

Sweet Rice Balls

(China)

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According to legend, during the Qing Dynasty, the emperor was traveling and got lost in a village. He knocked on a door and a poor old woman answered. The emperor asked her to make something for him, so she used what she had on hand: rice flour and black sesame seeds. She wrapped the grounded black sesame seeds in rice flour and cooked it to serve to the emperor.

The round shape of the balls symbolizes the togetherness of family. They're eaten during the Lantern Festival or the 15th night of the New Year. There is always a full moon then. People usually eat it in round bowls to also represent togetherness.

Ingredients:

1 cup glutinous rice flour
Red bean paste (as much as you like)
1/2 cup water

Instructions:

Combine the rice flour with water until it becomes a doughy texture.

Take a medium size ball and flatten it out.

Add some red bean paste on the surface and re-form the ball shape.

Boil water in a pan and place the balls into the water.

Cook until soft.

Tips: When making the dough, add only a little water at a time so that you don't add too much or too little. If there are cracks in the dough, add more water. Don't add too much red bean paste because then you can't re-form the ball.