



Japan Now: December 2024

Japan Now is the email newsletter of the Consular Office of Japan in Anchorage

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Mochi: Japanese Rice Cakes

Are you a fan of mochi?

Mochi is a traditional Japanese rice cake that has become a household name even in the U.S. In some regions of America, the word “mochi” might bring to mind images of mochi ice cream or mochi doughnuts.

In Japan, there are of course many different kinds of mochi products, but in general, the word “mochi” refers to traditional, plain mochi.



Plain mochi is made from just two simple ingredients: glutinous rice, called mochi-gome, and water. Soaked mochi-gome is steamed, mashed, pounded with a Kine (a heavy wooden mallet) in an Usu (a large bowl of wood/stone) to make it smooth before shaping it into either a ball to make “maru-mochi” which is said to bring good luck, or into a square to make “kaku-mochi,” which is good for making large quantities to be given out and more easily transported. Instead of using Usu and Kine, which is the traditional way to make mochi, mochi-making machines have grown in popularity in modern times.



maru-mochi



kaku-mochi

(Especially freshly made) mochi is very tasty on its own, with its subtle sweetness and chewy texture, but there are various ways to enjoy mochi!

お雑煮 (Ozoni) – A clear soup with mochi and other ingredients, such as chicken, vegetables, and more!

磯部焼き (Isobeyaki) – A grilled mochi cake mixed with soy sauce wrapped in a crispy nori seaweed.

きなこもち (Kinako Mochi) – A popular Japanese snack with mochi dusted in powder, soybean, and sugar.

お汁粉 (Oshiruko) – A traditional dessert with a red bean soup and mochi dumplings.

あんこもち (Anko Mochi) – Mochi cakes either topped or filled with anko, a paste made from red beans.

Now, are you craving for mochi? You can enjoy mochi dishes introduced above at the December Mochi Event in Anchorage!

2024 JAA Rice Pounding Festival

餅つき



Date: Sunday December 8, 2024

Time: 1pm-4:00pm

Place: Northwood Elementary School

Address: 4807 Northwood Dr.

Anchorage, AK 99517



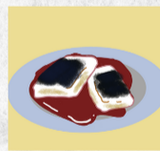
餅つきデモンストレーション Rice-Pounding Demonstration
太鼓 パフォーマンス Tomodachi Daiko Performance
フリーマーケット Flea Market

Menu for Purchase

※Actual product may vary



お雑煮
Ozoni



磯辺焼き
Isobeyaki



きなこもち
Kinako mochi



お汁粉
Oshiruko



あんこもち
Anko Mochi

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Designed by Hana

Head Consul Hamada's Visit to Fairbanks

Head Consul Hamada recently visited Fairbanks on

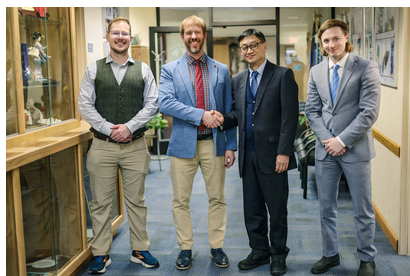
November 17 and 18. On November 17, Head Consul Hamada attended the celebration for newly appointed United States Ambassador at-Large for Arctic Affairs Mike Sfraga. Head Consul Hamada congratulated Ambassador Sfraga and looks forward to collaborating with him in the future.



On November 18, Head Consul Hamada met with International Arctic Research Center Director Hajo Eicken and Deputy Director Claudine Hauri. Head Consul Hamada appreciated learning more about new avenues of research in the Arctic, as well as Deputy Director Hauri's work on ocean acidification and carbon cycle dynamics. Also at the meeting, preparations were made for the Consular Office of Japan to host the Online Arctic Symposium in January of 2025. Director Eicken and Deputy Director Hauri will present at the Symposium. Please see our Homepage and Facebook page for updated information on dates, times, and speakers for the Online Arctic Symposium.



Head Consul Hamada also met with Alaska Center for Energy and Power Director Jeremy Kasper. Director Kasper spoke more about his work on data centers and microgrids, as well as Alaska's growing renewable energy market. Head Consul Hamada thanked Director Kasper for his willingness to present at the Online Arctic Symposium.



Lastly, a courtesy call was made to congratulate newly elected Fairbanks North Star Borough Mayor Grier Hopkins. Head Consul Hamada was intrigued to learn more about Mayor Hopkins' plans to bring in new infrastructure projects to the Borough, continue to increase tourism, lower energy costs, and revitalize sister city relations between Mombetsu and

Fairbanks. The Consular Office of Japan looks forward to continued cooperation with Mayor Hopkins and the Fairbanks North Star Borough.

Interview with a Japanese Intern in Anchorage

Sand Lake Elementary, Mears Middle School, and Dimond High School offer a Japanese immersion program, and every year interns come all the way from Japan to Alaska to act as a second teacher in the classes at these schools.

Hana, one of the interns, is from Ugo-machi which is located in the southeast of Akita prefecture. She is now working as an intern in the kindergarten of Sand Lake Elementary.



[**Read Full Interview**](#)

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