

# JAPANESE

2017 portfolio



Stacole Fine Wines  
A member of The Winebow Group





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## Introduction to Stacole Sake Portfolio

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Craft+Estate, a member of The Winebow Group and a national importer of fine wine and spirits, is proud to bring this exceptional portfolio of premium sakes to the U.S. market. Staying true to the company's long-term goals of representing family-owned estates, these sake producers are connected to the local traditions of their respective regions. Many of these breweries have been producing sake for centuries, employ local workers and commission locally grown rice. This focus on hand-crafted, artisanal sake production aligns perfectly with Craft+Estate's culture, philosophy, and passion for the fine wine and craft spirits sector.

**Family-operated estates:** The sake breweries Craft + Estate has selected are all family-owned operations with strong ties to their local communities. Many have been producing for centuries, some going as far back as 1689. These sake houses are more than just breweries, they are staples of their communities; employing local workers during the winter, commissioning locally grown rice, and instilling a sense of pride and tradition in rural regions often overlooked by the urban population.

**Diversity:** Never ones to do things halfway, we were not content to bring in just a handful of sakes. Instead, we chose to represent the entire world of sake, complete with different styles, classifications, regions and breweries.

**High Quality Products:** As with wine, there is a large quality spectrum for sake. And as with our wine portfolio, we sought to import only the highest quality sake. The breweries we represent produce hand-crafted, artisanal sakes that are worlds removed from the mass produced, box sake that for far too many people has been their only exposure to this wonderful beverage. We at Craft + Estate are very excited about this project, and look forward to helping people learn more about a drink that has been enjoyed by the Japanese for over 2000 years.

## History and Culture of Sake

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Japan is a land of contrasts, a stark blend of modern and ancient, foreign and local. It is the country that has given us sushi and samurai, hello kitty and haiku. It is crisscrossed by bullet trains, and in just two hours one can travel from the bustling streets of Tokyo to the ancient temples of Kyoto. Nowhere is this tendency toward dichotomy more present than in sake, the country's traditional beverage. It is not uncommon to see shiny new machines housed in an ancient rural brewery that has been owned by the same family for generations, or a stylish new bottle containing sake made using traditional, labor-intensive brewing techniques. Both domestically and abroad, the sake industry has been reinventing itself in recent years, and small producers from the countryside are leading the charge with a range of innovative premium sakes.

The Japanese discovered sake nearly two thousand years ago, and it has enjoyed an esteemed place in their culture ever since. It is not only the drink of choice for many Japanese to this day, but also features prominently in the ceremonies and traditions of everyday life. It is served at celebrations of birth and marriage, as well as at the more somber occasions of death and departure for war. It is even given regularly as an offering at shrines for local Shinto deities.

So what is sake, and how is it made? Despite the fact that it is often referred to as rice wine, sake is not a wine. It is in fact closer to beer, although that description is not quite accurate either. Because rice is a starch, sake must be brewed. However, due to differences in the fermentation process, sake has a relatively high level of alcohol and no carbonation. It is thus a unique product, with its own range of flavors and styles. The remarkable thing about sake is that it can be made using only four ingredients: rice, water, koji-kin (a type of mold) and yeast. Only through a very delicate and complex brewing process can such a delicious product be made from such pure and simple sources.

Sake is often referred to as “the drink of the gods” because its original use was mostly in religious services and celebrations. In fact, the original brewing method called for someone to chew uncooked rice and spit it into a bowl to begin fermentation, and only young girls were allowed to perform this duty, as they were seen as the only ones pure enough to do so. While production methods have come a long way since then, sake continues to be a divinely enjoyable drink, different from wine but with a variety and depth that allow it to hold its own on any table or wine list.



A rice field shortly after planting (top). Tokyo tower (bottom left). A view of Mt. Chokai in Akita (bottom right).



## Enter the Kura



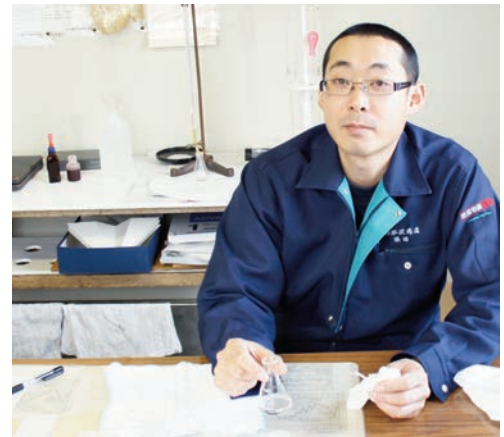
Sake is a brewer's art, and the kura, or brewery, is truly where the magic of sake occurs. For hundreds of years, skilled artisans throughout Japan have moved to the kura for the duration of the winter brewing season, leaving behind their snow-covered rice fields and their families. Months of arduous labor and careful precision are in store for these dedicated craftsmen, but by the time they return home in the spring, they will have transformed plain rice into the subtle and rewarding beverage known to us as sake.

