

## Freshwater Fish

Freshwater fish can be found in the Ota River and its tributaries, which run through Akiota. *Ayu* (sweetfish) is the most popular and is eaten in Akiota from summer to autumn. It is commonly dried and sold at local shops, eaten whole at food stalls, or served as part of a traditional meal. When *ayu* is grilled slowly on a charcoal grill, it can be eaten whole since the bones soften during the grilling process. The most common way to eat *ayu* is grilled with salt (*shioyaki*), which brings out the natural sweetness of the flesh. It is often paired with *tadesu*, a green sauce made from vinegar and Japanese knotweed. *Ayu* is also served deep-fried as tempura.

From June to November, *ayu* fishing is allowed in the Ota River with a day permit issued by the local fishery association. Before trying their luck in the Ota, however, beginners can try fishing at Keiryu Chaen. This facility consists of a fishing pond and restaurant, so diners can catch their fish and eat it immediately afterward in either *shioyaki* or *karaage* (deep-fried) form. While *ayu* is not available at Keiryu Chaen, both *amago* (red-spotted masu trout) and *yamame* (masu salmon) can be fished there. *Amago* can also be found in the Ota River, but are much easier to catch at a recreational fishing pond.