



NUTTY NUTELLA MOCHI (THE ASIAN FERRERO ROCHER)

Nutella on crack -- as in, Nutella made with more hazelnuts! Creamy, crunchy, and chewy Nutty Nutella Mochi (mochi = sticky rice cake) is like an Asian version of my one of my guilty-pleasure chocolate, Ferrero Rocher. It's very easy to make and lots of fun!

Ingredients (makes 8 mochi balls – recipe easily doubled, tripled, what have you)

- 2 tablespoons Nutella spread (you can easily substitute w/ other hazelnut-based or chocolate spread...but really, why would you do that? 😊)
- 3 tablespoons (about 30 grams) hazelnuts/filberts without shells
- 6 tablespoons glutinous/sweet rice or mochiko flour, plus a lot of extra for flouring surface and hands
- 7 tablespoons water, divided
- 2 teaspoons granulated sugar
- (optional) a drop of liquid food coloring

Other materials needed: aluminum foil, parchment paper – you don't need anything longer than 4 inches in width when you tear it from the box.

Preparation

1. (*Optional step – Roasting Nuts*) Pre-heat oven to 350°F. Spread hazelnuts in one layer on a baking sheet and roast for about 5 to 8 minutes (start checking the oven at 5). Be careful not to scorch it. Stir once during baking. Cool completely on a wire rack.
2. Ground hazelnuts in a food processor or grinder into rock salt consistency. Depending on your preference you can go finer than 3mm or you can go for chunky. Keep in mind that pronounced angular edges tend to tear the mochi as you mold it.
3. Mix Nutella spread and ground hazelnuts in a small bowl until all nut pieces are coated. Form 1-teaspoon balls using a measuring spoon and a small teaspoon. Scoop from measuring spoon, place the spread back in and scoop again until you form a ball. It shouldn't take more than 3 strokes. Once you get the hang of it, it will be a breeze. Drop each ball on the aluminum foil. Place nutella balls on the foil in the freezer for at least 30 minutes, preferably an hour before making mochi so they will harden.
4. Combine glutinous rice flour, 6 tablespoons water, food coloring (if desired) and granulated sugar in a small bowl. Heat it in the microwave on high for 2 minutes. Stir. If the sticky paste peels away from the side of the bowl as you stir, add the remaining tablespoon of water until combined. If not, return bowl in the microwave and heat in 20-second intervals until the paste peels away from the sides of the bowl, then mix with water.
5. Take the frozen Nutella balls from the freezer.
6. Dust the parchment paper and your work surface (could be just plate) with rice flour. Place a small mound of flour on your work surface for dipping. Flour your hands generously. I find that

the best way to ‘dust’ my hands with rice flour is to wash and wipe, and flour my damp hands. Spoon at least half a tablespoon of sticky paste (a.k.a. mochi). Dip all exposed areas onto your mound of flour. Once it doesn’t stick anymore, peel it from the spoon with your hands, then dip all un-floured areas in flour. Press this mound of paste until you form a 4mm-thick wrapper. Dust your hand with flour whenever it sticks to the paste. Use that floured mochi to grab a Nutella ball from the foil, and then carefully wrap it around the nutella. You can stretch it a little, and flour any sticky surface as needed. Once two mochi ends meet, to pinch them together with floured fingers – it’s just like working with clay. It takes a little practice to get this right, but once you realize that the trick is really to keep your hands from sticking to the mochi, you will be fine. If all else fails, you can eat your mistake. Mmm..Nutella.

7. Lightly roll each Nutella stuffed mochi in flour, and place on the floured parchment paper. Place in the freezer for 30 minutes to set. Or you can eat it right away, really.

Notes: I do repeat the importance of putting flour on the surface or your hands when making the mochi because it is extremely sticky. The mochi paste recipe has provisions for extra paste when you need to start over with the mochi wrapper.

Variation: You can wrap a whole hazelnut in Nutella and freeze it. You can use any imaginable filling you like and you can put any flavorings in the mochi paste itself – from extracts to powder. The mochi paste can also be just rolled in rice flour and eaten plain.

One of the best things about mochi is that you can be very creative about it. Make it savory, make it sweet, it will succumb to whatever flavor whim you fancy. It’s open to experimentation without a lot of fail.

For those who haven’t eaten mochi or sticky rice cake before, it is like a very soft (sticky/stretchy) pillow of gnocchi. I grew up eating sticky rice cakes and would prefer them to gnocchi on any given day. Try it! - Joy

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*This is an original recipe from Gourmeted.com and was feature on the site in February 5, 2010 in celebration of **World Nutella Day**:*

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