

# Make-Your-Own Granola!

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Store bought granola are often LOADED with sugar and all kinds of other questionable ingredients. This recipe is crazy good; it's full of fibre, contains healthy fats, isn't overly sweet, and is easy to make too! Don't feel confined to the ingredients listed below; use this as a framework to make a flavour combination that gets you excited. The sliced almonds and pumpkin seeds can be substituted for basically any combination of nuts or seeds, maple syrup can be replaced with honey, coconut can be removed and replaced with more oats or flax, and dried fruits can be added after baking and cooling; really the sky's the limit here. If you want to add some dried fruits, cut them into bite-sized pieces if necessary and mix through after the granola is baked and cooled to room temperature. If you add the fruit too soon it will dry out excessively and get really tough and chewy. If you have a gluten intolerance make sure the oats you buy are gluten free.

A great trick to help this toast more evenly is to make an opening in the center of the tray before baking. This works for pretty much anything being baked on a sheet pan, it allows the center of the pan to heat up more quickly and not just encourages even browning but speeds up the baking or roasting process entirely. It's really easy to over bake this granola if you don't keep an eye on it. Stay by the oven for the last 10 minutes and stir it often to ensure it doesn't burn; always taking a second to open a space in the center of the tray before returning it to the oven. The colour will deepen significantly, but shouldn't be too bark or smell burnt.

# ***Ingredient***

- 2 cups (250g) large flake oats, gluten-free if desired
- 1 cup (135g) quick oats, gluten-free if desired
- 1 cup (125g) sliced almonds
- ½ cup (75g) raw sunflower seeds
- ½ cup (75g) raw pumpkin seeds
- ½ cup (50g) medium unsweetened coconut
- ½ cup (100g) extra virgin cold-pressed organic coconut oil
- ½ cup (100g) pure maple syrup
- 2 tsp Ceylon cinnamon
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- ½ tsp kosher or sea salt
- ½-1 cup dried fruit, optional (raisins, currants, goji berries, mulberries, etc.)

Yields roughly 6 cups (1500 mL) granola

# ***Instructions***

Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C) and set rack to center. Line a baking tray with parchment paper.

Whisk together coconut oil, maple syrup, cinnamon, vanilla and salt; set aside. In a large bowl combine oats, almonds, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, and coconut. Add wet ingredients to dry and stir through until thoroughly combined.

Transfer granola to the prepared baking tray. Spread into an even layer leaving an area down the center open to encourage even browning. Bake 25-35 minutes, stirring often, or until toasted and rich golden brown. Stir every few minutes during the last 10 minutes of baking to ensure it doesn't get too dark. Remove from oven and cool to room temperature on the tray. Keep for up to 2 weeks in an airtight container or

storage bag.

Some great additions or substitutions: pecans, walnuts, cashews, sunflower seeds, ground chia in place of flax, dried cranberries, raisins, diced dried apricots, diced dates, dried mulberries, dried sour cherries, chocolate chips (after baking and cooling,)  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon almond or coconut extract in place of vanilla, honey or agave in place of maple syrup... Or ANYTHING else that makes you happy!