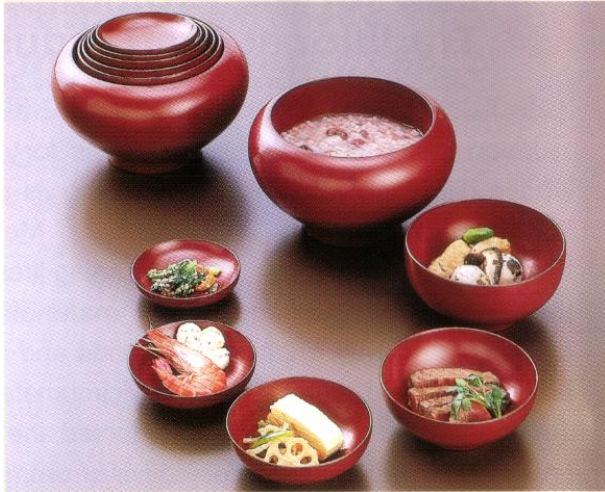


## 福井県の産地 ( F U K U I )



### **ECHIZEN-SHIKKI**

(LACQUERWARE)

Sabae-shi and environs, Fukui Prefecture

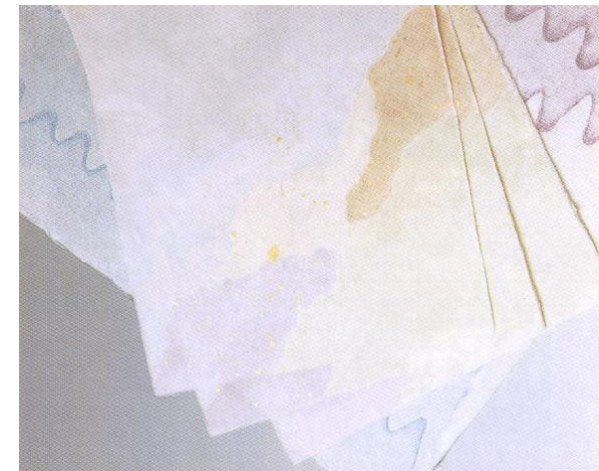
Echizen-shikki is said to have originated in the 6th century, when the emperor, who was deeply impressed by the beauty of glossy-black lacquer bowl presented by a local craftsman, encouraged the people of this region to produce lacquerware. Hiki-mono (literally, ground article) is made using sectionally split piece of chestnut, mizume or zelkova. Echizen-shikki features the Hananuri technique where the brushing and drying are performed in a row in a manner no finger mark or brush mark is left on a mirror-like surface. Shiny and elegant finish of Echizen-shikki (also known as Kawada-nuri) attained through undercoating and recoating has earned sterling praise. Also Fukui enjoys 80% share of domestic demands of lacquerware for business use in hotels, restaurants etc.

### **ECHIZEN-WASHI**

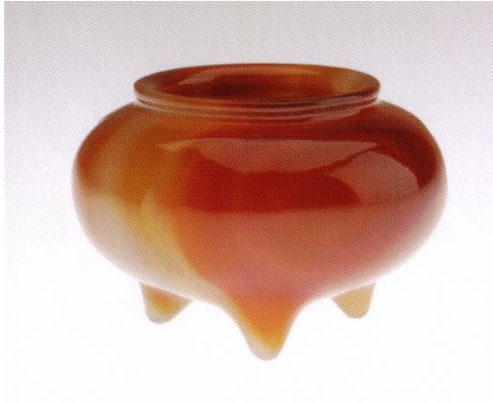
(HAND-MADE PAPER)

Echizen-shi, Fukui Prefecture

Legend has it that a beautiful maiden appeared in Okamoto River 1500 years ago and instructed how to make paper. In the Nara Period paper was used to scribe Buddhist sutra. Upon the increased demand for paper as a result of the rise of warrior class, paper production had a great leap forward both in quality and quantity, and concurrently the quality paper 'Echizen hosho' production began. Echizen has developed as a paper production center under the protection of Shogunate Government and generations of feudal lords. Because of its warm and elegant feeling and pleasant texture, Echizen-washi has been advocated by Yokoyama Taikan and other contemporary artists. Oizu, Otaki, Iwamoto, Shinzaike, Sadatomo in Echizen City, one of the largest of nation's hand-made Japanese paper production centers with the generic name of 'Go-ko', are known as scenic home to Echizen-washi.



