

Island Life: Local Produce Shops

Supermarkets, convenience stores, and other shops can be found in the larger communities around the island. People in more distant communities, however, must rely on local produce shops that sell products directly from local farmers, fishermen, and other producers. Visitors are also welcome at these shops, where some of the best deals on island specialties and souvenirs can be found. Among the products available are fresh and processed fruit products, vegetables and other agricultural items, meat, fish, and local crafts. The variety ranges from papayas and passion fruit to brightly colored tropical fish, the traditional fermented drink called *miki*, and local brands of *shochu*. Many of the shops have rest areas and a corner where drinks and snack items are available, as well as bulletin boards featuring notices of upcoming events. The local residents running the shops are great sources of sightseeing tips. Even for those who are not interested in shopping, these small retailers can offer an insider's look at the lives, traditions, and culture of the diverse island communities.