



# *Mochi*



*By Nicole Harripersad*

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Mochi at home



Mochi at a restaurant



Easter Mochi

# What Is Mochi?



Fresh Daifuku

**M**ochi is a Japanese rice cake made of mochigome, a short grain glutinous sweet rice that is much stickier than regular rice which originated in Japan. It is unknown who invented mochi but the Japanese say that it was created by a priest in Japan for church members in the era 794, mochi were once originally made as offerings to the kami, or “Gods”, at shrines. Mochi’s were cut into small pieces and were given

to people for good health and fortune. Later on mochi was eaten for various occasions or as a regular snack .

Mochi has a strange mixed structure which contained amylopectin gel, starch grains, and air bubbles. This rice has a lack of amylose, (a type of resistant in the starch that makes digesting these sweet things a bit slow, and is derived from short japonica rices. These sweet treats contain a lot of starch in them. The protein concentration in the rice is much higher than in normal short-grain rice, and the two also differ in am-

yllose. In mochi, the amylose content was insignificant, which results in its gel like texture.

Mochi is also said to give strength to those eating it. The use of two mochi symbolizes the passage of time, one for the previous year and one for the new year. It is also said that they represent the moon and the sun or have a yin and yang type meaning. Now That sounds very very interesting and very yummy too!! It is also said that in some of the Japanese folklore and in traditional medicine. Mochi has the ability to warm

the body and increase energy. Mochi’s sweet taste nourishes the pancreas, spleen, and stomach. Mochi is an excellent source of food for people who are in a weak condition. Japanese farmers and laborers favor mochi during colder months because of its reputation for increasing one’s stamina. So this can be a big help for students taking major exams during schools

Mochi is recommended for health problems such as anemia, imbalances in blood sugar, and weak intestines. Women who are pregnant and are lactating can benefit, because it strengthens both the mother and child which encourages a plentiful supply of milk. With its high calcium and iron mostly the mochi is traditionally given to women after childbirth. Mochi is not only tasty but comes with amazing health benefits as well



## Desserts with Mochi



**D**aifukumochi or Daifuku is a Japanese sweet that consists of a small round mochi, stuffed with sweet filling, which is most commonly anko, a sweetened red bean paste made from azuki beans, or matcha green tea powder. Daifuku comes in many varieties. Yomogi (grass filling) Ichigo (served with a whole strawberry, and my favorite Sakura (Japanese blossom filling) They were gaining so much popularity and many people began to eat them toasted. They were also used for gifts in ceremonies and occasions.

Nearly all daifuku are mostly covered in a fine layer of corn or potato starch to keep them from sticking to each other, or fingers. the Daifuku can be cooked either steamed over a stove pot, or it can be cooked in the microwave too. But with the microwave method, the sticky tasty mochi is ready in no time Both the Mochi and daifuku are very popular in Japan.

Dango is a Japanese dumpling and a sweet made from mochi. It is often served with green tea. Dango is eaten year-round, but the different varieties are

traditionally eaten in some given seasons. Three to four pieces of dango are often served on a skewer. The three main flavors in Dango is usually red beans, eggs, or matcha green tea. You can eat dango on a stick or you can have them toasted by a fire like how marshmallows are which are even tastier.

Dango is tasty no matter how you would eat them.



Zenzai is a very traditional Japanese dessert. It's a thick sweet soup which consists of boiled azuki beans "Red Bean Paste" and is often served with mochi or dango in the soup or on the side. Oshiruko or Shiruko is another name used in east of Japan where azuki beans are boiled and then crushed into paste and it has a more of a watery consistency than zenzai. Sweet azuki bean soup with sticky mochi is a very calm and comforting sweet for Japanese people during the winter time, or chilled and serve cold with green tea ice cream on warmer days.

Its even better during the hot summer days of japan. It's popular to enjoy zenzai with sour pickled plums or konbu tea to provide a refreshing contrast to the sweet flavor.



# The Best Dessert of all!! Mochi Ice Cream



Now this is a whole new turn in the dessert world of Japan itself. Behold!! Mochi Icecream. It's a confection made from Japanese mochi with an ice cream filling. The ice cream flavors the insides of the dessert while the mochi adds sweetness and a cool texture. Ice creams used in the mochi includes the traditional flavors such as vanilla, chocolate, and yes strawberry. There are also strange but other unique flavors for the mochi ice cream like kona coffee, plum wine, and red bean.

