**Trail Mix Cookies**

**MAKES**

about 40 (3-inch) cookies

**INGREDIENTS**

* 2 1/2 cups old-fashioned rolled oats, divided
* 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
* 1 teaspoon baking powder
* 3/4 teaspoon fine salt
* 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, at room temperature
* 3/4 cup packed light or dark brown sugar
* 3/4 cup granulated sugar
* 2 large eggs
* 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
* 1 (1.69-ounce) pack M&M chocolate candies (1/4 cup)
* 1/2 cup coarsely chopped crunchy pretzels (optional)
* 1/2 cup dried cranberries or raisins
* 1/2 cup roased peanuts or chopped roasted nuts
* 1/3 cup chocolate chips

**INSTRUCTIONS**

* Arrange 2 racks to divide the oven into thirds and heat to 350°F. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper or silicone baking mats; set aside.
* Place 1 cup of the oats in a food processor fitted with the blade attachment, high-speed blender, or spice grinder. Process until the oats are finely ground. Transfer to a large bowl. Add the remaining 1 1/2 cups whole oats, all-purpose flour, baking powder, and salt and whisk to combine; set aside.
* Place the butter, brown sugar, and granulated sugar in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment. (Alternatively, use an electric hand mixer and large bowl.) Beat on medium speed until light and fluffy, about 3 minutes.
* Beat in the eggs one at a time and beat thoroughly after each addition, scraping down the sides of the bowl if needed. Beat in the vanilla. With the mixer on low speed, slowly add the flour mixture and beat until just incorporated.
* Remove the bowl from the mixer. Add the M&Ms, pretzels if using, cranberries, peanuts, and chocolate chips and mix into the dough by hand with a rubber spatula until evenly distributed throughout. Scoop 1-ounce (2-tablespoon) mounds of dough onto the baking sheets, spacing them about 2 inches apart, 12 per baking sheet.
* Bake for 9 minutes. Rotate the baking sheets between racks and from front to back halfway through. Bake until the cookies are light golden-brown on the bottoms and around the edges, 8 to 9 minutes more.
* Place the baking sheets on wire racks and cool 3 minutes. Use a flat spatula to transfer the cookies to a wire rack to cool completely. Let the baking sheets cool completely and bake any remaining dough (you can reuse the parchment paper).

**RECIPE NOTES**

**Toasting the oats:** If you have the time, try toasting the oats first for an extra layer of flavor. Spread the oats in a single layer on a large, rimmed baking sheet. Bake, stirring halfway through, for 15 to 20 minutes. Set aside and cool until the oats are cool enough to handle, then proceed with the recipe.

**Storage:** Store the cookies in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 5 days.

**Make ahead:** The cookie dough can be refrigerated for several days before baking. It can also be scooped out onto baking sheets, frozen solid, and stored in resealable freezer bags in the freezer for several months. Frozen cookies can be baked straight from the freezer but may need 1 to 2 minutes extra baking time.