Desserts / Japan

Dorayaki

Two copper-brown, honey-perfumed pancakes sandwiching a thick, yielding layer of anko — sweetened red azuki bean paste. The pancakes are tender and slightly springy from mirin and baking soda, their edges cleanly defined and their surfaces a uniform matte amber.

Time 50 min **Servings** 4

What you'll need.

- ☐ 4 parts Cake flour (or all-purpose + 10% cornstarch)
- ☐ 2.5 parts White sugar
- ☐ 0.5 parts Mirin (hon-mirin)
- ☐ 1.5 parts Cold water
- ☐ 0.1 parts Neutral oil (for pan)
- ☐ 3 pieces Eggs (whole, room temperature)
- ☐ 0.5 parts Honey
- ☐ 0.1 parts Baking soda (bicarb)
- ☐ 6 parts Tsubuan or koshian (smooth red bean paste)

Let's make it.

01 In a medium mixing bowl, whisk eggs with sugar, honey, and mirin until the sugar dissolves and the mixture is pale, fluffy, and increased in volume — about 2 minutes of vigorous whisking. The mixture should form a thick ribbon that holds its shape momentarily when you lift the whisk. This aeration is what gives dorayaki pancakes their characteristic slight bounce and even crumb. Do not underbeat — pale and voluminous is essential.

02 Sift cake flour over the egg mixture. Dissolve baking soda in cold water and add to the bowl. Fold everything together with a silicone spatula using gentle J-stroke movements — cut down the center, sweep under the bottom, fold over the top. Rotate the bowl 90 degrees and repeat. Stop as soon as no dry flour is visible. Overmixing develops gluten and makes the pancakes tough rather than tender. Rest the batter at room temperature for 15 minutes to allow the flour to fully hydrate and the baking soda to activate.

03 Heat a flat-bottomed non-stick pan or griddle over the lowest possible heat. Brush with the thinnest possible film of oil, then wipe away the excess with a paper towel — you want just enough oil to prevent sticking, not enough to fry. Pour a ladleful of batter (about 60 ml) into the center of the pan from a height of about 5 cm. The batter will spread naturally into a round — do not spread it. Cook until the entire surface has set and the edges look matte and dry, and tiny bubbles are rising and bursting across the surface from edge to edge (2–3 minutes). Flip once with a thin spatula. Cook the second side for 1 minute only — it will be slightly paler than the first side. Stack on a plate covered with a damp towel to keep soft.

04 Match pancakes into pairs of similar size. Place one pancake flat-side up. Spoon 2–3 tablespoons of anko into the center and spread it gently to within 1 cm of the edge — it will spread further when the top pancake is pressed on. Place the second pancake flat-side down on top. Press lightly at the center so the filling reaches the edges uniformly but does not overflow. The profile should be a gentle dome — thick in the center, tapering to a neat edge. Wrap individually in plastic wrap and rest 30 minutes — the moisture from the filling softens the pancakes further and melds the flavors.

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Servings are an estimate; check quantities in the source recipe.
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