



Ishikawa Tourism Newsletter

SUMMER-AUTUMN 2022 | NO. 55



Feature

A SWEET TASTE OF ISHIKAWA

This issue introduces the theme of sweets unique to Ishikawa Prefecture.

ISHIKAWA, JAPAN

Recommended Sweets

Kanazawa is considered one of Japan's top three confectionery destinations, where traditional sweet-making has flourished for generations. Japanese sweets, called wagashi, have been nurtured over the years due to the popularity of the tea ceremony since the Edo period (1603-1868), with local confections continuing to play an important role in seasonal events and social gatherings. Enjoying wagashi that match the time of year and its scenery is a defining characteristic of Ishikawa's culture. Here we'll introduce you to a few favorites you can take back with you from your trip!

***You can find these sweets at Anto
in the Kanazawa Hyakubangai shopping mall**
<https://www.100bangai.co.jp/floorinfo-anto/>



Perfect for a break

● Moroe-ya: 'Hana Usagi Rakugan'

Have you ever eaten a rakugan? Their subtle sweetness, along with a crumbly texture that melts in your mouth, makes them ideal as tea snacks. The name of this variety, hana usagi (meaning 'flower rabbit'), comes from how they look when wrapped in soft washi paper. Presented in a flower-inspired drawstring package, these rakugan make an adorable souvenir that's bound to please!

A rich taste made
from premium eggs



● Ukeian: 'Ukokkei Castella'

This sponge cake is made from the eggs of the silkie chicken, bred deep in the mountains of Ishikawa. It's said that due to this environment the birds can better avoid stress and produce eggs which are used to create a high-quality castella. Fluffy, moist, subtly sweet but with a rich egg taste, these cakes make a great gift.



Enjoy traditional candy
from the past

● Ame no Tawara-ya: 'Jiro-ame'

The tradition of making this soft candy from only rice and barley, without sugar or additives, has continued for over 160 years. Having long been used for nursing babies and restoring the strength of pregnant women and the sick, jiro-ame has recently gained popularity as a natural health product. It's also not only as a sweet treat, but also as a condiment in some Kanazawa restaurants. It has a shiny golden color, soft texture, and a taste that brings back memories for locals. At Tawara-ya's main store, visitors can attempt scooping up jiro-ame from a tub using bamboo chopsticks and dispensing it into a jar. Be sure to stop by and try it out!



A precious
sweet
made only
once a year

● Nakaura-ya: 'Maru-yubeshi'

A wagashi from the Wajima area that also complements a cup of sake. Maru-yubeshi are made by lavishly using whole yuzu fruits of the highest quality. The insides are carefully hollowed out by hand and filled with rice cake, then steamed several times and allowed to dry naturally for six months before completion. With a strong fragrance of citrus, the mixture of sweetness and bitterness provide them with a profound flavor.



A taste unchanged in 280 years

● Enpachi: 'Ankoromochi'

It's fair to say that there isn't an Ishikawa native who hasn't eaten an ankoromochi from Enpachi. Wrapped in a bamboo skin, whose flavor is imparted to the filling, the combination of sweet bean paste and rice cake is particularly smooth on the palate. Perfect with a cup of tea, you'll have eaten plenty before you realize it! Just be careful as the lack of additives means they only last a day.



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Stories behind Ishikawa's wagashi

July

● Himuro Manju

During the Edo period (1603-1868), there were ice storehouses called himuro in Kanazawa, which were taken out every year on the first day of the sixth lunar month (currently July 1) and presented to the shogun.

The practice of eating himuro manju originated from consuming those that were offered to the gods to pray for the ice's safe delivery to Edo and the health of those responsible.



New
Year's Day

● **Fuku-ume** A must-have for the New Year's holiday in Kanazawa, this plum-shaped sweet comes in light pink and white. The sweet bean paste inside is harder and sweeter than usual, and is often made with syrup to prolong its shelf life. Every year around December, wagashi stores in Ishikawa begin making their fuku-ume, each with their own signature shape and taste. Many stores also sprinkle powdered sugar on top to resemble snow.

● **Tsujiura** Like fuku-ume, this charming sugar candy is eaten during the New Year's holiday. A simple dough made from a mixture of sugar and rice flour is stretched into a triangular shape and formed into petals. Inside you'll find a message written on a small piece of paper just like a fortune cookie.



Celebrations

● Goshiki Namagashi

These five-color sweets used for celebrations represent the blessings of heaven and earth: the sun, the moon, the mountains, the sea, and the forests. It's said that they were first made in 1600 when the wife of the third feudal lord married into the family. Later, during the Meiji period (1868-1912), they spread to the private sector and became an established celebratory confection. Despite the popularity of Western-style weddings nowadays, they're still often used as gifts.

