



## WHITE HERON CASTLE

Himeji Castle (Himeji City, Hyogo Prefecture), owing to its graceful appearance, has been likened to an elegant white heron or egret stretching its wings, hence the nickname seen in the title. It is dominated by the five-story Main Donjon—originally completed in 1609—whose beauty remains undiminished even after more than four centuries. A masterpiece of Japanese wooden construction, it was registered in 1993 as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, one of the first places to be honored so in the country. In the clear blue autumnal skies, when the surrounding trees turn bright red, the white castle walls sparkle even brighter.

AFL0

# COLORS AND SAVORS OF AUTUMN REFLECT JAPAN

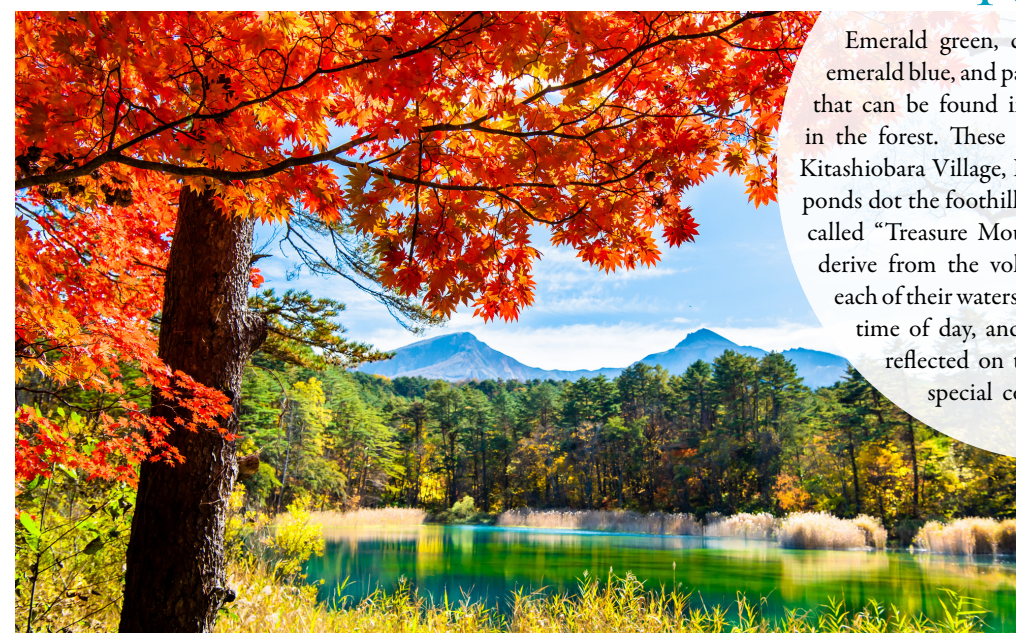
*The wealth of Japan's four seasons amply satisfies the five senses, especially in the fall. Leaves turning red or yellow and the tastes of nature's bounty are an excellent introduction to Japanese culture.*



## BBQ OYSTERS

Tender, ample flesh and the wonderful smells of the seashore stimulate the appetite for grilled oysters. Hiroshima Prefecture, which boasts the highest production of oysters in Japan, begins harvesting the product in autumn. The calm waters of the Seto Inland Sea, enriched with nutrients carried by inflowing rivers, are perfect for imparting a rich flavor to the local oysters. For that reason, the fishermen there have long been active in protecting the forests on the mountains where the rivers originate. Blessed thus with bountiful mountains and seas, Hiroshima is scheduled to host the G7 Summit in May 2023.

## MYSTERIOUS PONDS



Emerald green, cobalt blue, turquoise blue, emerald blue, and pastel blue ... the wonderful hues that can be found in mysterious ponds lying deep in the forest. These are the Goshikinuma Ponds of Kitashiobara Village, Fukushima Prefecture. Dozens of ponds dot the foothills of Bandai Mountain, familiarly called "Treasure Mountain." Their distinctive colors derive from the volcanic substances particular to each of their waters, as well as the season, weather, time of day, and angle of view. Red leaves reflected on their surfaces generate a special color scheme unique to autumn.