

<MULTICULTURAL NOTES・^{たぶんか}多文化コラム>



New Year's Soup (*Ozoni*) & Gift for Children (*Otoshidama*) in Japanese Culture

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日本文化のお雑煮とお年玉について



During the New Year's holidays each year in Japan, families and relatives gather to celebrate the New Year.

In this month's column, we would like to introduce "*Ozoni*" and "*Otoshidama*" which are indispensable in explaining the **Japanese New Year's custom**.

Simply put, ***Ozoni*** is a **traditional Japanese New Year's soup dish made of rice cakes, vegetables and meat, which is eaten on/around New Year's Day**.

At New Year's, children receive money called "*Otoshidama*" (New Year's Gift) from their parents and relatives, such as uncles, aunts, grandparents, etc.

For this custom, adults are supposed to prepare enough money to spend during the New Year's holidays. Parents who have received a New Year's gift for their children will also give it to the children of those who gave it to them.

The Amount of *Otoshidama* Varies by Child's Age

The amount of *Otoshidama* increases with the age of the child. For example, to elementary school students, **1,000 yen-3,000 yen** (for lower grades) **yen-5,000 yen** (for higher grades) is given by each adult/couple etc. Generally, children before/in schools (sometimes universities) receive it.

wow!



Otoshidama Is Put in a Small Envelope Called "*Pochibukuro*"

"*Pochi*" originates from the word "*koreppocchi*", which refers mainly to things of small value, such as small gratuities. Before/During the New Year's holidays, *Pochibukuro* with characters printed on them are available at supermarkets and convenience stores.

Main Ingredients for *Ozoni*

Rice cake, bonito broth, kelp broth, carrot, shiitake mushroom, taro, spinach, komatsuna, burdock, radish, chicken/pork, fish paste, etc.

(※Ingredients vary by household.)

