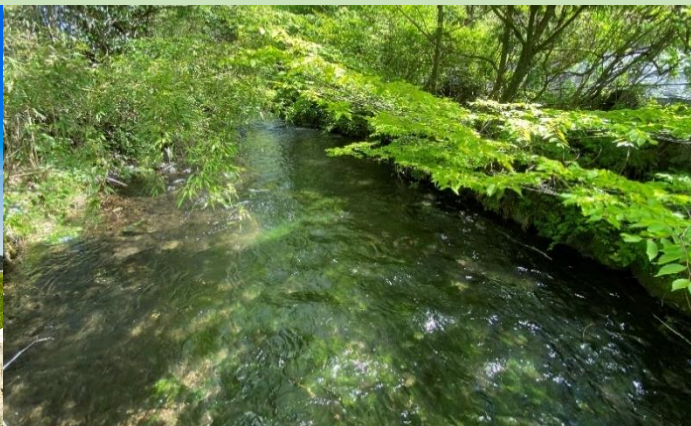


Savor the culinary magic of Shizuoka in the shadow of Mt. Fuji



Shizuoka Culinary Tour 3 days, 2 nights Yaizu, Shizuoka, Nishiizu & Fujinomiya

Day 1 (Yaizu & Shizuoka)

Shizuoka's food culture has played an important role in the history of Japan. Board a morning Shinkansen bullet train to Shizuoka Station and then head to the city of Yaizu.

Yaizu has a long history as a fishing port. From the Edo era (1603-1867) onward, the industry here was centered on bonito fishing in coastal waters in the Showa era (1926-1989). Fishermen from Yaizu were the first in Japan to pioneer southern bluefin tuna fishing in the undeveloped waters of the southern hemisphere. Today, Yaizu is one of Japan's largest fishing ports.

Yaizu, which boasts the largest catch of bonito in the country is one of Japan's three major katsuobushi production areas. *Katsuobushi*, or bonito flakes, was developed as a nonperishable and is a very important ingredient that forms the basis of Japanese *dashi* food culture.

Today, you visit a katsuobushi producer that has been in business for over 130 years. Each dried bonito is flaked by hand using traditional techniques.



Close by the katsuobushi factory is Hamadori, a street of elegant buildings that rekindles the ambiance of the past.

At the former Hattori residence, The history of Yaizu is palpable as soon as you step foot in this nostalgic area. Here, enjoy a lunch bursting with fresh locally sourced ingredients.



After lunch at Hoya in Yaizu City, visit Marikoshuku, a former post town on the old Tokaido road which was a major highway in the Edo era. The town is home to Chojiya, a farmhouse-style restaurant with a history that stretches back over 400 years and is depicted in Hiroshige ukiyo-e prints from the time.

Spend time studying Chojiya's ukiyo-e prints and let your mind travel back in time to the bygone Tokaido post towns. As well as trying Shizuoka sake, be sure to enjoy a cup of Shizuoka's celebrated tea served with traditional teacakes. For a taste from the past, don't miss the famous *tororo* soup, which was served to travelers here centuries ago.



From Marikoshuku, return to Shizuoka, the prefecture's namesake capital city.

A favorite food among Shizuoka folk is *oden*. For a glimpse of this local food culture, stroll through Oden Yokocho, a street lined with oden eateries.

End your walk at Kakuya Bessho and enjoy a dinner crafted by a prefecture-designated "Fuji no Kuni Maestro Chef." Here, feast on authentic Japanese-style dishes brimming with seasonal ingredients and relish the variety and wealth of Shizuoka's food culture.

After dinner, return to Yaizu and head to Minato no Yado Migiwaya, your accommodation for the night.

Day 2 (Nishiizu)

At Yaizu Port, experience the thrill of the regularly held tuna auction. When the auction kicks off, dozens of brokers call out their bids one after another. As the shouting grows louder, the price for each tuna goes up and up, creating a powerful spectacle that unfolds at breakneck speed before you.

