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Japan National
Tourism Organization

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Gastronomy – Summer to Autumn in Japan



Every season in Japan delivers its own special cuisine, and the period encompassing summer and autumn is no exception. From the fresh green pastures of Hokkaido in the north to the lakes and fruit orchards of central Japan, gourmet travellers have plenty of reasons to make this their time to travel.

A fruitful experience in Yamanashi Prefecture





Japan's fruit is famous around the world, whether it's the quirky square-shaped watermelons or eye-wateringly expensive grapes that make news headlines every year. But while the country's supermarkets and department stores may be filled with perfect, jewel-like peaches, cherries and strawberries, there's nothing better than [tasting fruit freshly picked from the tree](#). Head to [Fruits Farm Hagihara](#) in [Yamanashi](#) prefecture during the summer months and you'll be able to do just that.

Harvest season starts in June with popular *Sato Nishiki* cherries. From early July to the beginning of August it's peach season, and from early August to mid-September it's time to harvest grapes, including the renowned *Pione*, a large, purple-toned grape, and *Rosario* green table grape varieties. Whether you choose to do the 40-minute all-you-can-eat option or prefer to sample the fresh fruit from the comfort of the terrace is entirely up to you – the farm's elevated location overlooking the Kofu Basin offers spectacular views of Mount Fuji on a clear day.

Pro Tip – don't miss the onsite Yamakiya Café housed in a repurposed 100-year-old Japanese home. It's a great spot to try drinks and desserts made from the farm's own produce, including fresh juices and more unusual items such as drinkable cheesecake and fruit pizza.





Eating freshwater eel on the Day of the Ox – or any day

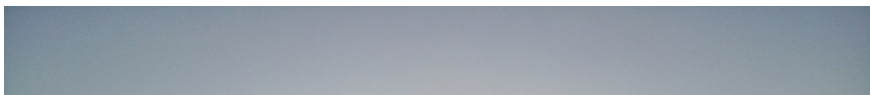


While it may seem counter intuitive to eat eel on the Day of the Ox rather than creating a Day of the Eel, there's a Japanese tradition to do exactly that. *Doyou no Ushi no Hi*, or Day of the Ox, falls on July 23 this year. There are four Days of the Ox throughout the year, but this one falls in the peak of summer. Freshwater eel is typically eaten on this day due to the belief that it combats fatigue brought on by the season's extreme temperatures.

Whether you visit on this particular day or not, eel is a tasty traditional dish that's worth seeking out. [Lake Hamana](#) in [Shizuoka](#) Prefecture is said to be the place where eel farming started, and the [Maruhama](#) restaurant, run by the Lake Hamana Fishing Cooperative, is the perfect place to try the region's catch.

The restaurant has been serving eel, broiled and grilled the traditional way, for years. Order it as a simple lunch box served over rice with pickles on the side, or add a bowl of eel liver soup for a real taste of the region. It's a true taste of summer, and you might just find it takes the edge off the heat.

Pro Tip – if Maruhama restaurant has whet your appetite for more, Hamamatsu City is also home to a number of [halal restaurants](#), ranging from Indonesian specialties to kebabs, curries, and even food from across the Himalayas.





Say Cheese! Visit a farm in Hokkaido where happiness and thanks are guaranteed

When a farm is called “Arigatou” (Japanese for “thank you”), you can’t help but smile. And when it’s also home to the Shiawase Cheese Factory, meaning “happiness” in Japanese, it’s pretty much impossible to pass up a visit. [Slow Life Hokkaido’s](#) tours to this free-range dairy farm take guests on walks through verdant pastures to visit herds of free-roaming cattle, see the cows being milked, and have a go at making cheese yourself.

The farm is located in Ashoro Town in [Hokkaido](#), Japan’s northernmost island and the heart of the country’s dairy production. While it has plenty to inspire visitors in winter, the summer months are the perfect time to visit the region, with fields full of sunflowers and lavender, as well as rolling meadows. And it’s the perfect time to visit the Shiawase Cheese Factory, too. Tours are available from early May to late October, and offer an insight into how milk and cheese are made.

You can also pick up a variety of cheeses and yoghurt, as well as taste delicious milk fresh from the farm. And if you feel like having a goat cheese-making yourself, there are opportunities to try making fresh mozzarella using traditional techniques from Europe.

And don’t forget to take a selfie while you’re doing it. Say cheese!





A Gourmet Stay at Zaborin



While you're in Hokkaido, don't miss the opportunity to experience a gourmet stay at [Zaborin](#), a luxury ryokan and restaurant surrounded by the Hanazono forest and rolling meadows. Located close to Niseko, famous as one of Japan's most popular ski resorts in winter, during the summer and autumn seasons the area has a completely different charm.

With just 15 villas, each having their own private onsen hot spring baths, this is an escape in the true sense of the word. The design is sleek, with large picture windows letting the surrounding countryside and take centre stage.

But one of the main draws to the hotel is the excellent onsite restaurant, with “*kita kaiseki*”, a traditional Japanese kaiseki cuisine inspired by the produce of its northerly location, being masterfully crafted by Hokkaido-born chef Yoshihiro Seno. Seno's menus capture the beauty of nature, and translate it into fine dining, following the cycle of growth from seed to plate. In summer, dishes might include eggs from local farms, homemade

from seed to plate. In summer, dishes might include eggs from local farms, homemade tofu, seasonal Hokkaido fish and vegetables, and carefully selected meats. It's like sampling Hokkaido on a plate, and an exquisitely beautiful one at that.



COVID-19 Update

For the latest information regarding COVID – 19 in Japan, advisories and up-to-date travel and safety measure requirements, please visit the below link.

[CORONAVIRUS \(COVID-19\) Advisory Information](#)

JNTO Online Training

The online training course provides all the necessary information for planning an itinerary to Japan and answers to frequently asked questions. You will also receive an official certificate on completion.

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