

Granola Recipe: Basic Blueprint

One of the best things about making granola is that you can indulge your creative urges and your taste buds with a few variations of a good basic recipe.

The following one makes a delicious breakfast and the ingredients can easily be changed to fit your mood. Since it uses dates and a small amount of pure maple syrup, it's good for people who don't want to use sugar or sugar substitutes. And you even have the choice of baking the granola or using a food dehydrator.

Soak the following in filtered water for 4 hours or more:

- 1 cup raw, organic almonds
- ½ cup raw, organic pepitas
- ½ to 1 cup raw, organic sunflower seeds

After draining the almonds and seeds, put them in a food processor and grind into small pieces. Combine the ground mixture in a large bowl with:

- 1 pound raw, organic rolled oats
- ½ cup flax seeds, ground in your blender or a food mill
- 1 cup grated, unsweetened coconut

Measure and cover with boiling water:

- ¾ cup dried dates

Let the dates soak so they soften. Then put them in a blender along with:

- ½ cup canola oil
- ½ cup filtered water
- ¼ cup pure maple syrup
- 2 tablespoons vanilla extract
- ½ teaspoon almond extract

Stir the liquid ingredients into the dry mixture and mix well.

You can either dehydrate the granola or bake it. If you use a food dehydrator, spoon it onto the shelves using parchment paper or the teflon sheets provided by the manufacturer. If you prefer to bake the granola, spread it onto a large cookie sheet that has been sprayed with a non-stick cooking spray, and bake at 350 degrees until it is golden brown and crispy. Stir often during baking so it doesn't burn.

You can easily vary the ingredients by using different nuts or raw peanuts, adding whole sesame seeds, grating orange peel into the liquid ingredients and so on. Let your creativity run wild!

There's only one downside to this recipe – it smells so good, there might not be any left when breakfast rolls around!