From the auction, head to Shimizu Port and board a ferry that takes you across Suruga Bay to Toi Port on Izu Peninsula. Enjoy the 70-minute boat ride while relishing the sight of Mt. Fuji from the surface of the sea. From Toi Port, head north to the fishing village of Heda.

Suruga Bay off the Izu Peninsula coast reaches depths of 2,500 meters (approx. 8,200 feet) and is known as the deepest bay in Japan. Mt. Fuji rises 3,776 meters (approx. 12,388 feet) above sea level, resulting in a difference of about 6,300 meters (approx. 20,670 feet). There are numerous springs along the coast where groundwater from Mt. Fuji flows to the surface, eventually forming streams and rivers that flow into Suruga Bay. Japan has some 2,300 species of fish, almost half of which, about 1,000 species, are believed to inhabit Suruga Bay.



The abundance of the bay is a major contributor to the rich food culture of Shizuoka Prefecture.

Reaching a leg stretch of up to three meters (approx. 10 feet), the Japanese spider crab is the largest crab in the world. As such, it can be said to be a symbol of the wealth of Suruga Bay. The fishing village of Heda on the west coast of Izu Peninsula is famous for spider crabs. This is not simply because they are caught here. Spider crabs are more difficult to cook than other crabs. The fact that we can enjoy eating them today is thanks to the people of Heda, who, over many years, have sought to find the best ways to preserve and cook the crabs. Relish the taste of the world's biggest crab while a local fisherman beguiles you with stories of the sea.



Leave the village of Heda and make your way to Shotokan, your accommodation for the night. From the guestrooms of Shotokan there are stunning views of Mt. Fuji and Suruga Bay.

Day 3 (Fujinomiya)

Mt. Fuji is a mesmerizingly beautiful mountain and its abundant nature enriches the lives of the people who inhabit its foothills. Today, you visit Fujinomiya, known as a "World Heritage city," to marvel at Mt. Fuji, which towers over the city, and to meet farmers who take advantage of this fresh mountain water source.

Arrive in Fujinomiya in the morning and head to Mt. Fuji World Heritage Centre, Shizuoka, where you can learn about Mt. Fuji while experiencing a simulated climb of the mountain. A five-minute walk away is Fujisan Hongu Sengen Taisha, an important shrine that has long been the center of Mt. Fuji worship. At Wakutamaike, a pond where climbers would once cleanse themselves before beginning their ascent, you can observe spring water rising to the surface.

Lunch is at Mitsu, a French restaurant where yet another "Fuji no Kuni Maestro Chef" is working his magic. With the concept of "cuisine at the foot of Mt. Fuji," Mitsu specializes in locally grown pesticide-free vegetables, meat from mountain-reared livestock, seafood from Tagonoura Port, some 20 minutes from Fujinomiya, and dishes rich in homegrown herbs.



After eating your fill of the finest mountain ingredients, head to Asagiri Kogen, a sweeping plateau at the foot of Mt. Fuji.

The first local produce you encounter here is wasabi. Indispensable as a condiment in Japanese dishes such as sashimi and soba, wasabi will only grow where the water is very clean.

Visit a farm that has been working this land for over a century and view the beauty of the wasabi fields.



Your next stop is a Wagyu beef farm focusing on rearing healthy cows using premium Mt. Fuji groundwater drawn from wells. The farm is known for high-quality meat, features that are easily appreciated when you see its cows leisurely grazing in the shadow of Mt. Fuji.



Another local attraction is the craft beer. Breweries in the foothills around Fujinomiya grow their own pesticide-free barley, hops and rice as raw materials for beer making, and use Mt. Fuji spring water that has been bubbling to the surface for millennia.



Your three-day culinary tour of Shizuoka Prefecture ends in the evening at Shin-Fuji Station, from where a Shinkansen train whisks you to your next destination.