

LITERARY GRANOLA / Harry Youtt

[I only call it this because it gives me an excuse to post it here. on the website of a writing class! It wouldn't be enough to just be "tasty" granola, or "money-saving" granola!]

Ingredients

2 Cups of rolled oats
¼ cup sunflower seeds
¼ cup sesame seeds
½ cup walnut pieces

bought from a bin at Whole Foods or wherever. This amounts to about half a pound if you're buying by weight. Buy at least a pound. You're going to want to make more.

or sliced almonds. I have also used raw cashews. You could even use raw peanuts.

¼ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon cinnamon
½ teaspoon ginger
½ teaspoon allspice

I spoon the dry spices into the oats etc and mix them up before I pour on the wet ingredients. There's nothing particularly magical about this mix of spices. Feel free to experiment. You could even use just cinnamon – probably a teaspoonful.

¼ teaspoon stevia (powder, scant)

Also note that if you use stevia for sweetening, I think it is a good idea to have an underlying citrus flavor – orange extract or orange flavor. You can even add a quarter teaspoon of orange zest if you use vanilla. Stevia has a slight taste if it isn't sweetening something citrus.

Stevia is a great and powerful sweetener – no calories, natural, from a plant, so that it doesn't have the downside risks of aspartame. It comes in powder or liquid form. The liquid tends to gunk up after a while, so we use the powder – mixed into the dry ingredients. It is expensive – about 12 dollars for a container, but you only use a tiny bit and it goes a long way. If you use the liquid form, I'm not sure there's an equivalence, so you'll have to experiment with amounts, but DON'T USE MUCH! Mix the liquid with the wet ingredients before adding them. You can sweeten instead with agave nectar, or honey, or maple syrup (Experiment with taste – probably half a cup of honey, maybe a little less). Some people even use frozen apple juice concentrate, and you could also use orange juice concentrate (a quarter cup or so)

½ Cup of water
¾ teaspoon of orange extract or vanilla
3 Tablespoons of Canola Oil

If you use a syrup sweetener, you'll want to reduce the amount of water. probably down to a quarter cup.

You could use other oils, just not Olive Oil because if you use it, your granola will taste like salad!

Pre-heat your oven to 300

Mix the dry ingredients and spices in a bowl.

Stir the wet ingredients together in a cup.

Stir the wet ingredients into the bowl so that everything gets wet.

Oil your pan (or spray it with Pam or something)

Spread the granola stuff evenly onto the flat pan.

Put the pan on a middle oven rack.

Stir the stuff around every 10 minutes or less.

Bake for 30+ minutes.

It's done when it's golden brown.

Take it out of the oven. Put it into a bowl, and add ½ cup of raisins or more (or other dried fruit) while still hot, and stir it all up.

You need a flat pan, the bigger the better, with sides on it, not a flat cookie sheet, because you stir the stuff occasionally as it cooks. Mine has sides that are about ¾ inches high. The idea is to get everything exposed so that it all gets golden brown.

Don't worry if it isn't hard like granola when it comes out of the oven. The liquid will have cooked off, but the oats will not be fully crisp. It will get harder as it cools – sort of the way oatmeal cookies do. [And if you think about it, granola IS a little like a very crumbly oatmeal cookie.]