



a



b

Ehime -

kingdom of citrus

Ehime lies on the north-west coast of the island of Shikoku, one of the four prefectures on the island. Ehime native Mikyan (right) would like to introduce just a little of what the prefecture has to offer.



Say 'citrus fruit' in Japan and most people will think 'Ehime'.

Citrus, such as navel oranges, lemons and limes, are also grown in Australia, but Ehime grows the most varieties and the greatest quantities of citrus fruit of any prefecture in Japan. Throughout the year there is a range of citrus with different flavours and textures. Moreover, thanks to a warm climate year-round and orchards on steep slopes close to the sea, Ehime grows delicious citrus fruit, juicy and rich in minerals from the sea breeze.

I would like to introduce just one type here – the iyokan. The iyokan [photos a & b] takes its name from the old name for Ehime, 'Iyo-no-kuni'. The iyokan is *the* Ehime citrus, with around 90 per cent of all iyokan produced nationally grown in Ehime. The moment you peel the skin of an iyokan, a bittersweet fragrance is released; bite into it and your mouth will be filled with juice that is a delicious balance of sour and sweet. There are plans to export iyokan juice to Australia – please try it for yourself.

Another special taste of Ehime that I would like to introduce is barley miso paste [c]. The taste and aroma of miso paste depends on the type of yeast and the mix of ingredients as well as the water and growing conditions (or terroir). The miso paste made in Ehime mainly consists of hulled barley, which Ehime produces in the greatest quantity in all Japan. Compared with barley miso paste produced in other regions, Ehime's is low in salt and high in fibre, and it also contains a lot of yeast giving the miso paste its distinctive yeasty aroma. The paste has a clean, sweet taste, and is used in many dishes, not least, miso soup.



c

Something that is really popular in Ehime today is the Shimanami Kaido [d]. The Shimanami Kaido is a cycling course about 70km long that takes in numerous small islands and beauty spots in the Seto Inland Sea. The course was named one of the most attractive cycling routes in *Epic Bike Rides of the World* published by Lonely Planet (Melbourne). In 2018, an international cycling contest 'Cycling Shimanami' will be held. I hope that many Australians will come and join us to enjoy the 'Sky Walk over the Sea'. To recover after all that cycling, relax at Dogo Onsen [e], Japan's oldest hot-spring with a history for some 3,000 years. You will never forget the feeling of complete satisfaction after relaxing in this wonderful onsen at the end of a full day.

If you would like to learn more about Ehime, please visit the following website for more tourism information.

<http://iyokan.net/english/index.htm>

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d



e

Introducing Mikyan: Your reporter Mikyan is the official mascot of Ehime prefecture. Japan is home to countless *yuru kyara* mascots such as Mikyan. Ehime's Mikyan is definitely cute — a puppy dog with a mandarin-shaped head, leaves for ears, a love heart for a nose and a citrus flower for a tail. So many charm points!