

# JAPAN STREET

## NEWS LETTER

vol.5, 2022

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Japanese sweets have gained much popularity in recent years. Not only are Western sweets, such as chocolate, arranged in a Japanese style, but also “wagashi,” an ancient and modern confectionery, is becoming increasingly popular. In this issue, we will introduce you to these traditional Japanese which are said to be an art of the senses.

We hope you enjoy these stories of wagashi from all over Japan, and have the chance to try them yourself.



Feel Japan with  
traditional Japanese confectionery,  
wagashi



JETRO



## What is wagashi?

Wagashi is a traditional Japanese confectionery. There are many different types, including baked, steamed, and kneaded. They are also produced in connection with local culture, agricultural and four seasons.



The origin of wagashi is said to have originated from dumplings made with nuts more than 2,000 years ago. Later, they were presented to the imperial court or served as an accompaniment to tea for the upper class. Furthermore, in the Edo period (1603-1867), with the increase in sugar imports, the "confectionery culture" spread among the common people.



## The popularity is expanding around the world.

Ingredients for wagashi are generally main plant-derived ingredients such as grains, beans, starch, and sugar. Because of their simple ingredients, they have a short shelf life, making them difficult to export overseas.

In recent years, improved technology has enabled us to deliver them to overseas buyers.

Because of the high quality raw materials used in their making, wagashi fans are expanding from Asia to Europe and America! In addition, the high use of healthy legumes has earned a high reputation from health-conscious consumers. Japan Street features a wide variety of confections. In this issue we will introduce six of the best Japanese confections with an expiration date of about six months or longer!

wagashi

1

Hanakikyo

Nagoya, Aichi



Class/Rice Cake Best before/1 year

Enjoy cherry blossom  
in your country  
and feel spring with hanadayori.

Hanakikyo began producing frozen wagashi in 1989 as a derivative of its flour milling business in Nagoya, the birthplace of the shogun and located between Tokyo and Kyoto.



Hanadayori

[view details >>](#)

One of the most popular products overseas is hanadayori. It is a very beautiful wagashi with a peach-colored glutinous rice-flour dough covering a white bean paste and a single salted pickled leaf of a flower called “sakura,” or cherry blossom, which is peculiar to Japan. The white bean paste has an elegant sweetness, and the outside is soft and chewy, while the inside melts in your mouth. The salty cherry blossoms not only look great, but also fill your mouth with the fragrance of flowers, giving you a sense of "springtime."

\* Sweet bean paste or “an” is made by boiling beans sweetened with sugar and is used universally in many Japanese confectionaries.

Ohagi is a classic Japanese wagashi. It is a Japanese confectionery made by steaming highly viscous rice, rounding it to the point where only a few grains of rice remain, and covering it with sweet bean paste, and was traditionally made to entertain guests.



## Ohagi

[view details >>](#)

In order to enhance the true flavor of azuki beans, the raw material of sweet bean paste, the use of sugar is purposely kept to a low level. The taste of modest azuki, which brings out the gentle sweetness of the viscous rice, is very elegant. Noboru in Fukuoka Prefecture, in the western part of Japan near the continent, has acquired HACCP certification, which indicates strict hygiene and quality control. They also produce school lunches for kindergartens and elementary schools, pursuing the creation of safe and secure quality products!

wagashi

2

NOBORU CO.,Ltd.

KitaKyushu,  
Fukuoka



Class/Rice Cake Best before/6 months to 1 year

Ohagi,  
traditional Japanese welcome sweets  
with an elegant sweetness.



Class/Rice cake Best before/6 months to 1 year

wagashi

3

MUSASHISEIKA  
CO.,Ltd.

Takasaki,  
Gunma

Perfect for any situation.  
A very versatile,  
four-flavored bite-sized ohagi.

Typical ohagi are about the size of the palm of your hand and have a large volume to make you full. For cafes and other places that wish to serve small quantities or simply want to try it out, we recommend Musashiseika four-colors mini ohagi.



## Four colors mini ohagi

[view details >>](#)

The set includes four types of small ohagi: grainy red bean paste with a fun texture, melt-in-your-mouth strained bean paste, savory soybean flour (made from mashed soybeans), and aromatic sesame seeds. In addition to the fun flavor lineup, almost no additives are used in the production process. What's more, the red beans used to make the bean paste are domestically produced and sourced from farmers in Hokkaido, ensuring high quality!

These fun, bite-sized ohagi are perfect for any occasion!



Delicious  
Japanese green tea  
reborn as  
crispy bite-sized candies.

This candy is made by kneading Fukuoka Prefecture tea powder into local sugar and then covering it with a thin layer of melted and whipped sugar to make it airy and crispy.



