

Hiroshima's Edible Souvenirs

Hiroshima has various regional food and drink specialties that are favored souvenirs. Many, such as the local oysters and products made with lemon and other citrus fruits, owe their fine taste to the city's climate and natural surroundings. Others, including the famed Hiroshima-style *okonomiyaki*, were born out of local culinary creativity.

Yume Plaza, a store in the Hondori shopping district, offers a wide range of locally produced food and drinks (not to mention an array of free pamphlets, some in English, containing a wealth of travel information). Popular among the delicious items sold here, and at other stores across the city, is a butter cake made with *yuzu*, a citrus fruit native to Asia which grows particularly well in the Hiroshima area.

Closely associated with Hiroshima is the tangy, orange-like *hassaku*. This fruit was originally discovered near a temple in Hiroshima Prefecture, and is used as the filling inside puffy rice cakes called *hassaku daifuku*. Another sweet local treat is *momiji manju*. Originating on Miyajima Island, these are maple-leaf-shaped cakes with a bean-paste filling.

Treats at the savory end of the spectrum include *okonomiyaki*-flavored items such as ready-to-eat squid tempura. *Senji-age* is a crunchy fried snack made with offal and popular as an accompaniment to beer. Foremost among the region's brands of sake, meanwhile, is Kamotsuru, which was famously enjoyed by US president Barack Obama and Japanese Prime Minister Abe Shinzo when the former visited Japan in 2014.