

Fruit & Nut Chocolate Bark

Chocolate is often seen as a guilty indulgence, but dark chocolate provides health benefits along with the sweet taste. Here's a treat that is kind to both your taste buds and your body.

You will need:

- 3 oz. dark chocolate (65% or above)
- ¼ c. roughly chopped raw almonds
- ¼ c. dried blueberries
- Pinch of sea salt (optional)



Directions:

Melt the dark chocolate in a double boiler*, stirring frequently to avoid burning.

Remove the chocolate from heat.

Stir in the almonds and dried blueberries.

Spread out the mixture on a pan covered with parchment paper; sprinkle with sea salt to taste.

Cool the bark for 1-2 hours.

*This is essentially two pots stacked on top of one another. Put 2 – 3 inches of water in the bottom pan. Then put the chocolate in the second, slightly smaller pot on top of the first pan. Bring the water to a simmer or very slow boil. The heat from the steaming water melts the chocolate slowly. Stir the chocolate frequently to avoid burning.

More information on dark chocolate:

Studies suggest that dark chocolate can reduce blood pressure and LDL cholesterol by up to 10%. It also contains antioxidants which combat free radicals, and is lower in fat than milk chocolate. Dark chocolate releases serotonin and endorphins, producing a sense of well-being. Exercise also releases endorphins: a less calorie-intensive way of boosting your mood!

Variations:

Try dried cherries or cranberries in place of the dried blueberries.

Try finely chopped walnuts or pecans as a variant for the almonds.

Try adding finely chopped crystallized ginger for more zing.