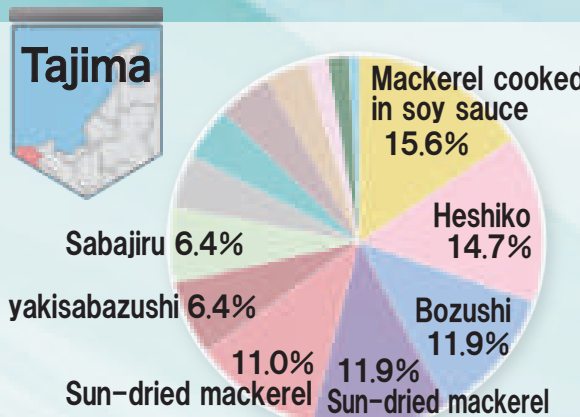
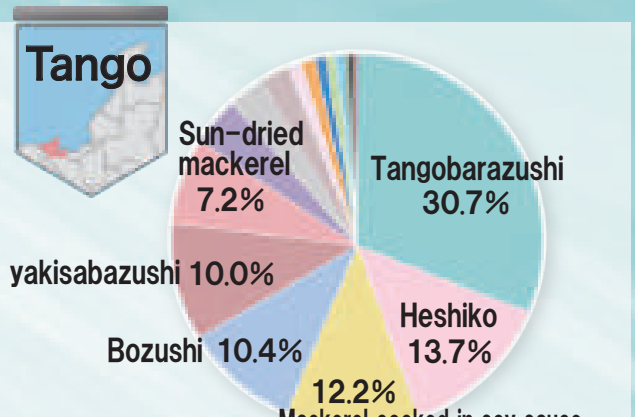
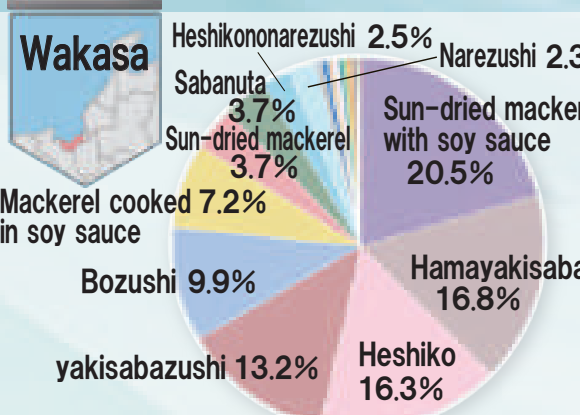
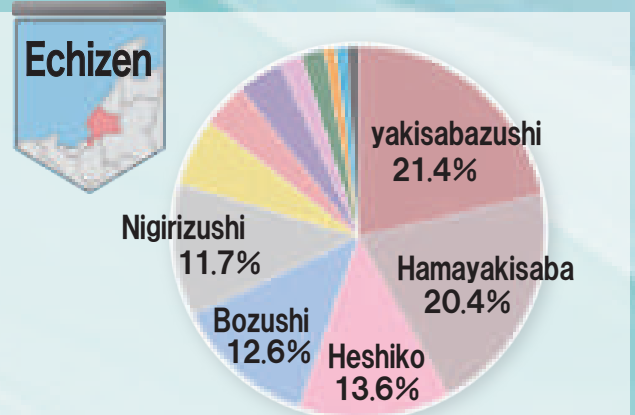
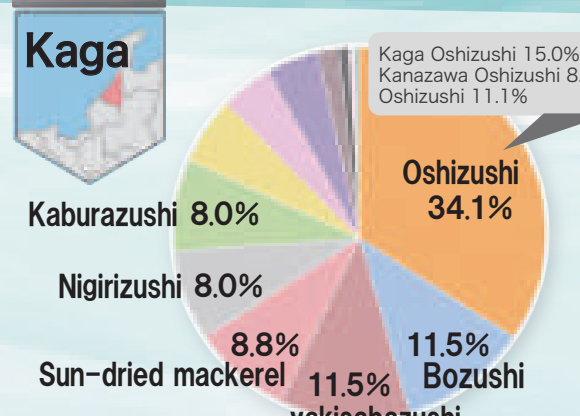
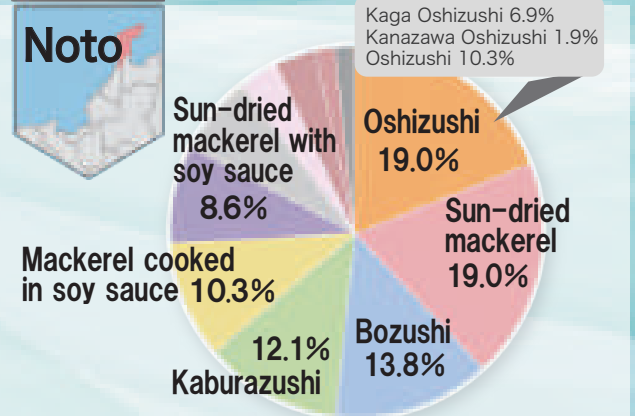
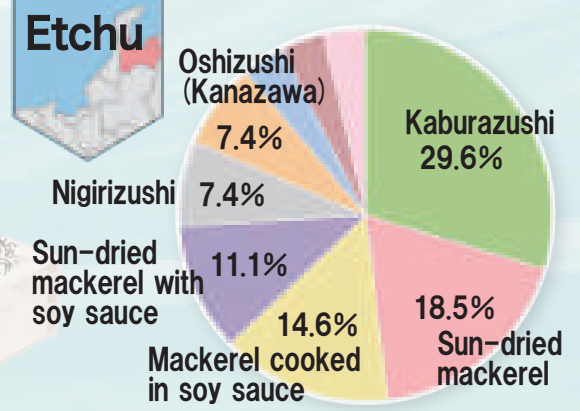


