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AMY'S ULTIMATE GRANOLA!!!



I love the kinds of foods and dishes served at a really great breakfast or brunch. Lots of people nowadays miss breakfast, which is understandable when on the go or in a rush, but also a shame. I am particularly partial to a proper granola, but so many of the commercially available granolas, marketed as 'health foods', tend to be full of sugar and preservatives, so are far less healthy than they are made out to be. I wanted to create a granola recipe that tasted great but had as little refined sugar as possible and, so using natural sweetness, also without loads of butter, after a good deal of experimentation, have come up with this recipe. It's fantastic served alongside some natural yogurt and fresh fruit, and will keep for a few weeks in a sealed container (though it is extremely addictive just snacking on it from the oven tray!). You can also make the same recipe but, instead of crumbling it to turn into granola, you can add the various dried fruit to the mix and press into an oven tray, then bake it at about 170C for around 15 minutes (depending on your oven), let cool and slice to make some lovely granola bars. Enjoy!



Ingredients (serves around 10 for breakfast)

- 2 cups rolled oats (gluten-free can be used for coeliacs)
- ½ cup (packed) large unsweetened coconut flakes
- ½ cup nuts of your choice (almonds, pecans, brazil nuts, macadamias etc)
- ¼ cup hazelnuts (blanched or natural both work well)
- 2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp ground ginger
- 1 tsp ground turmeric
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 large carrot, peeled and finely grated
- 3 tbsp coconut oil (nut oils, or any flavourless oils – such as vegetable or sunflower – also work, but will not need melting)
- 1/3 cup agave nectar or carob syrup (agave and carob have a far lower GI, but honey and maple syrup would also work)
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 cup mixed dried fruit of your choice (mixed raisins, sour cherries or other berries, apricots, figs etc)

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 170C.
2. Roughly chop the hazelnuts and mixed nuts, keeping them generally fairly chunky. Add these, along with the oats, coconut, all the dried spices, and salt, to a large mixing bowl and stir until thoroughly combined.
3. To a small saucepan, add the coconut oil and agave/syrup. Warm gently for 2-3 minutes, stirring frequently, until the coconut oil is melted and the two are totally combined, with no visible separation. Add the vanilla and stir to combine. Remove from the heat.
4. Immediately add the oil mixture, along with the finely grated carrot, to the dry ingredients, and stir to combine until all the oats and nuts are thoroughly coated. Crumble the mixture on a large baking tray, keeping it chunky, and spread into an even layer. (Use multiple trays if necessary, to get all the mix into an even layer.)
5. Place in the preheated oven for around 20 minutes, then remove from the oven and turn the tray around so that the other end goes into the oven first (to achieve an even bake). Bake for another 5-10 minutes, watching carefully so as not to let it burn. Remove from the oven when the granola is golden brown and fragrant. (**NB** It is very important NOT to add the dried fruit at



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this stage, or it risks burning, which will spoil the flavour of the granola.)

6. Allow to cool completely (if you can wait!), then break into clumps. Stir through the mixed dried fruit and enjoy!

Serving suggestion: I love this granola served alongside some thick fat-free Greek yogurt (Total 0% is my favourite!), mixed berries and slice banana, with a little drizzle of agave, but feel free to use any yogurt or fruit combination you like, or enjoy it plain with the milk of your choice.

Storage: Store in a sealed bag or container at room temperature for 2-3 weeks.

