

Niigata Prefecture

The rice-based food culture brought about by the blessing of water



Niigata Prefecture stretches slightly north of central Honshu, facing the Sea of Japan. Its area also includes Sado Island, which lies approximately 35 km out to sea. The Shinano, Agano, Ara, Seki, and Hime Rivers are first-class water sources that originate in the mountains and branch out into 767 rivers in various parts of the prefecture. Niigata is blessed with fertile land nurtured by its clean water, along with a climate that has a wide range of temperatures. The entire prefecture utilizes this environment to cultivate rice.

No matter the era, rice has always accompanied Niigata Prefecture's food culture. Rice plays a leading role in local cuisine such as "Sasazushi" and "Kensan-yaki." In areas where salmon fishing is popular, the preserved food "Salmon Yakizuke" has been handed down from generation to generation.

Due to the prefecture's large land area, even the same dish uses different ingredients and recipes depending on the region. While those on the mainland eat salmon during the New Year holidays, the people of Sado island eat yellowtail. In addition, there are many other dishes not found on the mainland, such as "Fugunoko no Kasuzuke," a dish using puffer fish ovaries, and "Sado no nishime," a simmered dish with a strong taste of flying fish soup stock.



Photo Credit : Sado City



※ Click here to see all of Niigata Prefecture's local cuisine listed on MAFF website "Our Regional Cuisines."

These are examples of processed foods
that are indigenous to Niigata Prefecture.
Please enjoy these foods.

① Salmon Yakizuke



② Sasa Dango



③ Igoneri



⑤ Fugunoko no
Kasuzuke



④ Kurumafu



⑥ Sankaku Chimaki



⑦ Kanzuri



Photo Credit : Kanzuri co LTD

⑨ Rice
Crackers



⑧ Hegisoba
Noodles



⑩ Pickled herring
with malted rice



⑪ Anbo



⑫ Sankaizuke



※Reference
Local Specialty Shops of Niigata
<Tokyo> Niigata Information Center in Ginza,

THE NIIGATA

5-6-7 Ginza, Chuo-ku, Tokyo 104-0061
<https://the-niigata.jp/>



<Osaka>

NIIGATA OKOME

Whity Umeda East Mall, Ogimachi
4-1 Umeda Underground Shopping Mall, Komatsubaracho,
Kita Ward, Osaka City, Osaka Prefecture 530-0018
<https://niigataokome.com>



Please check with each store for product availability.

Reference: MAFF "Our Regional Cuisines" Product Number: ①⑤⑥⑦⑧⑪

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Product Name	Product Introduction
<p>① Salmon Yakizuke</p>	<p>Murakami City is known as “Salmon City,” and in autumn, the city is filled with salmon. The salmon is cut in a way called mochi-kiri, which is similar to the shape of cut rice cakes unique to Niigata Prefecture. Grilled salmon is marinated while hot in a sauce made by adding soy sauce to boiled-down sake and mirin. You can enjoy a completely different flavor from salted salmon and simmered salmon. It does not harden even when cooled and stays fluffy.</p>
<p>② Sasa Dango</p>	<p>“Sasa-dango” is a bale-shaped dumpling wrapped in bamboo leaves and tied with a string of sedge or other material. It is said that “Kenshin Uesugi used it as a portable food” because it was considered a portable preserved food in the Warring States period, as bamboo leaves have a sterilizing effect. The dumplings are wrapped in three pieces of bamboo leaf, and tied them with sedge or rush grass. If the dumplings become hard, reheat them by steaming or microwaving.</p>
<p>③ Igoneri</p>	<p>“Igoneri” is a local dish representative of Sado Island, made from the Japanese rush grass harvested from the Sea of Japan. It is called “igo” in the Sado region and “ego” in the Niigata region. It is made by boiling and kneading sun-dried seaweed while adjusting the amount of water, then spreading it thinly and cooling it down to harden it. It is served with ginger soy sauce or vinegared miso. It is characterized by its firm texture and has a slight aroma of the sea.</p>
<p>④ Kurumafu</p>	<p>“Kurumafu” is the most popular fu in Niigata. It is made by wrapping kneaded dough around an iron rod and baking it while rotating it like Baumkuchen, then layering the dough two or three times and baking it. It is characterized by its donut-like shape and is said to have gotten its name from the fact that it resembles a wheel when sliced into rings.</p>
<p>⑤ Fugunoko no Kasuzuke (Puffer fish Ovaries pickled in sake lees)</p>	<p>Spotty-back puffers are caught in the Sea of Japan from June to July. Its ovaries are salted for more than two years and then aged for a long time in Sado's sake lees. In Niigata Prefecture, it is unique to Sado, and similar processed products can be found in Ishikawa and Fukui prefectures. In Sado, it is said to have been made since the Edo period.</p>
<p>⑥ Sankaku Chimaki</p>	<p>In Niigata Prefecture, there is a simple and plain tasting “Sankaku Chimaki” that is rare in Japan. It is a simple chimaki made of glutinous rice wrapped in bamboo leaf, folded into a triangular shape, tied with igusa (rush), and boiled slowly in plenty of hot water for two hours. It is served with kinako (soybean flour) sprinkled on top.</p>

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<p>⑦Kanzuri</p>	 <p>“Kanzuri” is a traditional fermented seasoning from Myoko City. Locally grown chili peppers are aged and fermented for three years after they are exposed to the snow, ground, and mixed with rice koji, yuzu, and salt. Kanzuri can be added as a secret ingredient in hot pots, ramen, or pasta, paired with sashimi, and added to yakitori or dipping sauces.</p> <p>Photo Credit : MAFF "Our Regional Cuisines" Photo Credit : Kanzuri co LTD</p>
<p>⑧Hegisoba Noodles</p>	 <p>“Hegisoba” is a type of cut buckwheat noodle made with seaweed called funori as a binder and served in a bowl called a hegi. The seaweed gives hegisoba a slippery texture and elasticity. The Uonuma region is not a place where wasabi (Japanese horseradish) is available, so it is customary to use mustard as a condiment.</p> <p>Photo Credit : MAFF "Our Regional Cuisines"</p>
<p>⑨Rice Crackers</p>	 <p>Niigata Prefecture is one of the country's leading rice-producing regions, and rice is the main ingredient in many of its food products. Rice crackers produced in Niigata can be purchased at supermarkets nationwide.</p>
<p>⑩Pickled broken pieces of herring with malted rice</p>	 <p>In Niigata Prefecture, there have been many dishes using broken pieces of herring since long ago, and "pickled broken pieces of herring with malted rice" is one of them. The sweetness of koji amazake and salt intertwine well to create a delicious dish with a unique flavor.</p>
<p>⑪Anbo</p>	 <p>It is a local dish of Niigata Prefecture. It is a steamed manju-like bun with a filling made of red bean paste and vegetables wrapped in a skin made of kneaded rice flour. The filling consists of azuki bean paste, daikon radish greens seasoned with miso, and side dishes such as nozawana, eggplant, and kiriboshi daikon (dried radish).</p> <p>Photo Credit : MAFF "Our Regional Cuisines"</p>
<p>⑫Sankaizuke</p>	 <p>“Sankaizuke” is made by marinating chopped vegetables such as daikon radish and cucumber, which are harvested from the mountains, and herring roe, which is harvested from the sea, in sakekasu (sake lees) and allowing them to mature. It is called “Sankaizuke” because it is made by pickling vegetables from both the mountains and the sea and is well-known as a unique regional flavor.</p>