## 福井県の産地 ( F U K U I )



### WAKASA-MENO-ZAIKU

(STONEWORK)

Obama-shi, Fukui Prefecture

The origin of Wakasa-meno (agate) is said to date back to the Nara Period, when Wani tribe, a gyoku-worshipping maritime people reached Onyu (present Wakasa, Fukui) and began producing gyoku in business. Agate is translucent quartz whose cross section shows an annual-growth-link-like pattern. In the mid Edo Period it was found that agate develops beautiful colors when the rude ore is burned at 200 to 300 degree °C, and the firing technique unique to Wakasa was established. In the 19th century the techniques of craft sculpture were developed. Extremely hard rough stones are made into various products such as images of Buddha or lovely animals, incense burners, drinking cups, accessories after time-consuming processes of carving, grinding and polishing.

### WAKASA-NURI

(LACQUERWARE)

Obama-shi, Fukui Prefecture

In the early Edo Period, inspired by Chinese lacquer art techniques, a craftsman in Obama on Wakasa Bay devised a Lacquerware piece depicting stylized sea bottom scene, which developed into 'Kikujin-nuri'. Also 'Isojin-nuri' was devised by the followers.

In the mid 17th century, a decoration technique to use eggshell, gold leaf and silver leaf was perfected. Then domain lord named the technique 'Wakasa-nuri' and encouraged as a side line of Ashigaru (lowest-class samurai), which provided fruits as sophisticated designs, e.g., 'Kikusui Shioboshi' etc. Wakasa-nuri features the designs representing the sea bottom scene depicted using eggshell, mother-of-pearl, pine needle, Japanese cypress leaf, oilseed rape, which makes the picture look as if stars or gems were glittering on its surface.



## 福井県の産地 ( F U K U I )



### **ECHIZEN-UCHIHAMONO**

(SMITHERY)

Echizen-shi, Fukui Prefecture

Echizen uchihamono is said to date back to the early Muromachi Period, when a blade smith from Kyoto visited this place in a quest for a place suitable for sword making and made some sickles for the villagers. In the Edo Period, the sickle with the brand name of 'Echizen gama' was sold nationwide under the protection by Fukui clan. In 1979, Echizen uchihamono was designated Traditional Crafts as the first of the Smithery to be designated.

Twenty-three processes from steel making to finishing are involved in the production. Mainly kitchen knives are manufactured applying the Japanese indigenous fire forging technique and hand finishing. Echizen is renowned as one of the best production sites of uchihamono for its sharp and high-quality products.

### **ECHIZEN-YAKI**

(CERAMICS)

Echizen-cho and environs, Fukui prefecture

Echizen-yaki, one of the six ancient potteries of Japan, dates back to the late Heian Period. More than 200 of old kilns have been discovered. In these large-scaled old kilns, various vessels for daily use were manufactured, such as, jars, urns, mortars, funa-dokkuri (sake bottle) and ohaguro-tsubo (jar).

Echizen-yaki is a rustic pottery with natural texture of the clay. Some are unglazed, and others are glazed mainly with ash or iron. The molding technique unique to Echizen-yaki called Nejitate molding (mold by piling up the rings of rammed soil) has been handed down up to now beside the technique of potters wheel and that of tatara molding (mold using plates of rammed soil). Simple-shaped Echizen-yaki vessels retain the warmth of soil and unique texture as well as the beauty inherent in the practical items. They are loved as vessels of daily use.

