



# USUKI

CITY OF GASTRONOMY

# JAPAN

## 2021

加入網絡年份

YEAR OF DESIGNATION

## 日本・臼杵

## 城市介紹 | INTRODUCTION OF THE CITY

By virtue of its geography and topography, Usuki City has been blessed with soft, delicate water that has a rich, mellow flavor.

Fermentation Industry, for which quality water is important, began in the area around the year 1600. The development of a diverse local food culture, including miso, soy sauce, and sake production that preserves longstanding traditions while incorporating ongoing improvements, led to the creation of distinctive local dishes that express the wisdom and frugality of the local people.

In more recent years, Usuki City has added to this local gastronomy that has been carefully cultivated by its residents the promotion of organic farming and the slow food movement. Usuki is the only municipality in Japan, for example, that produces mature compost from cut vegetation and other materials, which it then uses to develop fertile soil conditions. This practice raises awareness among both producers and consumers about the importance of quality food.

These and other municipal activities designed to promote diversity and sustainability are aligned with the aims of the Sustainable Development Goals, and help promote sustainable urban development in general.





## 廚師介紹 | CHEF INFORMATION

# Yoshihide Tatara

My name is Yoshihide Tatara, originally from Usuki City, and I currently run my own izakaya (a Japanese-style pub). My diverse culinary background includes experience in a bakery, a large izakaya, a Japanese restaurant specializing in fish dishes, a hamburger steak restaurant, and a restaurant in a wedding venue serving French cuisine.

At my izakaya, I focus on using local ingredients from Usuki, including fresh fish from Usuki Bay and organic vegetables. My signature dish is "Steamed Vegetables with Kabosu Citrus Salt Koji Sauce." We steam about 10 types of local organic vegetables and serve them with a homemade sauce using kabosu (a citrus fruit native to Japan), garlic, koji (fermented rice), and locally produced salt. Smoked local fish dishes are also popular.

I believe that using unique local ingredients also supports the producers, as they are essential to our work as chefs. My mother's vegetable shop next door provides many of our ingredients, helping us use seasonal produce and reduce food waste.

By using unique local ingredients, we not only create delicious dishes but also contribute to preserving the local food culture and supporting the community.





### Koneri

This is a traditional local dish from Oita Prefecture (where Usuki City is located) that my grandmother often made. It was typically prepared during the summer, when vegetables like eggplant and bitter melon were in abundance.

The dish is made by kneading flour together with seasonings, creating a thick sauce that clings well to the vegetables thanks to the gluten in the flour.

A key to this dish is infusing the oil with the rich aroma of dried baby sardines (iriko). Stir-frying the vegetables in this aromatic oil gives the dish a deep, savory flavor.

In this version, I've added garlic, rosemary, and bay leaf for a modern twist.



### Dango-Jiru

This is a traditional local dish that I used to eat at home when I was a child.

Typically prepared in winter, it's a warming soup filled with seasonal vegetables and flavored with a fragrant broth made from dried bonito flakes and kelp.

The dumplings are made from locally produced wheat flour. Instead of being shaped into balls, the dough is hand-stretched into long, flat pieces and added to the pot.

Every household has its own version, with some preferring a miso-based flavor and others using soy sauce, making it a dish that reflects the taste of home.

In this version, I've blended 14 different spices into the traditional Japanese broth to give it a curry-inspired twist.

