

## **Maze Satoyama Museum**

The Maze Satoyama Museum is an extensive ecotourism site stretching 28 kilometers along the banks of the Maze (pronounced *mah-zay*) River. The Museum is the natural landscape itself, along with the village of Maze and the people who live there.

### **A sweetfish celebration**

Summer is the season for *ayu* sweetfish in the Maze River. Fishermen catch *ayu* using a traditional technique called *hiburi-ryo*, which entails casting nets across the length of the river at night and using torches and noise to drive the fish into the nets. This public event occurs on set dates. *Ayu* are served throughout Maze, often salted and grilled over a charcoal fire.

### **Agricultural abundance**

The village of Maze produces rice, magnolia leaves, tomatoes, and blueberries, among other crops. Magnolia leaves are used to wrap sushi or as a base for grilling miso, vegetables, and sometimes meat in a method known as *hoba-yaki*. The tomatoes of this area are known for their sweetness. When blueberries are in season, they can be picked from the bush at Maze Kawakami Health Farm.

### **Events and excursions**

The Mizube no Yakata information center provides printed material about the Maze Satoyama Museum. Excursions into nature for activities such as canyoning and fishing can be arranged through Mountain Life Hida, an outdoor recreation company run by an international team. The village holds events throughout the year, such as a fireworks festival, a scarecrow contest, and a marathon.

### **Overnight options**

A range of accommodations is available, from the Mazegawa Onsen Miki no Sato to more secluded campgrounds in the midst of nature. Visitors can opt to lodge in traditional *ryokan*, *minshuku* guest houses, and *minpaku* private residences.

Maze is located about 30 minutes by car from Gero Onsen. It was named one of the Most Beautiful Villages in Japan. Visitors can explore the Maze Satoyama Museum at their own leisure or reserve a tour with a knowledgeable local guide.