

HOMEMADE GRANOLA

BY BRIAN MEDFORD

I didn't grow up in a granola eating household, that is unless you count packaged granola bars.

With chocolate chips, they're essentially a candy bar. So, I associated granola with particle board and moved on.

Over the past few years living on the North Coast, I've noticed a plethora of nesting instincts developing within me. Maybe it's the weather, or the lingering pandemic, but I've learned there's comfort in having home provisions that are ready to deploy at a moment's notice.

I'm not one for a perfectly stocked pantry, although I try to keep a few essentials around. This generally includes a package or two of Reese's peanut butter cups for emergency hunger of the heart.

More recently, my pantry stocking has included homemade granola. Welcome back, bad penny. Granola is a multitasking treat – a bowl of cereal, topping for yogurt or additional crunch for ice cream. Its health benefits are an ongoing debate, particularly when it's used on ice cream. Granola health proponents, I'm sorry.

Using a basic recipe, you can create your own granola blend, perhaps decanting it in jar emblazoned with "Gloria's Granola" or "Harold's Granola" on it.

The granola ingredient I've found is most polarizing has to be unsweetened coconut. It's the cilantro of the granola world. I like coconut (and cilantro for that matter), so I use it, but it can be left out.

The only downside of homemade granola is that it can feel expensive, depending on ingredient choices. Feel free to decrease the amount of nuts or bulk it up with less expensive alternatives like raisins or Chex Mix cereal.

Granola lasts for a month in an airtight container, which adds to its nesting appeal. Make a new granola experience every month or so to create a perfect blend. Keep it in the pantry, right beside a stash of emergency candy bars.



Granola mixed with toppings like nuts, seeds and even coconut can make for a delicious treat.

Brian Medford

Homemade granola

Adapted from Nekisia Davis

This recipe makes about 6 cups of granola. It halves or doubles easily, just be sure to watch the cooking time.

- 3 cups rolled oats
- 1 cup raw pecan, walnut, or almond pieces
- 1 cup sunflower or hulled pumpkin seeds
- 1 cup unsweetened coconut chips (optional)

- 3/4 cup maple syrup
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1/2 cup packed light brown sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt, plus more to taste

Heat the oven to 300 degrees Fahrenheit. In a large bowl, mix in oats, nuts, seeds, coconut, maple syrup, olive oil, brown sugar, ground cinnamon and 1 teaspoon of salt until well combined.

Spread the mixture in an even layer

on a rimmed baking sheet. Bake, stirring every 10 to 15 minutes, for about 45 minutes until the granola is toasted and fragrant.

Finally, remove the granola from the oven and season with salt to taste. Let cool completely before serving. Store in an airtight container for up to a month.

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