

# DISCOVER A COOLNESS UNIQUE TO THE JAPANESE SUMMER

*Japan abounds in traditional wisdom and customs that enable people to pleasantly endure the hot summer months through sights for the eyes, textures for the skin, and tastes for the tongue. With such summer-exclusive scenery and flavors, the five senses provide a feeling of coolness.*

## SUMMER NOODLES

A must-have dish aimed at helping people of all ages beat Japan's hot summers is *somen*: a traditional thread-thin noodle that is produced most notably in Hyogo and Nara Prefectures as well as Shodoshima Island in Kagawa Prefecture, using time-honored ingredients and production methods. Briefly boiled then chilled in ice-cold water, and finally dipped in a savory soy-based sauce, the noodles release a refreshing coolness into the mouth. Adding condiments such as green onions and ginger makes it more enjoyable to savor a variety of flavors. Slurping down *somen* noodles—a powerful ally for riding out the blazing heat—is an excellent way to experience the Japanese summer as the locals do.



## OLD STREETS IN YUKATA

Kimono, the traditional dress of Japanese people, is one aspect of Japanese culture that overseas visitors love to see. In particular, a simple garment originally worn after a hot bath, *yukata*, made of cotton or linen, has become customary Japanese summer wear thanks to its excellent breathability and smooth feel on the skin. Shown in the photograph is a street within the teahouse district of Kanazawa City in Ishikawa Prefecture, a leading tourist attraction whose intact townscape from two centuries ago charms modern visitors just as it did in bygone years. To take a stroll wearing *yukata* over the stone pavements, on summer mornings or evenings, gives an unmistakable feeling of total immersion in Japanese culture.



## MYTHICAL GORGE

Miyazaki Prefecture's Takachiho—a town situated close to the center of Kyushu Region—is known for legends that have been passed down from time immemorial. There, ancient shrines continue to honor gods that existed at the stage of Japan's foundation myths. That mysterious ambience can be felt even more powerfully by taking a trip to Takachiho Gorge. On boats passing beneath awesome 100-meter-high cliffs that extend for 7 km, travelers float over emerald-green waters, giving them the illusion of slipping back in time several centuries. Surrounded by majestic scenery, you can gaze upon a beautiful waterfall to get a unique sensation that is both cooling and refreshing.

