

## Seafood and Seaweed

Sado Island is famed for the high quality of its food, and the seafood is no exception. Fresh sashimi is a common delicacy, and different fish can be found on the table in each season. Squid sashimi is popular in June and July while *kanburi* (“winter yellowtail”), the pride of Sado, is best in the colder months. The fish travel south from Hokkaido in early autumn, grow plump in the cold waters, and are caught fresh with large nets placed in Ryotsu Bay, off the eastern coast of Sado. *Kanburi* season starts in December, when fishermen set out into the cold waves of the Sea of Japan. Fish weighing more than 10 kilograms are considered “Sado Ichiban Kanburi,” the highest-grade of *kanburi*. The catch is celebrated every December with the Sado Kaifu Kanburi Tairyo Festival at Washizaki Port.

Shellfish are bountiful in the waters around Sado. Oysters are now farmed off the coast and are harvested in winter. Summer is the season for shellfish such as abalone and *sazae* (horned turban). These shellfish were traditionally caught using *taraibune* tub boats. Fishermen would reach out of the boats and place a glass box on the surface of the shallow water to get an unobstructed view of shellfish hiding between the rocks.

An extensive variety of seaweed grows in the waters near Sado, including wakame and *mozuku*. A dish that is unique to Sado is *igoneri*; a seaweed cake made by boiling *igogusa* seaweed to thicken its jelly-like texture. The resulting cake is either cut into squares or finely sliced into noodle-like strands, and is commonly served as a side dish.