Engara Manju

Represent ears of rice

Sasara Mochi

Represent the sun

Uzura

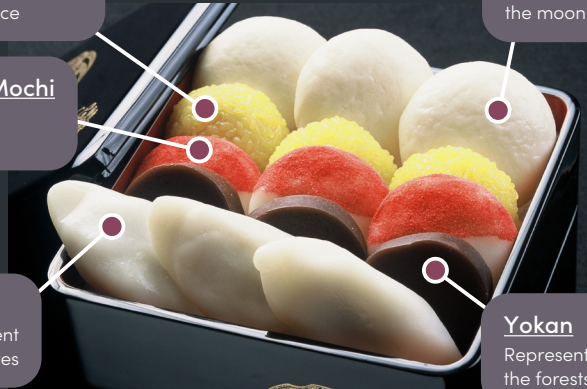
Represent the waves

Manju

Represent the moon

Yokan

Represent the forests



Festivals

● Tamahime Temari

Tamahime Temari is a Kanazawa sweet that's only available during the Hyakumangoku Festival held every June. It was created in the image of *Princess Tamahime, who was married to the third lord of the Kaga Hyakumangoku domain, Maeda Toshitsune. This wagashi combines glamorous gold leaf and colorful dried wheat gluten to represent the princess playing with temari balls, a traditional folk craft.

*Princess Tamahime was a descendant of Tokugawa Ieyasu and the formal wife of Maeda Toshitsune. She came to Kanazawa from Edo in 1601, and was married at the tender age of 3.



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Now Open!

● The New Prefectural Library (scheduled to open on July 16, 2022)

Ishikawa Prefectural Library: A Hall of Knowledge

This summer, one of the foremost prefectural libraries in Japan is due to open, boasting 300,000 open stacks and a storage capacity of 2 million books! The building's exterior resembles turning the pages of a book, while inside features a circular design in which bookshelves surround an atrium to create a wide-open space for visitors to explore. With an area to enjoy reading in nature, in addition to a food culture space, a workshop space, and a learning space with a great view, the library will be home to a range of cultural activities. Wireless internet access will also be offered throughout the building. The walls are lined with traditional craft works by Ishikawa's master artisans, including recipients of the Order of Cultural Merit and living national treasures, and the various chairs by famous designers are a must-see!

<http://www.pref.ishikawa.jp/muse/library/> (Japanese only)



photo (C) Hideki Ookura/Kurome Photo Studio



● Neo Yatai Street (Opened 2022.4.20)

A newly opened street food area only a 4-minute walk from JR Kanazawa Station West Exit. Here you can enjoy izakaya-style food and drinks from a collection of popular Kanazawa eateries. With eight different stalls, offering grilled fish from Hokuriku, yakitori, takoyaki and more, find your favorite and enjoy the izakaya atmosphere out in the summer weather!

<https://www.kanazawa-yatai.com/> (Japanese only)

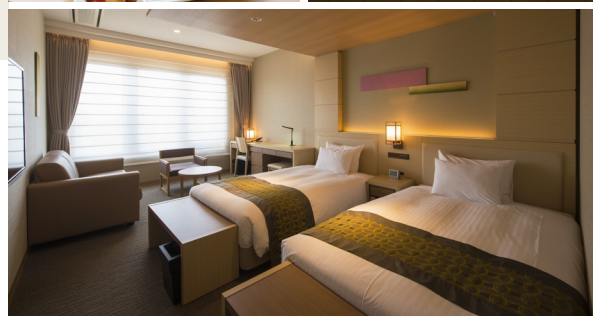


HOTELS New Hotel Opening Information

● Kanazawa Sainoniwa Hotel (Renovated on April 21, 2022)

This luxury hotel, surrounded by water and greenery, has been renovated to include new rooms to accommodate large families. In addition, as part of the hotel's LGBTQ initiatives, new gender-neutral uniforms have been introduced, and in keeping with Sustainable Development Goals, plastic bottled water has been phased out in favor of aluminum cans. Located only a 5-minute drive from the west exit of the station, and having been awarded the Michelin Guide 3 Red Pavilion twice in a row (2016, 2021), this hotel offers you a truly comfortable stay in Kanazawa.

<https://www.sainoniwa-hotel.jp/kanazawasvilla>



● OMO5 Kanazawa Katamachi by Hoshino Resorts (Opened on 2022.5.20)

OMO5 Kanazawa Katamachi gives you full access to Kanazawa's gourmet delights, from Michelin-certified restaurants to those frequented by discerning residents. You can find this hotel in the heart of the city, just a quick stroll from countless top-quality eateries. Staff also offer free guided tours and introduce visitors to surrounding restaurants. In addition, the large map installed in the reception area shows recommended spots that the staff themselves have discovered. Visitors can also enjoy a Kaga-boucha tea tasting experience and try their hand at making traditional rakugan sweets.

<https://www.hoshinoreorts.com/en/resortsandhotels/omobeb/omo/5kanazawakatamachi.html>



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