

Ipponsugi-dori Street

Ipponsugi-dori Street is a shopping street that flourished when Nanao was an important port of call for merchant ships called *kitamaebune*. *Kitamaebune* traded along the Sea of Japan coast from the Edo period (1603–1867) to the turn of the twentieth century.

Ipponsugi-dori starts at the red bridge over the Misogi River and runs northwest for about 450 meters. Many of the street's shops are housed in old buildings, some from as early as the late 1800s.

Notable stores include Torii, which has been selling homemade, cask-brewed, naturally fermented soy sauce since 1926. Torii offers soy sauce-making experiences with advance reservations.

Many stores here owe their trade to *kitamaebune*. For 80 years, Shirai has specialized in kombu seaweed, an important commodity from northern Japan that *kitamaebune* made available in Ishikawa. Takazawa has made and sold Japanese-style candles since 1892. Candle-making in Nanao began in the Edo period and flourished as *kitamaebune* brought important resources such as wax and *washi* paper.

The Hanayome Noren Museum is located steps from Ipponsugi-dori. *Hanayome noren* (“bride curtains”) are curtains hung in the door of a groom's home. In a local wedding custom, the bride's entry into her new home begins with stepping through these handmade curtains. The museum displays the evolution of these curtains from the nineteenth century to the present day.