

# Wagashi : Traditional Japanese Confections









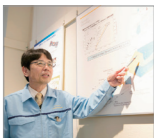






Photo from *Shimanesque Shimane* no. 95. Courtesy Shimane Prefectural Government.

*Wagashi* are traditional Japanese sweets, which portray the season with their shape, color, and ingredients. They are works of art designed to appeal to all the senses with their appearance, flavor, aroma, feel, and the sounds of their names.

The sweets in the photo are from Matsue, Shimane Prefecture. Along with Kyoto and Kanazawa, Matsue is one of Japan's three most famous producers of *wagashi*. These are high-grade fresh confections made with colorful *nerikiri*, a workable mixture of white bean paste and glutinous rice, and *yokan*, sweet jellied bean paste. From the left, they are *hanakago*, "flower basket," displaying the cherry blossoms of spring; *kao*, "king of flowers," representing the peony, Shimane's prefectural flower; and *fuji*, "wisteria." The filling, made from beans that are polished to remove the outer skin, melts in the mouth, leaving a delicate sweetness typical of the finest *wagashi*.

Starting with this issue we will introduce *wagashi* from around Japan. We hope that you enjoy seeing and reading about these artistic confections—and that you will have opportunities to enjoy eating them as well.

## Contents

		<i>We Are Tomodachi</i> Spring 2016		
<i>Wagashi</i> : Traditional Japanese Confections	— 4		The Charms of the G7 Ministerial Meetings Host Cities	— 18 
A Season for Floral Brilliance	— 6		Japanese People Contributing Worldwide	— 22 
Japanese Support for Safety Frameworks Worldwide			Tokyo Aims to Realize "Hydrogen Society" by 2020	— 24 
Support for Enhancement of Maritime Safety and Security	— 8		A New Laser Technology for Dissolving Blood Clots	— 26 
Sharing the Community- Based Police Model	— 10		Friends of Japan	— 28 
Strengthening Criminal Justice Systems Around the World	— 12		The JET Programme: A Great Way to Experience Japan	— 30 
Moments of Prime Minister Abe	— 14		Websites	— 32
Speech of the Prime Minister	— 16		Publications	— 33

© Copyright 2016 Cabinet Office of Japan. No article or any part thereof may be reproduced without the express permission of the Cabinet Office. All inquiries should be made through a form available at: [https://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/forms/comment\\_ssl.html](https://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/forms/comment_ssl.html)

Note: All U.S. dollar equivalents for Japanese yen amounts in *We Are Tomodachi* are calculated at 115 yen to the dollar, roughly the rate at the time of publication.