Sakura Mochi

This type of Japanese confectionery, known as wagashi, is traditionally enjoyed in the spring as a culinary celebration of cherry blossoms and the fleeting nature of life. This Tokyo-style Sakura Mochi recipe features three main components: a mochi pancake, sweet red bean paste, and a salted sakura leaf.

Ingredients

Anko, commonly called Red Bean Paste:
70 grams azuki bean
70 grams sugar
½ tsp salt
Water

Thin Mochi Pancake:
12 grams shiratamako (from mochi sticky rice powder)
30 grams rice flour (white non-glutinous rice)
25 grams sugar
60 grams water
1 grams salt
1-2 drops red beet powder

Method

For the red bean paste: In a medium pot, cover azuki beans with a couple inches of water and boil for several hours until soft. You may need to add more water. Using a sieve, drain the azuki beans. Using a blender or a food processor, blend your azuki beans until smooth.

Method
Back into your medium pot, add azuki beans, salt, and sugar and cook until a thick paste forms. Then spread out the paste into a thin layer on a baking sheet to let cool. If using store bought, use the "Koshi Anko" variety, as it is smoother.

For the mochi pancake: In a medium bowl, add a small amount of water to the shiratamako flour and knead it until smooth. Then add the remaining water, sugar, and salt. Once that is mixed well, add the rice flour and mix again. To give the Sakura Mochi its signature pink color, add 1-2 drops of red beetroot colored water and mix. In a teflon frying pan, heat a small amount of oil over low heat.

The mochi burns easily so be careful with the heat. Using a ladle, pour a small amount of batter into the pan, spread it thinly, and cook. Once the surface is dry, flip and cook the opposite side but do not brown. Place on a baking sheet to cool. Assemble by rolling the anko up on the inside of the mochi pancake. Roll that inside a salted Sakura leaf.

Recipe by Chef Kiyoka Nishikawa, Cheffrey's Kitchen

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