



Glorious Grains

Wake up your taste buds with exotic good-for-you grains like spelt, amaranth, and kamut

By Elaine Gavalas

Organic, whole, unrefined grains are a cornerstone of the yoga diet. The enlightened rishis (ancient yoga masters) believed that eating whole grains brings an abundance of prana (life-force energy) into the body. According to yoga dietary guidelines, sattvic (pure) food like organic whole grains encourages balance and good health and has the highest prana. Eating whole grains provides sustained energy and strength for yoga practice and everyday life.

Whole grains contain vitamins and minerals that protect your health with disease-fighting phytonutrients, dietary fiber, and antioxidants. Numerous studies suggest that they provide protection against type-2 diabetes, heart disease, obesity, and many types of cancer. Since you digest unrefined grains more than refined grains, you feel full longer and blood sugar levels stay steady. Whole grains are also low in fat, calories, and cholesterol and high in fiber.

Whole grains are living seeds with the potential

to sprout and contain valuable nutrient- and flavor-packed bran and germ layers. Refined grains, such as white flour, have had these nutritious layers removed during the milling process. Although many of us are familiar with whole grains such as oats, brown rice, barley, and whole wheat, there are some whole grains that may not be as familiar: quinoa, kamut, farro, amaranth, buckwheat, sorghum, spelt, millet, rye, stone-ground corn, kasha.

An easy way to add whole grains to your diet is to gradually include them in salads and main courses. Try substituting brown rice, bulgur, or quinoa for white rice and whole-wheat pastry flour for white flour. You can also enjoy whole grains in your hot and cold breakfast cereals.

Improve your health by incorporating whole grains into your daily diet and doing a daily asana practice. The following recipe for Yogi Hi Energy Bars helps put you on the right track. 🧘

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YOGI HI ENERGY BARS

Enjoy this treat before or after yoga practice or anytime you'd like an energy boost.

INGREDIENTS

- Canola oil cooking spray
- 2 cups organic rolled oats
- 2 tablespoons wheat germ
- 3 tablespoons organic light olive oil or expeller-pressed canola oil
- ½ cup honey
- ¼ cup mashed banana (about ½ banana)
- ½ teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon or pumpkin pie spice
- ¼ cup diced dried fruit (such as raisins, dried apricots, dried cherries, dried cranberries)
- ¼ cup 60-70% cocoa dark chocolate chips
- ¼ cup coarsely chopped unsalted nuts (such as walnuts, almonds, cashews, hazelnuts, or soynuts)

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Coat an 8 by 8-inch baking dish with cooking spray.
2. Spread oats on a large baking sheet. Bake, stirring occasionally, until golden, about 10 to 12 minutes.
3. Combine remaining ingredients in a large mixing bowl. Stir in the cooked oats.
4. Spread the mixture evenly into the baking dish, pressing down with your fingers to pack together.
5. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes, or until golden brown. Cool completely and cut into squares. Wrap the squares in plastic wrap and freeze or refrigerate for up to one week.