

## Ohagi

2 cups of sweet mocha rice

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup regular short grain rice

3  $\frac{1}{3}$  cups water

$\frac{3}{4}$  tsp. salt

Wash rice and soak for  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour. Cook rice and cool.

An (sweet bean paste)

1. Cover 1 lb. dry axuki beans with plenty of water and bring to a boil.
2. Lower the heat to medium and continue to cook.
3. When the beans have absorbed water and the wrinkles of the bean skins have disappeared, drain the beans in a colander. Change the water.
4. Cover the beans with plenty of water again using three times as much water as beans. Bring to a boil. Lower the heat to medium low and cook, removing any scum and adding water as needed to keep the beans covered until they are cooked and are very tender. (About 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  hours)
5. Drain the beans in a colander with a dish towel lining it. Gather up the ends of the towel and squeeze out the water. Sometimes smooth "an" settles as sediment in the bottom of the pot of water that has drained through the cloth. You can use this once you pour off the water, too.
6. Whirl the beans in a blender or food processor until they become a smooth paste.
7. Place the bean puree in a large pot, add 1  $\frac{3}{4}$ -2 cups sugar and  $\frac{1}{8}$  tsp. salt, and cook over medium heat, stirring with a wooden spoon. First the sugar will dissolve and make the "an" thin but as it cooks it will become thick again. Keep stirring as you cook. Cool and use for ohagi or freeze for other manju. Makes about 5-6 cups.

**Note: You can buy it already made as "sweetened red bean paste—koshi an"**

To make Ohagi:

Roll about about a rounded tablespoon of cooked rice into a ball. Make as many balls until you run out of rice. Make an equal number of "an" balls of the same size. Flatten the "an" ball in your palm. Place the rice ball on top of the "an" and cover the rice ball, flattening slightly as you cover. The "an" may be sticky and may be more manageable if you place the "an" on a small piece of rice sack dish towel and use it as you cover the rice ball.

Recipe from Cathy Nakamura