



Great Grecian Granola! Use this with plain yogurt and fresh fruit...mm-mmm good!

I saw this on Ina Garten's cooking show on the Food Network. She said her version of the recipe was inspired by Sarah Chase's Open House Cookbook. When I watched her make it, she used vegetable oil (ugh)...so I tried it with Kreta Reserve EVOO. The result was truly outstanding. I made a "plain" version without any dried fruit and one with dates and craisens (dried cranberries). Both were wickedly decadent.

Ingredient List:

- 4 cups old-fashioned rolled oats
- 2 cups sweetened shredded coconut
- 1 3/4 cups sliced almonds
- 1/4 cup pecans or walnuts
- 3/4 cup Kreta Reserve Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- 1/2 cup good honey
- Cinnamon, powdered (I like Saigon Cinnamon because the name is cool)

Optional: Dried fruits and other nuts of your choice. Here are some suggested portions:

- 1 1/2 cups small diced dried apricots
- 1 cup small diced dried figs
- 1 cup dried cherries
- 1 cup dried cranberries
- 1 cup roasted, unsalted cashews

Directions:

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F (if you have a convection oven, 325 is perfect).

Toss the oats, coconut, pecans or walnuts, and almonds together in a large bowl. Pour your honey into a microwave-safe mixing bowl and warm it for 10 seconds. This will help it blend with the oil. Whisk together the oil and honey in a small bowl. Pour the liquids over the oat mixture and stir with a wooden spoon until all the oats and nuts are coated. At this point, shake cinnamon over the mixture lightly covering it enough to change the surface color a bit. Stir in the cinnamon a few times and pour onto a 13" by 18" by 2" sheet pan. Bake, turning over the mixture with a spatula every 15 minutes, until the mixture turns a nice, even, golden brown, about 45 minutes in a convection oven. In a gas oven at 350, when turned every 15 minutes, you may find that an extra 8-12 minutes is needed to make the final golden brown magic happen.

Remove the granola from the oven, stirring one final time before you start the cooling process. If you are adding the dried fruit, this is where I put it in. Trying to add the dried fruit after it cooled made the oats and nut break down too much for my liking. Adding it while it was still warm and moist solved that problem. Allow to cool, stirring occasionally to create a loose form. Depending on how you want to serve it, you can leave it loose or pack it into the pan after you add the fruit to create a finished product than can be cut into squares. It will still crumble very easily after it is in the bar form, but it makes it easy to eat a bar for a healthy snack (and we do!!) without the yogurt and fresh fruit. Store the cooled granola in an airtight container. Makes about 12 servings without the dried fruit and extra nuts added and stays fresh for at least 10 days (that's longest it lasted before we ate it all). For a dessert, Ina Garten made parfaits using yogurt, granola, and fresh berries like cherries, blueberries, and blackberries. It looked very tasty!