

How to Make Popped Amaranth Energy Bars

KHON Living 808 with Taizo Braden and Trini Kaopuiki

Tazio: You know... if you're a busy parent, looking for an on-the-go snack for your Keiki, this is for you!

Trini: Ha ha... that's right! In today's Healthy and Delicious segment with Down to Earth, we're learning how to make energy bars using ancient grains.

Trini: Welcome back to Living 808! Now it's a new year, so a lot of people are trying to get healthy. And Down to Earth wants to help you do that. Or help you stick with your New Year's resolution goals.

I'm here with Sabra... who's a registered dietitian with Down to Earth. And, it looks like we're making some sort of...

Is it an energy bar today?

Sabra: We're making energy bars today. So we're going to do... it's a popped Amaranth energy bar.

Trini: Ok, I have no idea what that is... I'm sorry, what is that?

Sabra: So Amaranth, it's good 'cause it's not a well-known grain. It's an ancient grain. And, the thing that we love about Amaranth is... it is a complete protein. It's gluten-free for people that have Celiac disease, or are sensitive to gluten.

And it's an excellent source of protein, vitamins and minerals.

Trini: Ok, what does that mean: "Ancient Grain"?

Sabra: Ancient Grain, so it's a little bit of a loose term.

Trini: Am I going to be finding cobwebs in here?

Sabra: Basically, ancient grains, they haven't been changed over hundreds of years. There hasn't been any modification to it. And the other excellent thing about ancient grains is... they're whole grains.

It's a great way to add more whole grains into your diet. And, they tend to be more sustainable than regular grains, because they use less water, or are more drought-resistant.

So, cool all the way around.

Trini: Sounds like it's very good for you! Ok, so what are the ingredients for the energy bars?

Sabra: OK, to start with... I'll have you mix... this is some almond butter.

Trini: Ok.

Sabra: And then I also have some brown rice syrup. And this almond butter is amazing!

It comes from the... machines that we have downstairs in our grocery store. It is literally just almonds.

Trini: Wow!

Sabra: No additional... You know... salt or sugar or oils. It's not one that you have to stir before using. Tastes amazing! And then the brown rice syrup... And you'll mix those together.

While you do that, I'm going to pop the Amaranth. So, with the Amaranth... usually when you cook it takes like a little bit more time.

When you pop it, it's like twenty seconds, and you have something you can eat (versus 20 - 30 minutes).

So, what you'll do is... it's best to do it a tablespoon at a time.

Trini: Ok

Sabra: You don't want to put a ton in... because you have to sit and shake the pot and make sure that they pop.

So, I'm going to do a tablespoon at a time. And you just pour it into your pot... you want to make sure - medium high heat. And... Once it starts to pop, you'll just gently shake it the whole time that it's popping. And then I have here, some Amaranth that I already popped. And you can see it's just teeny, teeny, tiny little pop corns.

Trini: So, that's what it looks like after it's popped?

Sabra: Yes

Trini: Ok

Sabra: Little bitty.

Trini: Can I try some?

Sabra: Yeah... taste it and see.

Trini: I've never had this before.

Sabra: It's also really good if you put it on salads or yogurt. [It] adds a little bit of crunch.

[Chewing sounds]

Trini: That's good!

Sabra: It's just crunchy and...

Trini: It's like little miniature popcorn. That's kind of what it tastes like to me. But I can see that being really good on... salads.

Sabra: Yeah!

Trini: Add some [texture] and flavor. Ok, and this just looks yummy!

[Laughing]

Sabra: I know, it's like... You just want to make a sandwich right away.

Trini: I love almond butter!

Sabra: Yes! And then I also have... just in case you don't have time to make your own energy bars, I have some from our store. And then also from our deli, we have freshly made granola bars.

Sabra: Terrific!

Trini: Alright, so in the next segment, I guess we're going to put this all together?

Sabra: Yes!

Trini: Ok... terrific!

Sabra... thank you so much! And today, we're learning how to make energy bars. Not just any energy bars... It's an ancient grain energy bar.

Sabra: Yes... popped Amaranth. We're bringing some popularity to Amaranth.

Trini: Ok, which I had never heard about... but I can tell you they're really yummy! It's like little popcorn. Yeah! And that's what you did... you popped it on the stove.