## Green tea candy

[view details >>](#)

Yoshioka Confectionery Co., Ltd., which has been dedicated to the production of candy since 1933, does not use mass production.

The company still sticks to the same old method of making candy over an open flame. Its product is characterized by its crispy texture and savory flavor compared to ordinary candies. Being colorless and fragrance-free are also key points that the company has insisted on. The bag also has a zipper so it can be taken anywhere and enjoyed at room temperature for about a year!



Class/Candy Best before/1 year

Wakou is a Japanese confectionery located in Fushimi, Kyoto, which is famous as a sake brewery for its high-quality spring water. They produce Sake Manju, which is a Japanese bun made by kneading premium sake and the water for brewing sake into a dough and steaming it with a filling of red bean paste.

The secret to its delicious taste is that the dough is prepared by “aging at freezing temperature”. Chilling the ingredients just before freezing and aging them in that temperature range can stimulate a defensive reaction in the ingredients.



## Sake manju

[view details >>](#)

This process breaks down starch into sugars and proteins into amino acids, which increases the "umami". The effect is to bring out the original flavor of the ingredients and improve their moistness! The rich aroma of sake combined with the moist dough makes a very mature taste. Furthermore, Wakou has acquired a number of food safety certifications such as ISO9001, ISO14001 and ISO22000. They are committed to making great Wagashi with food safety not to mention deliciousness.

Contrary to its simple appearance,  
you will be intoxicated by  
the complex and rich aroma of sake.

wagashi

5

Wakou Co., Ltd.

Fushimi,  
Kyoto



Class/Steamed cake Best before/360 days (frozen, for export)

wagashi

6

Chikiriya Co., Ltd.

Fukuchiyama,  
Kyoto



Class/Flour cracker Best before/180days

A long-selling  
"odori senbei"  
which has been sold  
for 100 years in Kyoto.

Senbei is a Japanese confectionery that is kneaded into flour, rolled out thinly, and baked on a griddle. Chikiriya has been making senbei using techniques handed down since its establishment 100 years ago. A castle was built in Kyoto more than 400 years ago. The "odori senbei" was created to reproduce the simple and elegant dance of the inhabitants of the castle town through taste, and is shaped to represent the lanterns seen at festivals (odori means dance in Japanese)!



## Odorisenbei

[view details >>](#)

Ingredients are carefully selected from the finest ingredients, such as eggs with less chemical fertilizers and the highest quality flour with less gluten. Because of their high quality, "odori senbei" have won the Prime Minister's Honorary President Award and awards at national confectionery competitions, and have been featured extensively on TV and in magazines.



A photo taken at the time of the company's establishment.



# EDITOR'S COLUMN

We bring you the beauty of the four seasons!



**Editor** Nozomi

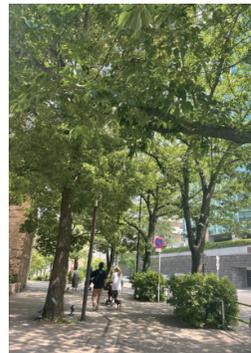
In Japan, we can enjoy four seasons of almost equal length! Japanese people have long enjoyed expressing the beauty and joy of each season through food, music, and painting. Wagashi is also full of products associated with the four seasons.

I am one of those who enjoy seasonal events such as picnics, swimming, and snowboarding.

Here are “pictures that you can feel each season” taken by me in Tokyo, where our headquarters is located. I hope you will enjoy the beauty and transition of the “four seasons” through these photos. You will be able to better understand Japanese culture!



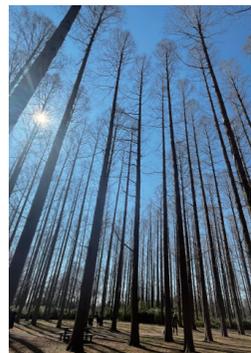
**SPRING**  
Cherry blossoms near Tokyo HQ



**SUMMER**  
My favorite Summer green!



**AUTUMN**  
Ginkgo trees in Autumn



**WINTER**  
Sometimes it snows!

# INFORMATION

Would you like to have an online business meeting with Japanese confectionery makers?

Please contact us if you want to know more about the long lasting wagashi registered on Japan Street! If you tell us that you are interested in these products after reading our newsletter, we will give you priority in arranging a business meeting! We look forward to hearing from you!



Contact us >>

## Back Numbers / Japanese Craft Beer & Gin



Sake is not the only Japanese alcohol beverage! We introduced fascinating craft beers and gins that made of such Japanese ingredients. Have a fun weekend with unique Japanese tastes!



We will see you at the next issue!