The treat is dusted with potato or corn starch to keep it from sticking while being

formed and handled. Where can you find this delicious treats? You can find these popular desserts served in some Japanese restaurants in the U.S. And they can be purchased in US grocery stores including Trader Joe's and Costco.

Now the other question that is on people's mind is "who created mochi icecream? And that was none other than Frances Hashimoto. Hashimoto was the former president and CEO of Mikawaya, and is credited as the creator and inventor of mochi ice cream.

Hashimoto's parents, Koroku and Haru Hashimoto, owned the family-owned Mikawaya wagashi, a Japanese bakery which opened in 1910 in Los Angeles. Hashimoto

attended Hollenbeck Junior High School. She later on received her bachelor's degree from the University of Southern California in 1966 and became an elementary school teacher. She taught third grade for four years until her mother, who had been a widow, asked her to join the family business full time in 1970. She then became the chief executive officer of Mikawaya in 1970, when she was 27 years old.

Hashimoto's husband, Joel Friedman, conceived the idea of taking small orbs of ice cream and wrapping them in a Japanese traditional mochi rice cake. She decided to expand on her husband's idea, and invented the fusion dessert now popular in the United States and elsewhere. Hashimoto introduced seven flavors in the mochi product line. Mikawaya began the production of mochi ice cream in the United States in 1993. Research and development took almost over a decade to realize the mass production form used today, due to the complex interactions of the ingredients contained.

Hashimoto was involved to the revitalization of Los

Angeles' Little Tokyo, home to the company's headquarters since it was founded in 1910, and devoted much time to the recognition and expansion to the Japanese community in Southern California. She also helped strengthen ties between Little Tokyo and Minami Otsu Dori Shotengai in Nagoya, Los Angeles' first sister city. But it comes with great sadness, Frances Hashimoto, has died due to lung cancer. She passed away Nov. 4, 2012 at her home in Pasadena.

But because of her invention of the sweet mochi icecream has left a huge impact throughout the world. Not only to the food industry, but to the supermarkets, and for other restaurants as well. Mochi Icecream

will never be forgotten thanks to Frances Hashimoto.



# How do you make Mochi?

A quick video on How to make Mochi from a microwave

## Ingredients

- 1 cup sweetened red bean paste
- 1 cup sweet rice flour (mochiko)
- 1 teaspoon green tea powder
- 1 cup water
- 1/4 cup white sugar
- 1/2 cup cornstarch, for rolling out the dough

Prep Time: 30 minutes

Cook Time: 5-10 minutes

Ready in: 3 and a half hours

## Sweet Rice



**1** Wrap red bean paste in aluminum foil and place in the freezer for at least 3 hours. Mix sweet rice flour and 1 teaspoon of green tea powder thoroughly in a microwave-safe glass or a ceramic bowl. Stir in water, then sugar. Mix until smooth. Cover bowl with plastic wrap.

**2** Cook the rice flour mixture inside the microwave for 3 minutes and 30 seconds. Meanwhile, you can remove the red bean paste from the freezer and divide the paste into 8 equal balls. Set aside. Stir rice flour mixture and heat for another 15 to 30 seconds.

**3** Dust work surface with cornstarch. While the mochi is still hot from the microwave, begin rolling balls the size of about 1 or maybe 2 tablespoons. Flatten the mochi ball and place 1 piece of frozen red bean paste ball in the center. Pinch the mochi over the red bean paste until the paste is completely covered. Sprinkle

with some cornstarch and place mochi seam side down in a paper muffin liner to prevent from sticking. Repeat until all the mochi and red bean paste is used.

**4** Decorate them! Yes, you can decorate them. Many people like to decorate their mochi with cute faces or make them look like cute animals. And when your done, you have the best part of all. You serve your treats with your friends and family or eat them all yourself.



Traditional Mochi Making

Hello Kitty Mochi

## Tips and Tricks

**W**hen you're making mochi for the first time, it isn't very easy. In fact it's very hard and there's a much longer process to it. So here are some useful tips if you are ever wanting to try to make yourself some mochi.

