



## **Anne's Favorite Granola**

Adapted from the granola recipe in Nigella Lawson's book *Feast*, with input from the "Oat Cuisine" episode of Alton Brown's Food Network show, *Good Eats*

### **Dry ingredients:**

- 5 cups rolled oats (use old fashioned oats, not the instant kind)
- 2 to 3 cups chopped raw almonds, cashews, pecan halves, or your favorite nut mixture
- 1 cup hulled raw sunflower seeds
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup shredded coconut
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup sesame seeds
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup wheat germ (Note: this is optional but adds to the nutritional value)
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup dark brown sugar
- 2 - 4 tbsp. ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp. ground ginger
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 - 2 cups raisins or other dried fruit

Note: the dried fruit is optional and is best added after baking. Otherwise the fruit gets too dry and leathery. If you're making this in the summer time, you might choose to omit the dried fruit and serve your granola with fresh fruit. But if you are adding fruit, I prefer to include a mixture and usually select from favorites such as dates, apricots, pineapple and/or cranberries or cherries. If you can find organic versions of these fruits, so much the better. Chop the dried fruit to convenient bite sizes, of course.

### **Wet ingredients:**

- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup unsweetened apple sauce
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup maple syrup
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup honey
- 1 tbsp. vanilla
- 2 tbsp. vegetable oil (canola or safflower oil are good choices, I don't recommend olive oil for this.)

Set racks in the upper and lower thirds of the oven. Preheat the oven to 300°F.



In a large bowl, combine all of the dry ingredients. Stir to mix well. In a small bowl, combine all of the wet ingredients except the apple sauce and microwave them enough to thin their consistency. Add the apple sauce and mix well. Pour the wet ingredients over the dry ones, and stir to evenly coat all the dry ingredients.

Spread the mixture evenly on two cookie sheets with edges, or you could even use two 13 x 9 baking pans.

Bake for 35 to 40 minutes, or until evenly golden brown.

I suggest that you check the granola every ten minutes during the baking period, so that you can rotate the pans and stir the granola; this helps it to cook evenly.

When the granola is evenly light brown, remove the pans from the oven, stir well – this will keep it from cooling into a hard, solid sheet – and set aside to cool.

After a few minutes, add the optional dried fruit and again mix until evenly distributed.

The finished granola may still feel slightly soft when it comes out of the oven, but it will crisp up as it cools.

Store your cooled granola in zipper-lock plastic bags or other airtight containers. Your granola will keep indefinitely in the refrigerator, though refrigeration is not necessary if you plan to eat it within two weeks.

Yield: about 11 - 14 cups depending on how much fruit you add.