

## Regional Cuisine

### Mackerel Dishes

Mackerel is a major food source in Obama and one of its most important products. Because the fish spoils easily, it must be handled appropriately. It used to be common for mackerel to be skewered and grilled on the beach, just after being hauled ashore, so that it could be preserved. The fish is usually marinated in soy sauce and ginger before it is grilled. In Obama, grilled mackerel is popular at festivals and the New Year holiday. Sushi made with grilled mackerel is another typical regional dish. The grilled fish is also made into a soup called *namagusajiru*. The broth is made from the bones and head, and the soup contains pieces of the fish, tofu, green onions, and vegetables. *Namagusajiru* is eaten during special occasions and ritual gatherings such as funerals. Another local dish, called *nuta*, is made from mackerel and locally grown green onions, and is a dish commonly eaten during festivals and at memorial services.

### Sweets

Wakasa Obama produces two local seasonal sweets made from adzuki bean paste. The round, gelatinous *kuzu manju* is a cool confection favored in summer. The translucent outer layer is made from the powdered root of the *kuzu* plant and has a very mild flavor, which is complemented by the sweetened bean paste filling. *Kuzu manju* are cool and refreshing, and are thought to be good for digestive health. In winter, a sweet adzuki bean jelly locally called *dechiyokan* is eaten. It has a fainter sweetness than its counterpart, *mizuyokan*, and is also smoother. The main ingredients in *dechiyokan* are adzuki beans and agar, and because it contains no preservatives, it is typically not made in the warm summer months.