### Tips & Tricks

**1.** Dust EVERYTHING with tapioca (or potato or corn) starch: the surface, your hands, spoons, plates. This dough is incredibly sticky and it's the only way to handle it. You don't want your hands to have bits of sticky mochi stuck onto your fingers and palm, that would be pretty annoying.

If you forgot to dust your mochi, and your hands are already sticky, wash your hands and dry them. Then you get your starch and start to dust in on your mochi. Dust no matter what sticky sweet you're going to be working with.

**2.** This is a huge benefit when working with chocolate and confections, but if you have naturally warm-hands I would suggest washing with very cold water before you get started. It will keep the dough from sticking as much from you again.

**3.** Play around with extracts or food colors--I don't think that it's exactly traditional, but it gives the final treats a great look and taste. Try to start out with just a few drops of red coloring. Pink mochi is always traditional. Or if you want them hot pink add more red for the final look. You can also use food dyes like beets or matcha green tea powder to give it a color than using dyes themselves.

Another tip, for vegans out there, you can use vegetables too. just blend them and strain out remains and add them to your mochi, you can use the liquid for the mochi on the outside and for filling. and you can use bits of the veggies themselves and add tiny pinches of sugar to make them sweet for your filling as well.

**4.** If you're being very lazy

and don't want to cook your mochi over the stove top for over 15 minutes, that's fine. You can always microwave it. You can microwave your liquid mochi in the microwave for 3 and a half minutes. When it's done being cooked through. Carefully take it out. It's going to be very hot. And then wait for your mochi to cool down til you start to knead your mochi.

**5.** You can add fruits and nuts on top of your mochi or on the inside as a filling. Give that mochi an extra kick. Not all mochi has to be creamy. You can give it a crunch with almonds, cashews, or peanuts.



**6.** To make the mochi round you can always use plastic wrap and wrap the mochi in it tightly and form it to a ball. Or if you're a professional confectioner, squeeze the mochi out of your hand until a tiny ball plops out. Make sure your hands are cold, and covered with starch to roll the mochi up again.



**7.** Remember mochi is very very hard to chew a bit, make sure it's not hard. Microwave it to make it soft. When it's soft you have to chew your mochi over and over again until it starts to melt in your mouth a little. Chewy mochi is the best. So savor and enjoy your mochi well

# Mochi Today



Today mochi is everywhere you go. In the streets of Chinatown in Manhattan. In your Japanese restaurants, or in your local anime shows you would watch. And many people today eat mochi for many good reasons.

Mochi is more exciting than a regular old sweet treat. For example: you need Mochi Ice Cream in your life. The unique flavors and texture of Mochi are exciting and delicious. Premium ice cream encased in our fresh, pastry-like Mochi dough you really can't go wrong

with whatever flavor you would choose. They're all so yummy.

It's the perfect grab-and-go snack. Mochi goes beyond the snacks in a bowl occasions. Since no bowl or spoon is required, Mochi is the perfect snack for anytime of the day. Whether you're in a rush to get out the door or you're hanging with friends, Mochi is perfect for any occasion.

Pick up a box of Mochi and you will be glad you did. They make it perfect eating mid-morning, afternoon or late night bite.

It has surprising health benefits. This is the most very

benefits. This is the most very important reason why to eat mochi. There's no denying that Mochi isn't exactly a health food. But believe it or not, mochi actually provides your body with a number of substantial nutrients. A little Mochi a day keeps the doctor away! The delicious and sweet treat provides your body with a handful of beneficial nutrients which includes bone-strengthening calcium, blood-pressure-lowering potassium, and energizing B vitamins. If you're craving a sweet treat, go with Mochi. It's better for you than most desserts.

Food is one of life's greatest joys and everybody deserves something sweet in their life. If you're tired of brownies and cake, it's time to make a change. Your taste buds will thank you.



Cha An <http://www.chaanteahouse.com/wp/>

230 E 9th St, New York, NY 10003

Beard Papa <http://beardpapa.com/>

2167 Broadway, New York, NY 10024

Minamoto Kitchoan <http://www.kitchoan.com/>

185 Greenwich St, New York, NY 10006

Nanatori <http://nanatorijapaneseny.com/>

162 Montague St, Brooklyn, NY 11201

Miyabi II Asian Fusion <http://www.miyabiii.com/>

1348 Forest Ave, Staten Island, NY 10302

