

"Cookin' Up The Blues"

2009 Recipe Collection



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Blueberry Festival Granola
Camilla Saulsbury

Once you make homemade granola, you'll wonder "Why on earth have I never made this before??!" It is so delicious, healthy, and very easy to make. It makes for great gifts during the holidays, or any time, too. And like my smoothie recipe, consider this recipe a template: vary the dried fruits, nuts, extract, and spices according to what you like, what you have on hand, or what's on sale.

Be sure to wait until after baking before adding the fruit. It will get hard and scorched if it is baked along with the granola.

1/2 cup canola oil (or any other neutral-flavor vegetable oil)
1/2 cup honey, maple syrup, or brown rice syrup
1 teaspoon almond extract
1 teaspoon ground cardamom (or use cinnamon)
4 cups old-fashioned rolled oats
2 cups unsweetened, shredded coconut
2 cups whole almonds, roughly chopped
1/4 cup ground flaxseed meal
2 cups dried blueberries, roughly chopped

Preheat the oven to 350F.

Whisk the oil, honey, almond extract and cardamom in a large bowl. Add the oats, coconut, almonds, and flaxseed meal, tossing to coat with a wooden spoon until all the oats and nuts are coated with the oil mixture. Spread out onto a sheet pan. Bake 15 minutes; stir with a spatula, Bake 8-10 minutes longer, until golden-brown and fragrant.

Remove the granola from the oven and stir in the dried blueberries. Allow to cool, stirring occasionally. Store the cooled granola in an airtight container (you can also freeze in airtight containers for up to 3 months). Makes 10 cups granola.

Ingredient Notes for Nacogdoches Buying:

Dried blueberries: Fresh local blueberries can be purchased and dried in a food dehydrator for this recipe. For off season dried blueberries try Brookshire Brothers, Kroger and Walmart. But the best prices, believe it or not, is at Wal-greens on North Street. They are located with the snacks and dried fruit.

Flax Meal: Flax meal (ground flax seeds) is not expensive, and is available at both Kroger locations (in the health food sections), the Granary, and Morning Glory. It is packed full of Omega-3 fatty acids, and tastes delicious in just about everything. It's an easy way to add some extra health to baked goods, deliciously.

Cardamom: Cardamom is my favorite spice; it is used a lot in Scandinavian baked goods, as well as Middle Eastern and Indian cooking. It is very expensive when purchased from the grocery stores (about 11 dollars for a small bottle), but a very cheap, and much fresher, alternative is available: **Morning Glory**, located on North Street. They sell many herbs and spices in bulk, so you can buy a small amount or exactly what you need for literally pennies. You can buy the equal amount of what is in the 11 dollar jar from the supermarket for \$1.00. I buy almost all of my herbs and spices there; they are much fresher than what is in the bottles, and literally a tiny fraction of the cost.

So-Good Blueberry Smoothie (You'll Think it's Shake)
Camilla Saulsbury

This smoothie is endlessly variable, so long as you stick to the basic proportions of liquids to frozen fruit. And whatever fruit you opt for, don't leave out the frozen banana. In addition to being super-healthy (and frugal), it's the key to giving this and any smoothie a thick, milkshake-like consistency.

And if you want to make this extra healthy, without changing the flavor or color, add 1 packed cup fresh (not frozen!) spinach leaves. No kidding. With the dark color of the blueberries, you will not even see it, and its neutral flavor is undetectable (even to my picky son and husband). It's a great way to sneak some vegetables into your breakfast or snack.

1 and 1/2 cups blueberries, frozen
1 small banana, peeled, sliced, and frozen
1/2 cup orange juice
1/2 cup lowfat milk (or almond milk, soy milk, or rice milk)
1 cup lowfat vanilla or blueberry yogurt
Optional: 1 tablespoon ground flaxseed meal

**Put all ingredients in a blender and blend until thick and smooth. Serve immediately.
Makes 4 servings.**

Blueberry Grunt

Sarah Colley Jones, Family and Consumer Sciences Agent, Panola County

1 (20-oz) can crushed pineapple
blueberries, washed
1 pkg. yellow cake mix
½ c. butter, melted
½ cup pecans, chopped
½ c. flaked coconut

Grease a 9x13 pan. Preheat oven at 325 degrees. Empty contents of pineapple can into pan, refill can with blueberries, add to pan. Mix well. Sprinkle dry cake mix over fruit, DO NOT MIX. Drizzle melted butter over mix. Sprinkle pecans and coconut over all. Bake for 1 hour, every 15 minutes grab opposite corners of pan and shake slightly, return to oven. Serve with ice cream or sweetened whipped cream.

Low-Fat Lemon Blueberry and Chicken Salad

Karen Sessions Tucker, Family and Consumer Sciences Agent, Nacogdoches County

2 cups fresh or frozen blueberries, dividied

¼ cup low-fat lemon yogurt (not sweetened)* You can add lemon to plain yogurt.

3 tablespoons reduced calorie mayonnaise

1 teaspoon salt

2 cups cubed cooked chicken breasts or canned chicken

½ cup sliced green onion (scallions)

¼ diagonally sliced celery

½ cup diced sweet red bell peppers

Reserve a few blueberries for garnish. In a medium bowl, combine yogurt, mayonnaise and salt. Add remaining blueberries, the chicken, green onions and bell peppers, mix gently. Cover and refrigerate to let flavors blend, at least 30 minutes. Serve over endive or other greens garnished with reserved blueberries and lemon slices. Yield – 4 servings – about 4 cups. I love this recipe – it is very good and different!