

Eating in Teshikaga—local delicacies

Visitors to Teshikaga’s restaurants will notice a number of specialties labeled “Mashu”. This is a reference to the Mashu area—the eastern section of the Akan-Mashu National Park in which much of Teshikaga is located. Mashu-branded foods are hard to find elsewhere, as they are only produced and grown in limited quantities and are generally unavailable in supermarkets.

Mashu soba (buckwheat noodles)

The limited cultivation of Mashu buckwheat makes this brand of soba rare. The noodles have a light-green hue—unlike the yellow-brown of standard soba noodles—because Mashu buckwheat is harvested earlier than other kinds of buckwheat. There are several specialty restaurants that serve freshly made Mashu soba in the Teshikaga area.

Mashu melon

Mashu melon can be found in Teshikaga between early August and early September. The high sugar content makes this melon sweeter than other varieties. Because it is grown in limited quantities, Mashu melons are not sold in supermarkets but can be purchased at tourist spots such as 900 Grassland (Kyu-maru-maru Sogen) and the Mashu Onsen Roadside Station.

Mashu pork and beef

Mashu pigs and cattle are locally bred. Mashu pork comes from a farm in southern Teshikaga. The pigs’ regular diet includes seaweed, which makes the meat sweeter than other types of pork. Mashu pork is most often served marinated and then layered on rice as *buta-don*. Mashu wagyu black beef has been certified as A5 rank wagyu, which is the highest rank among wagyu brands. The tender meat comes from locally bred cattle and is frequently served as steak or in hamburger form.

Other Teshikaga staples

Farmers in Teshikaga grow many varieties of potatoes, which appear as staple ingredients in many of the dishes available at Teshikaga restaurants. Soybeans are another common crop; visitors to the area can find them in Teshikaga eateries in the form of tofu or miso paste (among other dishes) and in gift packs to take home. Teshikaga farmers have had success in cultivating sweet, golden mangoes in their greenhouses. Also look for the rich and creamy Ushi no Oppai (cow’s udder) brand of Teshikaga milk, which comes from a free-ranging herd.

Many local outlets sell Teshikaga specialties. If you are keen to try before you buy, you can sample many kinds of local fare at the Mashu Onsen Roadside Station, a large information center and food market in the center of the town of Teshikaga.