

Local Specialties

Sado Island has several specialties that cannot be found on mainland Japan. Quality over quantity is emphasized in many aspects of Sado agriculture. The small-grain rice grown in terraced fields throughout the island is used not only as a food crop, but to make sake as well, particularly the dry (*karakuchi*) sake that Sado is known for. There are five sake breweries on the island, including Hokusetsu Shuzo, producer of the world-famous YK35 *daiginjo* (the highest-grade sake). Another example of an exquisite but rare delicacy is Sado beef, which does not often appear in supermarkets and restaurants on the island. However, locally produced dairy products such as milk, butter, and cheese are somewhat more common. Other noteworthy processed products include *igoneri*, a thick seaweed jelly, and sweet dumplings called Sawane Dango. *Igoneri* is a boiled, noodle-shaped seaweed product eaten cold as a side dish with ginger and soy sauce. Sawane Dango are soft dumpling-like sweets filled with smooth azuki bean paste, and have been a popular local snack since the Edo period (1603–1868).