



1840 Farm

CHEWY GRANOLA BARS

A NOTE ABOUT OUR RECIPES

The recipes we share have been made many times here at the farmhouse. In all cases, I have made them at least three times, adjusting them along the way if needed. Then I make them once or twice in their final form to make sure that the results are delicious and consistent.

My family members step in and make the final recipe to make sure that they are easy to understand and follow. Our Farmhouse Kitchen Recipe Testers are invited to make them and share their ideas and suggestions with us. Once they pass those tests, they are ready for you to give them a try.

We do our very best to ensure that there are no mistakes, omissions, or typos in our recipes. We're not perfect, so every once in a while, we miss something. We hope that you'll let us know if you find one so that we can make a correction and improve the recipe.

I believe that there's no "right" way to make a recipe, just my way and your way. I hope that you'll use our recipes as a guide to help you find your own unique way to make each one. Or, if you prefer, you can follow the recipe without making any changes.

Substitute ingredients to meet your dietary needs and preferences. Use the kitchen equipment you have on hand even if it differs greatly from what I use. Modify the instructions if it suits you or if you simply find an easier way to achieve the same result.

I hope that you'll tell me about the adjustments you make and how our recipes work for you in your kitchen. Your comments will help me to improve our recipes which makes it easier for other readers to create them successfully in their own kitchens.

I can't wait to hear what you think of this collection of recipes!

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RECIPE NOTES

I'm a tinkerer by nature. I am forever imagining ways that I can improve a recipe or remove unnecessary steps from the instructions. I'm also prone to deciding on a whim to adjust a recipe to fit the ingredients I happen to have on hand in the pantry and refrigerator.

My want to be nimble in the kitchen leads to me making notes on nearly any recipe I make no matter how many times I have made it. Perhaps I learned this from my grandmother who would make handwritten notes on recipes she clipped from the local newspaper. She would write, "tastes good", "looks beautiful", or "needed more time in the oven" on those recipes so that she could use her own notes as her guide the next time she made it.

I still have her recipes in the recipe box I made for her when I was about ten years old. There's something about her handwritten notes that make them feel like a bit like a time capsule of my childhood and part of the cultivation of my lifelong love of baking. I hope that my children will feel the same way about my handwritten recipe notes. I also hope that you'll make your own notes and make changes to my recipes to make them uniquely your own.



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CHEWY GRANOLA BARS

When it comes to granola bars, I like them chewy and I like them crunchy. I can't choose one over the other. This recipe is of the chewy variety. It incorporates crisp rice cereal which lightens it up and lends an airy crunch reminiscent of a Rice Krispie treat.

Ingredients

- 2 ½ cups old fashioned oats
- ¼ cup (2 ounces) butter
- Pinch of salt
- ¼ cup (2 ounces) honey
- 2-4 Tablespoons brown sugar
- 1 ½ cups crisp rice cereal
- Flavorings, if desired (See Note)
- ¼ cup seeds
- ¼ - ½ cup chocolate chips, dried fruit,
or chopped nuts

Instructions

In a large pot over medium heat, combine the butter, salt, honey, and brown sugar. Allow the butter to melt and then stir to combine. Bring the mixture up to a gentle simmer. Simmer for 1 minute before removing from the heat. Allow the mixture to cool for 2-3 minutes.

While the mixture cools, choose a baking sheet or pan to hold the granola bar mixture as it cools. I like to use a quarter size baking sheet (9x12) lined with parchment paper. You can use a brownie pan, casserole dish, or cookie sheet. Lining your pan with a sheet of parchment paper will make cleanup a breeze and allow you to easily remove the sheet of granola in one piece when cool.

Add the oats and seeds (if using) to the pot and stir with a wooden spoon or rubber spatula to coat the oats completely. Add the rice cereal and stir gently to incorporate the cereal into the oats without crushing them. The mixture may appear a bit dry. It will resemble a meal more than a batter or dough. Don't worry, as the mixture cools, it will set up.

If you are adding chocolate chips to your batch, allow the oats and cereal to cool for a minute or two. This will help prevent the warmth of the mixture from melting your chocolate chips. If you are adding nuts or dried fruit, you can add them to the pot without allowing it to cool.

Add your chocolate chips, nuts, or dried fruit (if using) to the pot and stir gently to disperse them. Transfer the mixture to your pan or piece of parchment paper for shaping. Using a spatula, dough scraper, or a sturdy measuring cup, flatten the top of the mixture and spread it out until it is even and about ½ inch high.

Compress the mixture slightly to encourage it to hold together. I use the measuring cup I have used to measure the oats, pressing the mixture slightly with the bottom of the cup. Once the mixture is flat, I use a dough scraper or sturdy metal spatula to tidy up the edges.





Allow the mixture to cool until firm. I often place the pan in the refrigerator to speed this process along. After 15 – 20 minutes in the refrigerator, they can be removed easily from the pan and cut into bars, squares, or whatever size and shape you like. I cut mine into 1 ½ inch squares. Each batch makes approximately 3 dozen squares.

TO TOAST THE OATS

Toasting the oats is optional. I find that the bars have a more prominent oat flavor when the oats are toasted, so I almost always pop them in the oven or toaster oven to toast while I am gathering the other ingredients. It's such a simple way to enhance the flavor of the oats, but you can skip this step if you prefer.

To toast the oats, place your old fashioned oats on a rimmed baking sheet or pan. Toast them in the oven or toaster oven at 350 degrees Fahrenheit for about 10 minutes. The oats will take on a slightly golden appearance. Remove them from the oven to cool slightly.

A Few Notes about this Recipe

HONEY

You can also use agave syrup or a combination of honey and agave. I use what I have on hand, often mixing the two.

BROWN SUGAR

I don't like my granola bars to be overly sweet, so I use 2 tablespoons of brown sugar. If you prefer a sweeter bar or plan to add dark chocolate or a tart dried fruit like sour cherries, you can add another tablespoon or two of brown sugar to your batch.

SEEDS

I like to add seeds to my chewy granola bars. I usually combine a tablespoon each of quinoa, hemp seeds, chia seeds, and flaxseeds or flaxseed meal for our bars. You can add your favorite seeds or completely omit them with equally delicious results.

FLAVORING THE BARS

While I have made this recipe without seeds, I prefer them with seeds. I like the texture and flavor that the seeds add, so I always add them in. Along with the seeds, I flavor our granola bars with between ¼ and ½ cup of mini chocolate chips or chopped chocolate and dried fruit cut into bite sized pieces. We are nut free here at the farmhouse, but if you don't have nut allergies to consider, chopped nuts would also be a delicious addition.

Of course, these bars are also delicious without any seeds or flavoring additions. They have a nice blend of sweetness and earthiness that is delightful on its own.



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