

# New Year Accessories

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The holiday season in Hawaii is about eating Thanksgiving turkey with friends and family, opening gifts from Santa Claus during Christmas and popping long strings of firecrackers on New Year's Eve. But in Japan, no other occasion in the year has as much major significance as New Year's Day.

The New Year festivity in Japan called *oshogatsu* starts in the last few days of December until the first week in January, when schools and businesses are closed and many people return home to spend time with their families.

Company President Robert Iida says that time is spent tying up loose ends, clearing out the old and beginning the new year on the right foot.

*Otoshidama-bukuro* or New Year money envelopes, wooden offering tables called *sanbo* for mochi decoration and *kine* or wooden mallets to pound mochi are a few of the accessories Iida's sells to usher Japan's biggest celebration of the year.

Much hard work and cooking preparation are involved in the days leading up to New Year's Day, Iida said. Homes are well-kept to welcome "Toshigami-sama," the Year God who brings abundance, good health and happiness to each family.

After the house is cleaned, families hang *shimenawa* made of straw rope and place bamboo arrangements called *kadomatsu* at their front doorstep to welcome ancestral spirits and ward off evil.

A favorite activity is mochi pounding. Mochi rice, soaked and then cooked overnight, is repeatedly pounded using a *kine* or wooden mallet until its consistency gets soft and sticky.

The mochi is then made into a New Year decoration called *kagami mochi*, round rice cakes on a *sanbo* and topped with a tangerine, Iida said. The display usually sits on the dining room table as an offering to Shinto gods.

For dinner on New Year's Eve, the custom is to eat buckwheat noodles called *toshikoshi soba* for longevity, he said. And at the stroke of midnight, the echoing sound of bells from Buddhist temples in Japan are heard ringing 108 times.

Bishop Daiya Amano of Izumo Taishakyo Mission of Hawaii said such bells are rarely seen in Hawaii, because very few temples can accommodate its enormous size.

Shrines and temples open just before midnight, and many people are already eagerly waiting in line for blessings at the alter. Amano Sensei said as many as 10,000 people from all faiths, including Christians and tourists from Japan, come to pray at Izumo Taisha for safety, good health and prosperity for the coming year.

The first meal with the family on New Year's Day is a big deal in Japan, Iida said. Many people enjoy eating *ozoni*, a soup with mochi and vegetables, with stock made from dried bonito flakes. Then, an abundance of ceremonial dishes called *osechi ryori* are served to last a few days, enough time for the housewife to rest from cooking and cleaning.

The festivity often ends about a week into the new year, Iida says, with hopes of good luck, fortune and a better year ahead.

**"Shinnen Akemashite Omedetoogozaizmasu"**  
Happy New Year!



**Large Sanbo Offering Table**

Cypress Wood  
5.5" H, 7" W  
\$51.00



**Small Sanbo, or Offering Tray**

Cypress Wood  
1" H, 4.5" W  
\$13.25



**Medium Sanbo, Offering Table**

Cypress Wood  
4.75" H, 5.75" W  
\$41.75



**Mochi Kazari**

\$16.20



**#Y135 Takarabune with 7 Gods**

Ceramic  
Dragonboat: 5.5" H, 5.25" W  
\$80.60



**Yanagizuru New Year Decor (S)**

\$43.25 per box



**Bag of 6 Shuttlecocks for Hagoita (6-1)**

\$11.95 per package.

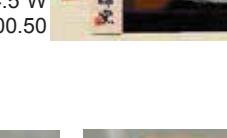
**#Y64 Takarabune Dragonboat**

Ceramic  
Gold Screen: 5.5" H  
Dragonboat: 4.5" H, 4.5" W  
\$100.50



**Standing Shishi Lion**

Paper Mache/Fabric with Plastic Stand  
4.75" H, 3.5" W  
\$7.95



**Shishi-MaiLion**

Paper Mache/Fabric  
Lion Head: 2.5" H, 3.25" W

\$7.95



**Mochibana, Mochi Flower**

To decorate on willow trees.

Symbolizes

the coming of spring in Japan.

*Out of Stock*



**Hagoita: Paddles used to play Hanetsuki**

Made of Cypress Wood.

3 Different Designs Available. Each paddle includes 2 shuttle-

cocks.

14.5" L, 4" W

\$33.49/Paddle



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Seven Gods of Luck  
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