

### **The Traditional Process of Making Kamairicha**

When tea was first introduced into Japan from China, the leaves were processed by roasting them in a hot pan to reduce the effects of oxidization. Most green tea in Japan is currently processed by steaming the leaves, but tea makers in Ureshino still use the original roasting method in the manufacture of *kamairicha*, a yellow-green tea that has a sweet roasted flavor.

Though tea is now commonly processed using modern machinery, traditional methods are still practiced in Ureshino. Fresh tea leaves are traditionally roasted at over 300°C in large metal pans built into large stone hearths and are hand-tossed regularly to prevent charring. After roasting, the leaves are hand-pressed and rolled to produce the curved, coiled shape.

Ureshino is one of only a few places that still produce *kamairicha*, and local farms have recently won top awards in recognition for producing the best tea in Japan.