## Familiar Local Dishes



## Heshiko



The mackerel in this traditional dish is pickled in salt and fermented rice bran. It's made differently depending on the region or processing plant, and it's known for its strong umami flavor, coloration, and unique smell.

In the past, it used to be common to remove the fermented rice bran from fermented or aged heshiko, then sliced and lightly roasted before eating. But in recent years, it has been used to add flavor to dishes such as fried rice and pasta.

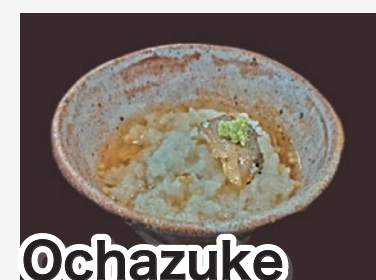
In general, heshiko is made by slicing Pacific mackerel along their backs, stacking them in a barrel with salt for about a week, and then pickling them in rice bran.

They are usually stored this way for a long period of time; in order to promote lactic acid fermentation, they may be pickled for about one year.

One common reason for people to dislike heshiko is its intense salty taste.



Pickling heshiko



Ochazuke (rice in green tea or soup)



Pasta



Sashimi

A more detailed report regarding the survey referenced in this pamphlet is available on the Kyoto Prefectural Tango Folk Museum website.

We extend our deepest thanks to those who participated in our questionnaire, oral surveys, and town meetings, as well as those who offered opinions and information via letter or telephone.

### Special Thanks

Aoki Fishery Co., Ltd., Iio-Jozo Co., Ltd., Ishikawa Prefecture Board of Education, Ishikawa Prefectural History Museum, Ine Fish Market Co., Ltd., Yoichi Ueno of Yoyomaru, Umaimonya Wara, Hyoshiro, Odanitsune Co., Ltd., Kaga Oshizushi Study Groupe, Kaya Farmers Rice Co. Ltd., Kawamata Shoten Ltd., Kyotango City Tourism Association, Kyotango-Juku School for Regional Culture, Kyoto Fishery Association, Kyoto Prefecture Fishery Co-op (main office, Ine branch, Miyazu branch), Kutsukiya, Gokayama Folklore Museum, Sakita Shoji Co., Ltd., Satou Co., Ltd., SEA CRAFT Co., Ltd., Seyagura, Chidorien Co., Ltd., Nishigaki Co., Ltd., Nogigen Co. Ltd., Hamabun Shoten, Hyogo Prefecture Kami City Board of Education, Wakasa Senior High School, Fukui Canning Co., Ltd., University of Fukuchiyama, Maizuru Kamaboko Cooperative, Miyake Shoten, Minshuku Sasuke, Morihiro Shoten Co., Ltd., Yamaichi Co. Ltd., Japanese-style restaurant Fumiya Co., Ltd.

### Participating Organizations

Local organizations in Miyazu, Kyotango, Ine, Yosano, Maizuru, Obama (Fukui Prefecture), and Kyoto

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### source

Sabanosugatazushi: From the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan website  
<[https://www.maff.go.jp/j/keikaku/syokubunka/k\\_ryouri/search\\_menu/menu/sabanosugatazushi\\_kochi.html](https://www.maff.go.jp/j/keikaku/syokubunka/k_ryouri/search_menu/menu/sabanosugatazushi_kochi.html)>  
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<[https://www.maff.go.jp/j/keikaku/syokubunka/k\\_ryouri/search\\_menu/menu/oshizushi\\_ishikawa.html](https://www.maff.go.jp/j/keikaku/syokubunka/k_ryouri/search_menu/menu/oshizushi_ishikawa.html)>  
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<[https://www.maff.go.jp/j/keikaku/syokubunka/k\\_ryouri/search\\_menu/namacusajiru\\_fukui.html](https://www.maff.go.jp/j/keikaku/syokubunka/k_ryouri/search_menu/namacusajiru_fukui.html)>  
Chirashizushi with grilled mackerel: From the Shishimasa website  
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## Mackerel Food Culture and Local Cuisine on the Sea of Japan and Wakasa Bay Coastline

### - Keeping Unique Traditions Alive -

Mackerel have long been fished along the coast of the Sea of Japan and Wakasa Bay. Used in local cuisine and various food products, they are a firmly established part of the regional food culture.

