

# Traditional Local Cuisines of Japan

Issue No. 3

**Guzoni** ◆ **Nagasaki Prefecture**

By CGJNYJIC

*Traditional Local Cuisines of Japan* is a series introducing the history and food culture of various Japanese locales through their unique *kyodo-ryori* – timeless regional cuisines made with local ingredients and techniques.

This issue features *guzoni*, a hearty soup native to Shimabara, a city in Nagasaki Prefecture. Read on to learn about its grand debut in Shimabara's history!



## What is guzoni?

*Guzoni* is a variation of "ozoni", a type of one-pot soup said to date as far back as the Heian era (794 – 1185). It is a wholesome combination of meat, vegetables and rice cakes in a light broth that is customarily eaten during New Year's. Shimabara's *guzoni* is unique for its generous portion of ingredients—anywhere from 7 to 10 (or more!) nutritious items fill up the pot for a deeply satisfying meal.

## Nagasaki Prefecture

Nagasaki is located in northwestern Kyushu and encompasses 971 islands alongside its area on the mainland. The prefecture is a long-time international hub—it was one of the few places which connected to the outside world during Japan's isolationist "Sakoku" period. These diverse interactions have had a significant impact on its culture and landscape.



Glover Residence

It is no surprise then that Nagasaki's foremost tourist attraction is Glover Residence (left), a World Heritage Site and oldest surviving western-style house in Japan. Another popular destination is Huis Ten Bosch, a large theme park which recreates a Dutch town.

Local cuisine was also heavily influenced. Did you know that staples such as Nagasaki champon, "castella" cake, and even the crowd-pleasing "tempura" are all adaptations of existing Chinese and Portuguese dishes?

Thanks to its unique geographic position, Nagasaki possesses a dynamic history and has played a vital role in the development of modern Japanese culture.



Huis Ten Bosch

## Conception by Siege

The origin of *guzoni* can be traced back about 400 years to a time in the 17<sup>th</sup> century when Christianity was banned by the Tokugawa shogunate. Dissatisfaction had long been brewing among farmers on the Shimabara Peninsula over oppressive land taxes, until they finally banded together in December of 1637 in a revolt known as the Shimabara Rebellion. Christian rebel forces were then led by a youth named Amakusa Shiro.



Legend has it that *guzoni* first came to be during the rebellion's final standoff at Hara Castle. Although victory against shogunate forces was ultimately out of reach, it is said that Shiro and his group of 37,000 rebels withstood a siege for 3 months with *guzoni* by making use of ingredients obtained from the nearby mountains and ocean. This is just one of many stories about *guzoni*.

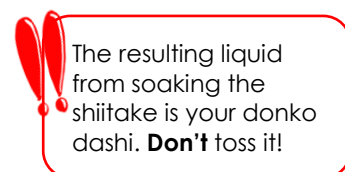
The Shimabara Rebellion was the largest uprising ever recorded in Japan's history. Recently in 2018, the ruins of Hara Castle were designated as part of the World Heritage Site, "Hidden Christian Sites in the Nagasaki Region".





## Guzoni Recipe

This recipe is by Chef Yasuhiro Shima of the CGJNY Ambassador's Residence.



### Ingredients

Serves Four

Chicken breast	100g
Napa cabbage	200g
Satoimo	2
Kamaboko	4 slices
Burdock root	100g
Daikon radish	¼ cut
Carrot	½ cut
"donko" shiitake mushrooms	4
Sliced mochi (rice cakes)	150g
Mitsuba (Japanese parsley)	1 bunch
Shrimp	4
★Ago dashi (flying fish broth)	630 cc
★Donko dashi (shiitake broth)	180 cc
★Mirin	90 cc
★Light soy sauce	90 cc

### Instructions

1. Soak donko shiitake in water overnight.
2. Cut daikon and carrots into quarter slices and parboil. Shave burdock into slivers and rinse under running water. Thinly slice napa cabbage core, and cut the leaves into bite-size widths.
3. Peel and devein shrimp. Cut chicken breast into bite-sizes and quickly pass through boiling water for about 10 seconds.
4. Cut satoimo into chunks and parboil.
5. Combine broth and seasonings marked with a ★ in a clay pot. Place all ingredients except for the mochi, kamaboko, and mitsuba into the pot. Bring to a simmer.
6. Add in the remaining ingredients and continue to cook until the mochi becomes soft.

Ready to serve!



The key to guzoni is substantiality. Feel free to experiment with different ingredients you may have on hand!



## Nagasaki Heirloom Vegetables

Nagasaki Prefecture lays claim to a significant list of heirloom vegetables. One noteworthy example is the "Nagasaki takana", mustard greens with records of cultivation in the Edo era and used in one of Japan's "top 3" pickled vegetables. Another example is the plum-colored turnip "Nagasaki akakabu", known for its distinct color and aroma, as well as its use in Nagasaki's specialty *shippoku-ryori*—Japanese-Chinese cuisine served family-style on a low dining table.

Relevant to this issue's featured dish is the *tojinna* (lit. "Chinese vegetable"), also known as Nagasaki *hakusai*. As the name suggests, it is a cabbage originally brought over from China, and is considered by some to be a must-have ingredient for guzoni.

Many heirloom vegetables are high-labor crops, and cultivation of some types have all but ceased over the years. Recently a "save the heirloom vegetables for future generations" movement has begun to gain momentum in the prefecture—here's to hoping for their success!



Tojinna

We hope you enjoyed learning about guzoni! The ingredients in our recipe are easily found at any Japanese grocery store, and the dish itself is very friendly to customization. Be sure to save the recipe for an easy, wintertime Nagasaki-flavored pick-me-up!