



Ocean views, delicious seafood, rich history,  
and a welcoming community eager to share  
their culture and traditions with visitors...  
All this and more awaits you on your journey!

Wakasa  
&  
Obama!

The seaside city of Obama and the neighboring town of Wakasa may not be as well known as tourist hubs like Tokyo and Kyoto, but this historic region has a lot to offer for visitors willing to venture a little way off the beaten track!

Driving what is now known as the Saba Kaido (Mackerel Road) or taking a train along the scenic Lake Biwa and the Sea of Japan will bring you to Obama and Wakasa in Fukui Prefecture. This rural area has a population of approximately 41,000 people, who mostly make a living in the agricultural and commercial fishing industries. Local traditional crafts include lacquerware (especially chopsticks), agate carving, and *washi* papermaking. Popular cuisine features winter crab, *kuzu manju* sweets, pickled sea bream topped with bamboo leaves, Yatabe green onions, fresh eels, *ume* plums, and a dizzying variety of mackerel! Seasonal tourism usually consists of beach lovers, autumn color chasers, and seafood connoisseurs, but Obama and Wakasa are worth visiting for their heritage and art as well.

In earlier periods of history, when Kyoto was still the capital of Japan, mountain routes through Wakasa to Obama were Kyoto's primary mode of access to the Sea of Japan. This went beyond just fishing, as the port in Obama also served as the gateway to the Asian mainland. With foreign goods and travelers arriving from abroad to proceed to Kyoto along with shipments of local staple foods such as fish and salt, Obama and Wakasa inevitably absorbed aspects of their trading partners' refined culture, some of which has survived to this day in the form of culinary traditions, architecture, hospitality customs, and festivals.

Keep reading to discover even more about this charming region by the sea!