



## Taiwanese Meatball 肉圓

Taiwanese Meatball is a Taiwanese traditional snack that named after its shape. The word 肉 is meat, and 圓 means circle, and often is translated as "ball." It is a flat, translucent circle and usually its diameter is 6-8 cm. Its greyish translucent wrapper is made by tapioca powder, potato starch and water, which make it look gelatinous and taste chewy and sticky. The savory stuffing inside the wrapper consists of pork, bamboo shoots, scallion, mushroom, and some other ingredients different from place to place. Usually Taiwanese Meatball will be served with garlic and the kind of sauce that tastes both sweet and salt and even a little bit spicy.

It is said that Taiwanese Meatball was first in the shape of triangle in Beitou (北投) yet did not become as popular as the circle shape ones.

Taiwanese Meatball was devised by a person who worked in a temple named Fàn Wàn jū (范萬居). At that time, Beitou (北投) was suffering from heavy floods. Fàn Wàn jū (范萬居) used seasoned sweet potatoes and ground them into powder, and he kneaded the dough with the powder sweet potato and then distributed to the refugees. At that time there was no meat in it. After years of improvement, Taiwanese Meatball has spread to different regions of Taiwan and each region has different ingredients and its own features.

Changhua(彰化) and Hsinchu(新竹) counties are the most famous places for Taiwanese Meatball. Yet the two counties have different recipe of making Taiwanese Meatball, giving each local variety a distinctive taste. In Changhua, those meatballs are deep-fried, while those in Hsinchu are steamed. No matter which kind of Taiwanese Meatball in whatever region of Taiwan, the chewy outer skin and fragrant, tasty filling make a perfectly delicious match and make Taiwanese Meatball become one of the most popular traditional Taiwanese snack for all times.