—Hearty Grains or Squares Bagelbread (3.5 oz.) <sup>1</sup> *	270	8	440
Lender's New York Style—Whole Grain or 100% Whole Wheat (3.5 oz.) <sup>1</sup> *	270	8	500
✓ Sara Lee Heart Healthy 100% Whole Wheat Cinnamon Raisin (3.5 oz.)*	250	7	340
Pepperidge Farm Whole Grain Multi-Grain (3.5 oz.)*	250	7	420
Pepperidge Farm Whole Grain 100% Whole Wheat (3.5 oz.)*	250	6	450
Sara Lee Heart Healthy 100% Whole Wheat (3.5 oz.)*	220	6	490
Pepperidge Farm Whole Grain White (3.5 oz.)	250	5	440
✓ Thomas' 100% Whole Wheat Mini—regular or Squares Bagelbread (2 oz.) <sup>1</sup> *	140	4	230
✓ Trader Joe's The Bagel Spinoza (3 oz.)	240	4	340

	Calories	Fiber (g)	Sodium (mg)
✓ Trader Joe's Whole Wheat Mini (1.5 oz.)	110	3	150
✓✓ Pepperidge Farm Whole Grain 100% Whole Wheat Mini (1.5 oz.) <sup>1</sup> *	100	3	180
Thomas' Hearty Grains—Multi-Grain or Oatmeal & Honey (3.5 oz.) <sup>1</sup>	300	3	480
Pepperidge Farm Plain (3.5 oz.)	260	3	500
Thomas' Plain Made With Whole Grains (3.5 oz.)	290	3	510
✓ Pepperidge Farm Whole Grain White Mini (1.5 oz.)	100	2	180

## PITAS & FLATBREADS

✓✓ Weight Watchers 100% Whole Wheat Pita (2 oz.)*	100	9	260
✓✓ Tumaro's Soy-full Heart Flatbread (1.5 oz.) <sup>1</sup> *	100	4	60
✓✓ Trader Joe's 100% Whole Wheat Apocryphal Pita (2 oz.) <sup>1</sup> *	140	4	110
✓✓ Trader Joe's Whole Wheat Mini Pitas (6 mini pitas, 1.5 oz.)*	120	4	180
✓✓ Thomas' Sahara Pita Pockets—100% Whole Wheat or Multi-Grain (2 oz.) <sup>1</sup> *	140	4	320
✓✓ Toufayan Whole Wheat Pita (2 oz.)*	140	3	130
✓ Toufayan Whole Wheat Mini Pitettes (5 mini pitas, 2 oz.)	130	3	230
✓✓ Trader Joe's Organic 100% Whole Wheat Pita (1 oz.)*	80	2	60

## TORTILLAS & WRAPS

✓ La Tortilla Factory Multi Grain Wraps (2 oz.)	100	14	290
✓ Tumaro's Low In Carbs Tortillas (1.5 oz.) <sup>1</sup>	120	10	130
✓ La Tortilla Factory Whole Wheat Low-Carb/Low-Fat Tortillas (1.5 oz.) <sup>1</sup>	60	10	220
La Tortilla Factory 100% Fat-Free Tortillas (2 oz.)	90	8	230
✓ Mission Carb Balance Whole Wheat Fajita Size (1 oz.)	80	8	240
✓✓ South Beach Diet Wraps—Multi-Grain or Whole Wheat (2 oz.) <sup>1</sup> *	110	8	330
South Beach Diet Wraps—Multi-Grain Garlic, Rosemary, and Herbs (2 oz.)*	110	8	420
Mission Carb Balance Fajita Size (1 oz.)	80	7	220
✓✓ Flatout Wraps Whole Grain White (2 oz.)*	110	7	350
Mission Wraps Multi-Grain (2.5 oz.)*	210	7	660
✓✓ La Tortilla Factory Carb Cutting Low Fat Organic Wheat Tortillas (1.5 oz.) <sup>1</sup> *	60	6	150
La Tortilla Factory Smart & Delicious Low Fat Low Sodium Tortillas (2.5 oz.)	150	6	170
✓ La Tortilla Factory Whole Grain Wraps (2 oz.)	170	5	320
Mission Multi-Grain Flour Tortillas Soft Taco Size (1.5 oz.)*	140	5	460
La Tortilla Factory Organic Whole Wheat Wraps (2.5 oz.) <sup>1</sup>	180	5	510
✓✓ All Natural Roll-Ups (1.5 oz.)*	110	4	30
✓✓ Thomas' Sahara Wraps 100% Whole Wheat (2 oz.)*	170	4	310
✓✓ Mission Multi-Grain Flour Tortillas Fajita Size (1.5 oz.)*	110	4	340
Mission Wraps Original (2.5 oz.)	210	4	580
✓✓ Flatout Wraps Mini—Harvest Wheat or 100% Stone Ground Whole Wheat (1 oz.) <sup>1</sup> *	70	3	190
Mission 96% Fat Free "Heart Healthy" Flour Tortillas Plus! (1.5 oz.) <sup>1</sup>	130	3	330
✓✓ Mission 96% Fat Free "Heart Healthy" Whole Wheat Flour Tortillas Plus! (1.5 oz.)*	130	3	340
Toufayan Wheat Wraps (2 oz.) <sup>1</sup>	170	3	340
La Tortilla Factory Heart Healthy Flour Tortillas (1.5 oz.)	140	1	280
Mission Flour Tortillas Fajita Size (1.5 oz.)	150	1	440

✓✓ Best Bite. ✓ Honorable Mention. <sup>1</sup> Average.

\* Made from 100% whole grain. <sup>1</sup> Contains 1 gram of trans fat.

**Daily Limits** (for a 2,000-calorie diet): **Fiber:** at least 25 grams. **Sodium:** 1,500 milligrams.

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