

Detchi Yokan

Detchi yokan is a traditional sweet popularized in Omihachiman and sold by several local confectioners. It is a simple snack made with azuki bean jam, sugar, wheat flour, agar, and water, steamed and served wrapped in a bamboo sheath. The purplish-brown mixture has a soft, paste-like texture and a light, refreshing sweetness.

Compared to other, more expensive types of *yokan*, which usually have the texture of dense jelly, *detchi yokan* contains more water and less sugar. Its low price helped make it a popular snack among merchants' apprentices, or *detchi*, after whom the sweet is thought to be named. When these trainees returned home to Omihachiman during holidays, they would buy *detchi yokan* as gifts to take back to their workplaces in the big cities. An alternative theory holds that *detchi* comes from the word *detchiru*, which means kneading and mixing ingredients.