Sabra: Yup... just like a little teeny tiny popcorn.

Trini: In fact, this is what it looks like... This is the popped version. And actually, I eat a lot of energy bars... It's an easy snack. It's great for the kids. When you're on the go, you just... grab, grab and go.

Sabra: You don't have to worry about it...

Trini: I love that! So, what is the next step?

Sabra: Ok, so what I'm going to do is... I'll start putting our ingredients into the Amaranth. If you want to zest the orange...

Trini: Ok

Sabra: It'll come into this bowl. So I'm putting... this is our popped Amaranth. And you can just zest right inside.

[Bowls clanging]

And then I also have some... [Laughing] Pecans. You got it... you're good!

Trini: I'm going to need the skin on that finger!

[Both Laughing]

Sabra: And then, I also have some raisins here... And the other thing... You can add whatever ingredients you like. So maybe you like almonds and... you know, like a dried cranberry better. You could do that... This is just what we're doing for today. So, you can make your own flavor with this...

I have some Chia here...

[Pouring sound]

And then... If I could have you (sorry), hand me that little bit of salt right there. Little bit of sea salt.

Trini: One thing I love about the recipes from Down to Earth: it's very minimal ingredients.

Sabra: You know what, we're busy! We need easy things that... You know, sometimes if you look at a recipe, it's this long. I'm like: uhh!

Trini: I'm intimidated by the long recipes.

Sabra: Yeah... it takes time! Oh... perfect! Ok

Trini: More?

Sabra: Nope, that is really good!

Trini: I've only done this once before, and it was here at Down to Earth.

Sabra: You're a pro!

[Laughing]

Pro... microplane zesting pro!

Trini: Yeah!

Sabra: So, I'm just mixing all of our ingredients into our popped Amaranth. And then we're going to... put in our almond butter with the rice syrup, and this is what kind of binds everything together, and helps it to stick.

Trini: Alright!

Sabra: And this is where, even, this is great for kids. Get your kids involved! It's a little bit messy! Make sure they have clean hands. And they can go to town pressing it into... a... pan.

Trini: Alright! I just want to... Get my fingers and lick this...

Sabra: I know, you just want to make a sandwich... like right away!

Trini: Alright, I'm gonna...

Sabra: You're good! So this one takes... takes a little bit of stirring. And this is where you do have to get your hands in... So, you'll just stir this... And incorporate... all of the ingredients into your...almond butter.

Trini: But normally at home, you can go ahead and get your hands....

Sabra: Oh yeah! And we can too! We have clean hands, so... We can just dig in, and that helps make it easier. So you just really want to like... get in there, mix it together. Have your kids help you.

Trini: I can already tell... this is so delicious!

Sabra: It's so good! And the orange zest just really takes it up a level. So with this you'll take... We'll keep mixing... But you'll press it into your pie pan here.

Trini: Ok

Sabra: And then, I also have... And this is what's... you get nice messy hands! Exactly! That's what you do after you've mixed everything. If you'd like to try, I have some finished bars right here.

Trini: Yes... yes!

Sabra: Ok, so once we've mixed this... this will go in the pan. Yes!

Trini: And here is the finished...

Sabra: That's the finished product. So, after you press it into your pan... you will want to put it in the fridge for a couple hours. And it'll set up really nice for you. And then you can just cut it to whatever size you would like.

Trini: Ok, let's try this. [Laughing] Mmm

Sabra: Good, right?

Trini: Really good!

Sabra: And something totally different!

[Chewing Sounds]

Trini: I can taste the... grain.

Sabra: Oh... yeah!

Trini: The pop. It's like little pieces of popcorn.

Sabra: Yeah!

Trini: Really yummy! I don't want to talk with my mouth full.

[Laughing]

But I will say, something that I really appreciate about Down to Earth is that... You make these healthy... dishes, but they're delicious too!

Sabra: They all taste good! And that's what we want... We want healthy stuff, but we also want it to taste good.

Trini: Mmm... hmm. And you do that! This is great!

Sabra: And have a little fun while you're at it!

[Laughing]

Trini: Sabra... thank you so much! I'm going to continue eating, but let's throw it back into the studio. This is delicious!

Don't forget: you can find all of these recipes on Down to Earth's website.

Sabra: Yes!

Trini: Thank you!

Sabra: Uh...huh.