

The Forest, Tosashimizu, and *Sodabushi*

The city of Tosashimizu is Japan's leading producer of *sodabushi*: dried, fermented, and smoked fish fillets made from frigate tuna (*sodagatsuo*). The aromatic flakes shaved from the fillets are used mainly to make soup or simmering stock, but can also be eaten as they are or used as toppings for various dishes. About 70–80 percent of all *sodabushi* consumed in Japan comes from Tosashimizu.

The *ubame-gashi* oak grows along the coast of Tosashimizu in large numbers and has long been a crucial source of firewood for the local people. Its hard, slow-burning wood is considered the ideal fuel for the fires over which *sodabushi* is dried.

[Captions]

The fish fillets are placed in bamboo baskets to dry and smoke over a fire.

Smoked fish fillets drying under the sun.

Firewood used for the drying and smoking process.

Local wood has many uses

Kochi Prefecture is famed for its lush forests, which cover 84 percent of the prefecture. Wood is used not only in fish drying but also for many other purposes.

[Captions]

- Nishimura, the home of *perayaki*

Perayaki is a savory pancake-like dish topped with green onion, minced tempura, eggs, and the Tosashimizu region's famous fish flakes. The Nishimura shop has been cooking its *perayaki* over locally sourced charcoal since 1957.

- Asahiya, the only public bathhouse in Tosashimizu

The water at this 100-year-old bathhouse is heated using sawdust and wood chips.