

HOSHINOYA Taketomi Island (Taketomi Island, Okinawa)

Winter Dining Specials Based Around Theme of “Island Terroir”

HOSHINOYA Taketomi Island, a resort hotel on Taketomi Island, Okinawa, is offering a winter-exclusive dinner course with the theme of “Island Terroir.” In 2019, the second year since the resort’s establishment, the hotel will prepare a menu containing the ingredients of Taketomi Island that have been prized by the islanders since ancient times for their health effects, such as vegetables, herbs, and “*nuchigusa*”, which will be in season during winter.



Winter Dining Specials “Island Terroir”

The winter dining specials based around the theme of “Island Terroir” was born at HOSHINOYA Taketomi Island in 2018. The word “terroir” is a French concept referring to the climate, soil, land, geography, history, and people that influence the growth of crops like wine, coffee, and tea. It is said that these disparate elements combine to create the “terroir,” which determines the quality of the produce*.

Taketomi Island is a small island with a circumference of around 9km, formed by a coral reef rising above the waterline. Taketomi Island has its own unique terroir: its temperate climate, with temperatures averaging around 24°C throughout the year, creates a different agricultural cycle to that of Honshu, entering peak season in the winter. This winter, when the crops grown in this island’s unique terroir are in season, HOSHINOYA Taketomi Island will offer a gourmet experience made possible by the skies, sea, and people of the island.

*Reference: Rigaux, Jacky. *Terroir & the Winegrower (Japanese Edition)*. Sakuhinsha

The terroir of Taketomi Island

1. Climate

The average temperature throughout the year is 24°C, with the average over summer being 30° - 31°C, while in winter it hovers around 18°C; the island has a temperate climate, staying warm throughout the year. On the island's farms, *nuchigusa* herbs and sweet potatoes are grown in the abundant sunlight. It is said that the water temperatures created by Taketomi Island's climate are the perfect conditions for kuruma prawns, and are the reason that they have a particularly sweet taste.



2. Land

The most unique aspect of Taketomi Island is the fact that the island was formed by a coral reef. There are no mountains or rivers on Taketomi Island, so the people use their scarce land for agriculture. Sweet potatoes are the staple food, and *nuchigusa* herbs have long been used by the islanders to support their health in their day to day lives. The sea is also free of any dirt washing into it, so it stays a pristine emerald green color. The food gathered from this ocean, such as seaweed, sea lettuce and octopus, are common sights on the islanders' dining tables even today.



3. Human Effort

Taketomi Island is home to three villages, with a total of about 350 residents. The original Okinawa scenery remains in the coral walls, brick roofs, and sand roads. They still have their own unique cultural practices, such as Tanadui Festival, which is said to have 600 years of history. The backdrop for these practices is the spirit of "*utsugumi*," or the idea that working together is the best and wisest thing to do, and the Taketomi Island Charter, which emphasizes the importance of cherishing the island's traditional culture. The conviction towards protecting the island's culture and environment is deeply ingrained in the population, and this conviction protects the terroir of Taketomi Island.



Island Terroir Menu

A total of 9 courses are on offer, starting from the Shimakaji Apéritif, which includes drinks that guests can enjoy before their meal while enjoying the evening breeze.

Aperitif	Two of the following: Okinawan Seaweed Biscuits, Shrimp and Parmesan Cheese Tuile, Jimami Peanuts Tofu, Orange Lily and Salted Pork Fromage de Tête
Amuse	Coupe of Gazami Crab and Island Tofu
Entrée	Coral-grilled Kuruma Prawns Nuchigusa Herb Sauce
2eme	Poire of Foie Gras and Kubushimi Squid with Squid Ink Risotto
3eme	Three Different Arrangements of Akane Sweet Potato
Soup Poisson	Poire and Bisque of Kuruma Prawns with Carrot Cream
Viande	Beef Fillet in a Baked Pie with a Bearnaise Sauce of Nuchigusa Herbs
Avant dessert	Akane Sweet Potato Tart
Dessert	Mango Baba with Awamori Sake Fragrance

*Menu is subject to change depending on ingredient availability.

Enjoy a nice breeze with the Shimakaji Apéritif

The beginning of the dinner course is the Shimakaji Apéritif on the “Wind Terrace” in the back of the dining room. As it was formed by a coral reef, Taketomi Island is a flat island, and there are few tall buildings, so a pleasant breeze blows through it. Guests can enjoy their apéritif while experiencing the natural environment of Taketomi Island: hearing the sounds of the wind, the trees, and the chirping of insects, and watching the sky as it transitions from the sunset to a starlit night.



Two Featured Dishes

Three Different Arrangements of Akane Sweet Potato

This dish features the faintly sweet orange potatoes in copious quantities, in the forms of Roti (roasted), Frit (fried), and Vapeur (steamed). Guests can enjoy an intense sweetness and fragrance with the Roast, a savory aroma and texture with the Fritto, and a simple, natural sweetness with the Vapore.



Beef Fillet in a Baked Pie with a Bearnaise Sauce of Nuchigusa Herbs

A beef fillet is wrapped in pastry containing the most well-known *nuchigusa* herbs of Taketomi Island, such as *choumeisou* and *fuchiba* (mugwort), and cooked at a low temperature. Characterized by the rich taste of the *nuchigusa* herbs, transferred to the meat during cooking. By slowly heating it through the pastry, the meat stays soft and moist.



Island Terroir Dinner Course at a glance

Dates: December 1st, 2019 - March 10th, 2020 (Closed January 19th - 24th, 2020)

Price: ¥12,000 (excl. tax/service fees)

Booking: Book a stay that includes dinner at the official site (<https://hoshinoya.com/taketomijima/en/>)

Venue: Dining restaurant

Time: 5:30 pm - 8:00 pm

Who can participate: Hotel guests only

Notes: The menu and the areas where the ingredients are produced are subject to change depending on ingredient availability

