

Traditional Local Cuisines of Japan

Issue No. 13

Mago Chazuke ❁ *Shizuoka*

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 *Mago Chazuke*, a nostalgic rice dish from Shizuoka Prefecture.

What is Mago Chazuke?



Mago Chazuke is a rice bowl topped with fresh, finely chopped fish and herbs (similar to fish tartare) and served with hot dashi broth—a quick and simple meal originally enjoyed by fishermen during breaks. The origin of its name is up for debate; some say it is because the dish is “so delicious that you’d want your grandchild (*mago*) to eat it”, while some credit the fact that the dish can be eaten quickly without fussing (*mago-mago*); still others associate it with tuna (*maguro*). Try touring Shizuoka's restaurants to taste the many variations of this dish!

Shizuoka Prefecture

Shizuoka Prefecture is located on Japan's Pacific coast, at the center of the Honshu region. It is known for its spectacular view of Mt. Fuji; major onsen resorts on the Izu Peninsula such as Atami, Ito, and Shuzenji; lush natural scenery; and fresh seafood. The many options for outdoor activities paired with the promise of delicious food make it an attractive destination for travelers.

Shizuoka is also a place of historical prominence: the area was home to Tokugawa Ieyasu, who famously united the warring states and founded the Edo Bakufu. Ieyasu spent much of his youth and retirement in present-day Shizuoka City, and rose to power as a warrior and daimyo in Hamamatsu.



Statue of Tokugawa Ieyasu

Shizuoka was also the first to cultivate the wasabi root, which is highly prized for use in sushi and fine dining. It goes without saying that freshly grated wasabi is a must-try

garnish for *Mago Chazuke*!

Blessings of Suruga Bay

Hugging the shores of Shizuoka are the waters of Suruga Bay, the deepest bay in Japan. Reaching a depth of 2,500 meters, the cove is home to over 1,000 fish species,



thanks to its prime habitat setup with undulated seabed, nourishing deep sea waters, and steady flow of minerals from nearby Mt. Fuji. With

over 40% of the Japan's fish species in one place, it is a prime location for fishing both national staples and favorites, including *shirasu* (whitebait), *taka-ashigani* (giant spider crab), *aji* (horse mackerel), and even an elusive delicacy: *sakura ebi*.

Tender and flavorful, *sakura shrimp* in Japan are sourced exclusively from Suruga Bay, making it the only place in the country where the tiny crustaceans can be enjoyed fresh; they are otherwise



distributed only in dried form, due to a short freshness period. With the ocean's bounty at its fingertips, possibilities for a gourmet meal in Shizuoka seem endless!



Mago Chazuke

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

Ingredients

serves 2

Instructions

Cooked rice	~300g
Sashimi-grade Aji (Japanese horse mackerel)	160g
Ginger	6g
Ooba (Japanese perilla)	5 leaves
Naga-negi (Japanese leek)	60g
Shinshu miso	10g
Soy sauce (regular)	15ml
Sesame seeds	As needed
Nori seaweed	Optional

Broth

Katsuo dashi (skipjack tuna broth)	200ml
Salt	To taste

1. Peel and mince ginger. Cut ooba leaves into shreds and soak in water. Finely slice naga-negi crosswise, then rinse with water for 1 minute and drain. Set aside.
2. Fillet sashimi-grade Aji, removing the bones. Remove the skin and slice fillets into fine chunks.
3. Move the fish into a bowl and mix with Shinshu miso, soy sauce, sesame seeds, ginger, and ooba shreds (drained). This mixture is called *namerou*; set aside.
4. Heat and season katsuo (skipjack tuna) dashi with salt.
5. Fill a bowl halfway with rice, and top with *namerou*.
6. Pour in hot dashi broth from step 4. Garnish with naga-negi and nori seaweed to serve.



Watch Chef Shima's
demonstration on our channel!
youtube.com/user/CGJNYchannel



Shimoda: Dawn of U.S.-Japan Relations

It was 1853 when U.S. Navy Commodore Matthew Perry's fleet of black ships sailed into the harbor of Uruga, Kanagawa Prefecture. This moment marked the end of a chapter in Japan's history—200+ years of isolationism was formally concluded the following year with the Treaty of Kanagawa. Central to this treaty were Perry and Hayashi Fukusai, a Bakufu diplomat.

Among the first ports to open to the world was the Port of Shimoda, at the southern tip of Izu Peninsula. Perry and his crew docked here and stayed at the Ryosenji Temple, where they held a concert to share American culture and music. A commemorative stone from this time sits at the 220-foot level of the Washington Monument in D.C., with the inscription:

*From Shimoda, Izu Province, the fifth month of the year Kaei Kouin.**

**Present-day Shimoda City, Shizuoka Prefecture; the year is Kaei 7, or 1854.*

Since World War II, the U.S. and Japan have continued to develop friendly ties through cultural exchanges between both countries. Here in New York, 160 years of diplomacy will be celebrated with the first-ever "Japan Parade" on May 14 of this year. U.S.-Japan relations have come a long way since the opening of Shimoda, and we hope to see them go much further!

