

# Dorayaki Pancakes

By Chef Takashi Yagihashi

Dorayaki, pancake sandwiches filled with red bean paste, are a popular Japanese snack with tea. To turn them into a party dessert, I add candied walnuts and top them with ice cream and honey. They're like miniature pancake sundaes.



## INGREDIENTS

### For Candied Walnuts:

- ½ cup walnuts
- Nonstick cooking spray
- ½ cup sugar
- ¼ cup water
- 2 tsp. light corn syrup

### For Simple Syrup:

- 6 tbsp. sugar
- 6 tbsp. water

### For Pancake Batter:

- 4 large eggs
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup cake flour
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- ½-1 cup water
- 2 tbsp. honey
- Nonstick cooking spray
- ¾ cup canned sweet red bean paste
- 1 pint vanilla ice cream
- Honey for serving

## DIRECTIONS

**For the candied walnuts:** Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Spread the walnuts on a small rimmed baking sheet and place in the oven until they take on color and are fragrant (about 10 to 15 minutes). Remove from the oven and let cool, then chop.

Place an 8-inch sheet of parchment paper on a work surface and spray with cooking spray. In an 8-inch sauté pan, combine the sugar, water and corn syrup over medium-high heat and cook, without stirring, until the mixture turns a medium amber (about 8 to 10 minutes). Add the walnuts, stir to coat with the caramel, and remove from the heat. Pour the nut mixture onto the prepared parchment, spread evenly with a heat-resistant rubber spatula, and let cool completely. Transfer to a cutting board and finely chop. The candied walnuts may be stored in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 3 days.

**For the simple syrup:** In a heavy-bottomed saucepan, combine the sugar and water over medium heat and bring to a boil, stirring occasionally, until the sugar is dissolved (about 2 minutes). Remove the heat and let cool to room temperature. You should have about ½ cup; set aside.

**For the pancake batter:** In a large bowl, whisk the eggs until blended. Sift together both flours, the sugar, and the baking powder into the bowl with the eggs. Add ½ cup of the water and the honey and stir just until the ingredients are evenly combined. The batter should be thick and pourable and have the consistency of a milk shake. If it is too thick, stir in up to ½ cup more water.

Spray a large nonstick sauté pan with nonstick spray and place over medium heat. When the pan is hot, pour in the batter to form 3-inch pancakes, using about 3 tbsp. batter for each pancake and being careful not to crowd the pan. Cook until browned on the first side (2 to 3 minutes), then flip and cook until browned on the second side (2 to 3 minutes longer). Using a spatula, transfer the pancakes to a large plate. Wipe out the pan, spray it again with cooking spray, and repeat with the remaining batter. You should have 16 pancakes total. (The pancakes may be made up to 24 hours in advance. Let cool to room temperature, wrap with plastic wrap, and refrigerate. To rewarm, place in a microwave for 30 to 45 seconds.

**To assemble:** Lay the 16 warm pancakes, with the sides that were browned first face down, on a work surface. Brush each pancake with about 1 ½ tsp. of the simple syrup. Spread 1 ½ tbsp. of the red bean paste on each of 8 of the pancakes, leaving a ¼-inch border around the edge uncovered; this is the bottom of the pancake sandwich.

Sprinkle the candied walnuts evenly over the bean paste on each pancake. Top with a second pancake, simple syrup side down, to form a sandwich.

Transfer the pancake sandwiches to individual plates. Top each serving with a scoop of ice cream and a drizzle of honey, if desired. Serve right away.