



# Kawada, Echizen Lacquer Ware Village

Kawada District, Sabae City

With porcelain China comes to mind, but with lacquer Japan is at the tip of everyone's tongue. Kawada is said to have the longest tradition of lacquer ware in all of Japan, and its woodworkers, lacquerers, and *makie* painters preserve this tradition in their workshops.



Traditional buildings along Kawada's *Namamichi*



A craftsman painting lacquer ware

The lacquer ware produced in the center of the Kawada district, known as Echizen Lacquer, carries a history of over 1500 years. The sturdiness and beauty of this traditional craft are known and admired throughout Japan.

Its origins are said to come from when the 26<sup>th</sup> Keitai Emperor, then crown prince, broke his crown when visiting



Echizen Lacquer Ware (Nat. Traditional Craft)

Kawada. A lacquerer living nearby repaired it, adding additional flourishes before presenting it to the emperor. Greatly pleased by the artisan's work, he was designated the "bowl of Katayama," and today's Echizen lacquer was born.



Kawada, as viewed from Shikki Shrine<sup>①</sup>

Along Kawada-cho's Daimon Dori (Street) and Nakamichi, the black-tiled houses and factories of the Echizen Lacquer Ware Village warmly greet visitors.

From the hill above Shikki Shrine, one can enjoy a commanding view of the town and its traditional architecture.

Local Togenshōzu Spring has provided drinking water to the area for centuries, and was reputedly found when the Keitai Emperor was searching for water in the area.

Mandarin ducks can be found floating along the Kawada River year-round. Situated in their ideal environment, breeding grounds such as these where one can find the ducks are rare throughout the country.



Mandarin ducks in the Kawada River<sup>③</sup>



Togenshōzu (Kamikōchi-cho, Sabae City)<sup>②</sup>