Before the advent of railways and cars, the roads merchants took to carry mackerel from Wakasa Bay to Kyoto were bustling with commerce and became known as the Saba Kaido, or "Mackerel Highway". The Wakasa Bay coastline is a region historically known for sending mackerel to Kyoto.

Mackerel are known for being quick to spoil, which is the origin of the Japanese saying "saba no ikigusare"—even if a mackerel looks fresh, it may not be safe to eat. Before refrigeration technology became widely available, various methods appropriate to the local climate were employed to preserve mackerel. These included grilling, drying, pickling in salt or rice bran, and making it into sushi.

Also, as part of the unique local cuisine, pasta and fried rice dishes incorporating mackerel have even been invented in recent years to complement traditional fermented and processed mackerel products, grilled and pickled dishes, and sushi, soups, and hot pots utilizing the fish.

This just goes to show the unique passion the people of this region have for these dishes, as well as the skill of those dedicated to its preservation.



### Region-wide Tastes



Bozushi

Mackerel marinated in vinegar is placed on a sushi mat. Sushi rice is then placed on top, following which it is rolled and shaped using the sushi mat.



yakisabazushi

Grilled mackerel is placed on top of sushi rice and then shaped using a sushi mat.



Nigirizushi

Mackerel marinated in vinegar is cut into bite-sized pieces and then placed on sushi rice.



Sabanosugatazushi

Fresh mackerel is sliced along the back and marinated in vinegar. The head is included for decoration.



Narezushi (Wakasa)

After pickling the mackerel in vinegar, then stuffed with rice and then fermented.



Sabanuta (Wakasa)

Salted mackerel is marinated in vinegar, then dressed with a mix of miso, mustard, sugar, vinegar, and salt.

## Regional Dishes and Food Products

(Based on a 11/2023 - 1/2024 survey of residents of Toyama (Etchu), Ishikawa (Noto/Kaga), Fukui (Echizen/Wakasa), Kyoto (Tango), and Hyogo (Tajima) Prefectures)



### Survey Results

\*Responses for Etchu were collected from residents of Nanto.  
Responses for Tango were collected from residents of Kyotango, Ine, Yosano, Miyazu, and Maizuru.

Along the Wakasa Bay and in nearby regions, a widely established, traditional preference for dried mackerel or mackerel cooked in soy sauce can be seen. In recent years, mackerel bozushi, nigirizushi (hand-pressed sushi), and yakisabazushi (grilled mackerel sushi) stand out as newer food trends. Grilled mackerel sushi is particularly popular in the Echizen and Wakasa regions.

Some local dishes that reflect the regional food culture include tangobarazushi, heshiko in the Tajima-Echizen area, narezushi, heshikononarezushi, shoyuboshi, sabanuta, and namagusajiru in the Wakasa area, sabanokaburazushi in the Etchu and Noto areas, hamayakisaba in the Echizen and Wakasa areas, and sabajiru in the Tajima area.

These local dishes are closely related to daily life in these regions. They are often eaten at home with family, and certain local customs endure, such as eating kaburazushi and heshikononarezushi during the winter, or partaking in oshizushi (pressed sushi) once per year. Many respondents recalled eating tangobarazushi with their children at festivals, important events, and other celebrations.

Most of the ingredients for tangobarazushi can be found at local supermarkets, while heshiko and yakisabazushi are made with imported Norwegian mackerel and sold at local supermarkets, roadside rest stops, and other retailers. This gives us a glimpse into the differences in food distribution between regions.

### A Variety of Local Dishes



### Sun-dried mackerel

(A Traditional Staple Throughout the Region)



Lightly salted and partially dried mackerel

### Mackerel cooked in soy sauce

(A Traditional Staple Throughout the Region)



Mackerel chopped into pieces and simmered in soy sauce. Sometimes made with whole mackerel, organs included.

### Namagusajiru (Wakasa)



A clear soup containing grilled mackerel.

### Sabajiru (Tajima)



The broth is made from grilled mackerel head and konbu seaweed, then flavored with soy sauce, sake, and mirin. The sliced mackerel is then boiled with vegetables.



### Hamayakisaba

(Echizen/Wakasa)

The mackerel's organs are first removed, then it's put on a bamboo (or thatch) skewer and grilled. It's usually eaten as-is, with ginger soy sauce. Most people eat it freshly grilled, or warmed up. However, some find removing the skewer and dealing with the bones to be difficult. While some regions eat this dish year-round, others save it for special days or events like festivals.

