

## A Historical Walk Around Kyoto

### Enjoy tasting “Senmaiduke”-pickled sliced radish



Plump *Shogoin kabura* (radishes)



*Senmaiduke* piled up in fan-like shape

When Kyoto city is covered with autumn leaves, one of the traditional vegetables; “*Syogoin kabura*” (a big round shaped radish) is pickled as “*Senmaiduke*” and begin to appear in the market.

*Syogoin kabura* is the most giant round-shaped radish in Japan. The size is about 20 cm of diameter and the weight is over 4 kg. A large temperature swing between day and night, which is a specific climate of Kyoto as a basin, enhances the sweetness and succulence of the radish. For that reason, *Syogoin kabura* deepens the flavor from autumn to winter.

Currently, *Shogoin kabura* are produced in Sasayama-cho (town) in Kameoka city located in the midwest in Kyoto prefecture. They were originally produced in Shogoin area in Sakyo-ku in Kyoto city. In Edo era, this area was famous for production of vegetables and various improvements for species of vegetables were attempted. These trials brought forth a vegetable named after Shogoin.

*Senmaiduke* is a pickle of thinly-sliced *Syogoin kabura* marinated with salt, kelp and chili peppers in vinegar in wooden barrel. It seemed that it began to be called *Senmaiduke*; (*Sen-Mai-Duke*; *Sen* refers one thousand, *Mai* refers counting manner of something thin, *Duke* refers pickles) because the number of slices exceeds one thousand, or the slice is too thin as if it takes one thousand slices from one radish.

It is said that a cook served for Kyoto Imperial palace, Touzaburo Daikokuya firstly devised *Senmaiduke* in the last period of Edo era in 1865. The pickles won popularity in Imperial palace spread across Kyoto people and it has been popular until now.

The best season of *Shogoin kabura* is from November to March. The preparation for *Senmaiduke* is also limited in this season at each maker. The thickness or taste is different by makers. It is a traditional food with a history more than 150 years. How about find your favorite *Senmaiduke* while comparing original tastes of each maker, because there are a lot of pickles' stores in Kyoto.