

## **Kinseiken Daigahara Sweets Shop**

Along the Koshu Kaido road in Daigahara-Juku is Kinseiken, a sweets shop that dates back more than a century.

The Kinseiken Daigahara shop was opened in 1902 and operates in a building that was once an inn. The shop is famous for a number of traditional Japanese sweets made with fresh ingredients and innovative manufacturing processes. The company is known as the creator of *shingen mochi*, a soft confection made with rice flour that is often served with *kuromitsu* (black sugar syrup) and *kinako* (roasted soybean powder).

The company sells its products all over Japan. To serve a wide market while maintaining quality, Kinseiken uses a freezing technique called CAS (Cells Alive System). This system uses a magnetic field to minimize damage to food cells that occurs during normal freezing practices.

### *Raindrop Cake*

The *mizu shingen mochi*, known as the Raindrop Cake in English, is a popular choice at Kinseiken. After tasting the pristine water of the Southern Minami Alps of Yamanashi, CEO Koichi Ono wished there was a way for people to experience the refreshing purity of Yamanashi's water without having to climb a mountain.

He spent months testing and creating different products, until he finally discovered the Raindrop Cake, developed by a Kinseiken craftsman. This unique confectionary has only two ingredients—Yamanashi water and agar—and is served with *kuromitsu* (black sugar syrup) and *kinako* (roasted soybean powder).

The Raindrop Cake has become famous internationally. While others have tried to copy the recipe, the Daigahara Kinseiken and Nirasaki shops are the only places where customers can try the fabled *mizu shingen mochi*. Due to its fragile nature, the cake lasts only 30 minutes at room temperature before dissolving. The item is so popular that it normally sells out in the morning. Visitors must line up early and eat it quickly in order to have the experience of “eating” Yamanashi water.