

There sprinkled with
some sesame. the
dish



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there are many traditional rituals in Japan that includes soybeans. "Osechi" is a set of dishes that is eaten in the new years in Japan. The dishes are served in the square boxes piled with two or three of them, in hope of the New Years bringing many blessings "piled up" in their lives. each dish has its own meaning, and boiled sweet black beans is one of the many.

The word "mame" means beans. But the sound "mame" itself also means "healthy" or "diligently." So people eat sweet black beans so that we may be healthy and able to work diligently throughout the year. There are other dishes such as Tazukuri. It is made from dried sardine roasted with soy sauce, sugar, and sweet cooking wine, sprinkled with some sesame.

The dish name means "making good rice fields." This comes from how farmers used to sprinkle fertilizer mixed with minced dried sardine when they planted rice in the spring wishing they would have a good harvest in the fall. Herring eggs are served because it bears lots of eggs, so people eat salt-preserved herrings, wishing for the prosperity of the family. There are deserts as well. Kinton is made from sweet potatoes and chestnuts, colored with natural yellow coloring extracted from "kuchinashi" (gardenia). It looks like mashed potatoes but has a beautiful gold color and tastes very sweet. Chinese characters for "Kinton" mean gold or treasures, so we wish for the great blessings for next year. one of the biggest traditional events that has soy beans as its main symbol is "setsubun".

This is a day before the beginning of spring in Japan, which is 3rd of February. the ritual that includes roasted soy beans is called "mamemaki", which literally means "scattering beans". the beans are thrown at a person wearing

a mask with a oni(a demon) on it, while others shout “ oni wa soto fuku wa uchi”(demons/badspirits go out, luck come inside).

The beans are thought to have the power to destroy evil spirits such as diseases and bad luck. After purifying the home by driving away bad spirits, it is also customary to eat the same number as your age of soybeans.