

Gyohan

The wealthy salt producers of Takehara once welcomed guests and celebrated special occasions, such as festivals, with a traditional local dish called *gyohan* (grilled fish and seasonal ingredients served over rice). *Gyohan* is a local legacy dish inseparable from the history and culture of Takehara, a merchant town known for its salt and sake. Each family has their own unique recipe, handed down over hundreds of years from generation to generation.

Gyohan can be enjoyed in two ways at one sitting: first, as flavored rice (*takikomi gohan*) eaten with an assortment of local seasonal toppings such as shredded egg, shrimp, and burdock root, and second, as a soup-style dish (*chazuke*), whereby a light refreshing broth is poured over the rice.

To make the dish, the meat of some variety of white-fleshed fish, such as snapper from the nearby Seto Inland Sea, is grilled and placed on top of rice. A special broth is made with the bones of the fish, *dashi* stock, and other ingredients.

Gyohan is served at many of the restaurants in Takehara. Often you will see it served in bamboo (*take*) dishes, a reference to the name of the town (Takehara).