

Welcome to the world of Otsukemono!

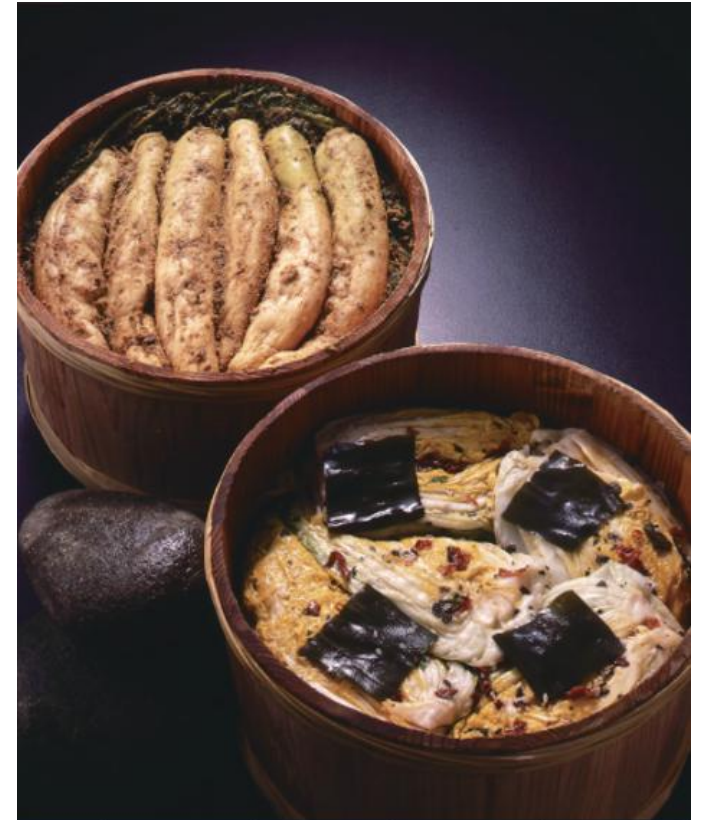
We call Japanese pickles "Otsukemono"
Its first letter "O" is an exalted prefix in Japanese.

Usually the word "tsukemono" is used for Japanese pickles but we put "O" on it to pay the respect for Otsukemono which is the wisdom of our ancestor and also to express that they are good enough to be used as a gift for someone you care.

Japanese Otsukemono first appeared in the literature more than 1200 years ago. Actually it is believed that pickling vegetables with sea water for food preservation began sometime around stone age.

Owing to the grace of seasons and our original fermentation culture, Otsukemono has evolved and prevailed through our history and has made huge variety and affluence in each region.

Otsukemono has unique deep taste, rich piquent aroma, addictive unique texture and attractive colorfulness. We believe that Otsukemono can be more valued as an essential side dish in today's world of diversity.



Paying respect to the culture and history of Otsukemono while creating new values up to date

Since our foundation, we put emphasis on the quality of salt and vegetable ingredients as the basis for good pickles.

In the late 70's, we started to use natural sea salt, to collaborate with progressive farmers in the regions and to reintroduce local traditional vegetables.

We think its our mission to pass on the value of Japanese fermentation culture to the next generation. We are producing various types of pickles using seven pickling beds, namely salt, rice-bran, soy-sauce, soybean-paste, rice malt, sake lees, and vineger.

Now the richness and value of Japanese food "washoku" is gathering attention around the world. So we think, Otsukemono, Japanese pickles will play more important roles in washoku as one of fermented foods, and as cooked vegetable dishes with full of dietary fibers, vitamins and minerals.

Through the production process, we keep learning from traditional arts of Japanese pickling and introducing new ideas into it, so that our customers can feel the grace of four seasons and the richness of five tastes (sweetness, sourness, saltiness, bitterness, umami) from our products.



Based on the history of our origin "Tokugetsu-ro"

Our origin started in 1828, the later Edo period at Tokugetsuro, a high-class restaurant in Nagoya. Because of its dedicated food menu, the restaurant got popular among famous poets and writers. Especially its homemade mirin-nara-zuke got high reputation as the best of the best.

In 1946, Wakana inherited the traditional arts of Narazuke pickling and its goodwill and was reborn as Otsukemono WAKANA. The name of WAKANA comes from the chapter title in The Tale of Genji, and it was selected by a famous Japanese composer Kosaku Yamada.

The factory of Wakana is located in Kanie the western suburb of Aichi prefecture which is rich in nature in terms of agriculture. Kayatsu-shrine, in which unique deity of pickling is worshiped, is near from Kanie town.



From Ginza to the world

We launched a small shop at Ginza 7-chome 66 years ago. As the city was recovering from the devastation of the war time, our shop started to sell our Nara-zuke, of which the recipe had been inherited from Tokugetsuro. We also started introducing western pickles at the shop.

The city was full of people from all over the country and they requested us to carry the pickles of their own hometown. Then, we were beginning to sell the pickles from various regions and carried over 50 kinds of Japanese local pickles.

In 1960s, we formed research and development room in the factory and started to produce refrigerated lightly-salted pickles, Asa-zuke preceding the other companies in the trade and at the same time we also developed our original seasonal products.

In the late 70s, we started contract farming with farmers around the country, so that we could receive the vegetables of stable quality and quantity.

In the 80s, we opened the new shops at the Haneda Air Port, and enriched the product line of Tokyo specialties.

Nowadays, we sell the pickles of salad taste at department stores, ekinaka shops and airport shops, pursuing the new style of Japanese pickles.



What we value and are particular about

1. Carefully selected vegetables

- We seek for the quality vegetables at their seasonal best and have them shipped from every part of the country.
- Most of the seasonal vegetables we use are organic or vegetables grown in minimum amount of pesticides from contract farmers.

2. Ingredients

- Using well-balanced natural sea-water salt rich in minerals.
- Using quality, additive-free, authentically-brewed soy sauce, vinegar, sweet rice wine, sake and miso for fermented pickling ingredients.
- Using natural, fresh seaweed (dried kelp), bonito flake and mushroom to add flavor. Try to avoid chemical seasonings as much as possible.
- We never use synthetic preservatives nor artificial colorings.

3. Pickling methods

- The basics of manufacturing tsukemono is <salt × pressure × pickling ingredients + time>

We stick to the traditions and fundamentals of long history of tsukemono.

- The pickling beds, namely salt, soy sauce, sake lees, vinegar, miso, malts and rice bran are the mother of complex, rich flavor of Japanese food.

We choose those ingredient that matches best for each vegetable.

With the help of yeast and lactic bacterium, our seasonal, selected vegetables get even more tasty.

4. A sense of the season

- One of the best enticements of tsukemono is that you can enjoy the changing of seasons through them.

We try to identify the best season and the best production area for each vegetable ingredients, creating Otsukemono calendar which contributes to our product lineup full of variety in four seasons.

5. Progressive product development

- Otsukemono is one of the smart ways to make vegetables taste better and effectively intaken.

By pickling, we can get rich-nutrition and dietary fiber of vegetables.

- For generations who is not quite familiar with vegetable-based diet, we develop new type of Otsukemono as well such as salad-type ones, ones with seasonal fruits, and hors d'oeuvre-type tsukemono that goes well with wine. We pursue to develop new products that stand out on the dining table of the time as well as to pursue long-lasting traditions.

Enjoy the beauty of four seasons in Japan

spring



summer



autumn



winter

