

# Hawaiian Shave Ice



**Shave ice** or **Hawaiian shave ice** is an ice-based dessert made by shaving a block of ice. While the product can resemble a [snow cone](#), snow cones are made with crushed, rather than shaved, ice. Even though it is made with shaved ice, it is called "shave ice", not "shaved ice" in Hawai'i.<sup>[1]</sup> On the Big Island of Hawai'i, it is also referred to as 'ice shave', though both terms (ice shave and shave ice) are used by locals.

Shaving produces a very fine ice that appears snow-like. Flavored syrups are added to the ice, which are absorbed by the ice instead of surrounding it.<sup>[2][3]</sup> A properly made shave ice product rarely requires a straw, since the flavors are in the ice and not at the bottom of the cup. Although the traditional American flavors are common, shave ice in Hawai'i is often flavored with local ingredients such as [guava](#), [pineapple](#), [coconut cream](#), [passion fruit](#), [li hing mui](#), [lychee](#), [kiwi fruit](#) and [mango](#). Hawaiian shave ice is traditionally served in a conical paper or plastic cup with multiple flavors and with a scoop of vanilla ice cream and/or [azuki bean](#) paste at the bottom of the cup. Sweetened condensed milk drizzled over the top is sometimes called a "snow cap." This style of shave ice is common on the north shore of O'ahu, as well as on Maui and the Big Island of Hawai'i (where it is called "Japanese style").

## History

Shave ice traces its history to [Japan](#), where it is known as [kakigōri](#) and dates back to the [Heian Period](#).<sup>[4]</sup> "Shave ice enjoyed world-wide popularity after Japanese plantation workers immigrated to the Hawaiian islands and took their traditional dessert with them, creating shave ice from large blocks of ice and using Japanese swords which were family heirlooms."<sup>[5]</sup>

### Shave Ice Terms:

**Mochi:** glutinous rice that adds crunch to your shave ice.

**Azuki beans:** a dark sweet bean paste. Good but filling. Have it added in lawyers if you like it.

**Li Hing Mui:** this is a powder of pulverized plums. Sweet and sour in taste and you can sprinkle it on top of shave ice. Try first though, it's an acquired taste. Just pretend you are doing a tequila shot, lick your hand and sprinkle in on your hand and lick.