### Tangobarazushi (Tango)

The use of oboro/soboro (minced and flavored meat/fish) made from canned mackerel is what makes this dish unique. It's made in a matsubuta (a type of wooden box), and the oboro is sandwiched between layers of sushi rice. Then, thin omelette strips, red pickled ginger, and fish cakes are scattered on top. Finally, it's cut into sections and eaten. This dish can be seen at regional festivals.



A Key Tangobarazushi Ingredient  
- Keeping the Art of Making Fish Cakes Alive -

The firmness of a fish cake determines its texture when eaten. This firmness depends on the quality of the minced fish, which, in turn, is dependent on the type of fish, the area of the sea the fish is caught, and the season. In today's era of growing global distribution, producers in this region strive to preserve their traditional methods and maintain the quality of their unique fish cakes.

# Mackerel Food Culture Along the Wakasa Bay Coast

- Catching, Production, and Consumption -

### Heshiko (from Tajima to Echizen)



The fish is preserved by pickling it in salt and then storing it in a barrel with fermented rice bran.

### Sun-dried mackerel with soy sauce (Wakasa)



Fresh mackerel is covered in a soy sauce-based sauce, then partially sun dried.

Nanatsujima Is.

Wajima

C.Suzu

(Noto)

Takaoka

Toyama

ISHIKAWA

Kanazawa

Nanto

TOYAMA

Komatsu

Kaga (Kaga)

Takayama

Wakasa Bay

Fukui

FUKUI

Kyoto Prefectural Tango Folk Museum

C.Kyogamisaki

(Echizen)

Tsuruga

Tottori

Kami

Toyooka

(Tajima) (Tango)

HYOGO

KYOTO

(Wakasa)

Obama

Ogaki

Gifu

Hikone

出典：国土交通省国土地理院

### Kaburazushi (Etchu)



Mackerel is sandwiched between pieces of turnip that have been pickled in salt overnight and layered in a tub along with amazake (a sweet fermented rice drink), malted rice, carrots, and other ingredients. A weight is then placed on top and it's left to sit. After two weeks, it's ready to eat.

### Oshizushi (Kanazawa)



Mackerel marinated in vinegar, sushi rice, and blue nori seaweed are stacked in a wooden container, then pressed overnight.

### Heshikononarezushi (Wakasa)



This is the same as heshiko, but pickled with rice and malted rice as well.

### Oshizushi (Kaga)



Mackerel pickled in vinegar is laid on top of bamboo grass or persimmon leaves. Sushi rice formed into a ball is placed on top, as well as sakura shrimp and blue seaweed. It's then arranged into a wooden container and pressed overnight. This dish is known as sasazushi or kakinohazushi.

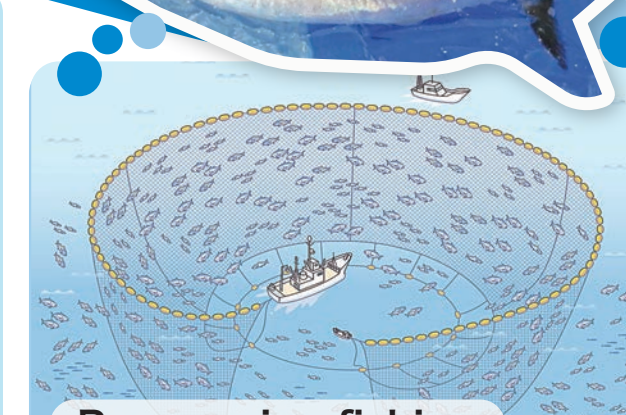
## Mackerel Fishing Industry, Distribution, and Imports

Pacific mackerel from off the coast of Japan



### Fixed-net fishing

In Tango, the primary method of catching mackerel involves setting up fixed nets in order to capture fish as they pass through off coast waters.



### Purse seine fishing

Fishfinders and sonar are used to detect schools of fish, then nets 1,500 meters or more in length are deployed to catch the whole school.



▲ Fishing ports, such as Maizuru and Kanazawa boast large catches of fish and are major distribution centers, equipped with ice-making, cooling, and fish-sorting facilities.



▲ In Tango's port, after a catch, fish are directly sold in a fish market called "hamauri".



▲ Auctions are held at local wholesale markets, where brokers evaluate and purchase fish, then arrange for their distribution.

### Norwegian Mackerel (Atlantic Mackerel) Features and Imports

The Norwegian mackerel's proper name is the Atlantic mackerel. Compared to the Pacific mackerel seen in Japan, its striped pattern is more clearly defined. It is also known for being more fatty, and is said to contain 20 to 30 percent fat. Fish caught through purse seine fishing have mainly been imported from Norway. In recent years, the quantity caught has ranged between 50 and 60 thousand tons.