The principal responsibilities of the kura can be divided into three different groups:

**蔵元 Kuramoto** (brewery owners): traditionally, they run the business side of the kura, and focus mostly on sales and public relations. However, recently kuramoto are becoming increasingly active in the operations of their breweries, some even going so far as to participate in the brewing process themselves!

**蔵人 Kurabito** (brewery workers): they are in charge of executing the individual steps of sake brewing. Typically, each worker specializes in a different section of the brewery or production process.

**杜氏 Toji** (master brewer): he (or as of recently, she) is responsible for directing the whole brewing process and determining the style of the sakes being produced as well as ensuring the smooth operation of the kura. The toji acts as a go-between for the kurabito and kuramoto, and is vital to the functioning of the brewery. Most toji are longtime kurabito who have risen through the ranks to attain a leadership role.



Naoki Suzuki, 19th generation heir of Hideyoshi (left). The kurabito at Chokaisan gather in the morning (center). The toji at Minato Harbor does some analysis (right).

# 蔵人家族

The long days and intense working conditions that have defined the kurabito's lives for centuries have given rise to an extraordinary closeness among workers, many of whom spend their whole adult lives working for the same kura. It is the toji's responsibility to foster and encourage these relationships in order to create a positive working environment. Over time, several sayings have been created to describe the ideal functioning of a brewery, and many continue to adorn the walls of the breweries to this day. Below are a couple examples:

**蔵人家族 Kurabito Kazoku:** roughly translates to “workers are family”. In the traditional system (still being practiced at some breweries to this day, including Minato Harbor), workers would leave their families and live at the brewery for the duration of the winter brewing season. After eating all of their meals together and working in tight conditions for over four months, it is not surprising that a close, family-like bond would form among the workers!

**和醸良酒 Wa-jo-ryo-shu:** roughly translate to “harmonious brewing, good sake”. This phrase really emphasizes the interconnectedness of the kurabito. The brewing process is precisely scheduled and needs to run like clockwork on a daily basis. Even small errors can disrupt the entire rhythm of the kura, and lead to disastrous consequences both at that time and down the line.

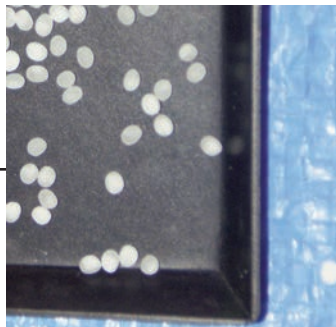


The kurabito at Manabito share a meal together (left). The Kurabito at the Minato “Harbor” brewery distribute the steamed rice. (right).

## BROWN RICE



## POLISHING



## WASHING/SOAKING



## STEAMING



# Sake Brewing Process



While region and ingredients are also important in determining a sake's profile, the production process is perhaps the most important factor. Not only is the toji's meticulous attention necessary during each step to ensure a high quality product, but several key choices along the way will result in drastically different styles of sake. This chart provides an outline of the basic brewing process, as well as an indication of where changes to this basic process yield different styles.

**BROWN RICE** There are around 100 strands of sake rice, although only about a dozen are widely used. Each strain has its own unique attributes, both in terms of size and taste. All rice, even the rice we eat, is brown when harvested, only becoming white after polishing.

**Rice Polishing** An extremely important step, polishing removes the harsher elements found on the outer layers of the grain, and leaves only the starches concentrated in the center. The milling percentage also determines the classification of a sake, from futsuu-shu, which has no requirement but is typically milled to about 80% of original size, to daiginjo, which is milled to 50% or less. The more of the grain that is milled away, the more complex, delicate and aromatic the resulting sake becomes.

**Rice Washing/Soaking** As when rice is cooked, sake rice needs to be washed and soaked before it can be used. This is the first of several steps in which water plays an important role.

**Rice Steaming** Again similar to cooking, the rice must also be steamed in order to soften the grains. This steamed rice is then used in several different parts of the production process.

**KOJI** Koji is the mash that results when steamed rice is sprinkled with koji-kin, a special kind of mold. As the koji-kin spreads over the rice, it begins to convert the starches found in the rice into sugars.

**YEAST STARTER** Also known as shubo, the yeast starter is formed by adding yeast to a mixture of koji and water. After time, the yeast in this mash becomes highly concentrated.

**Yamahai/Kimoto:** These terms refer to traditional brewing methods in which no lactic acid is used to create the yeast starter. This requires more time and labor, but the result is often an earthier, tangier sake with higher acidity.



## KOJI & YEAST STARTER <sup>(added)</sup> → FERMENTATION



## PRESSING



## FINAL STEPS/BOTTLING



**Fermentation** Finally, the koji and yeast starter are combined with additional steamed rice and water to begin the process known as multiple parallel fermentation. As the koji breaks the starch down, the yeast converts the resulting sugars into alcohol. By controlling the temperature of the mash, the brewers can determine how active the yeast is, and thereby change the profile of the sake. The entire process can take anywhere from about 20 to 40 days.

**Pressing** After the fermentation process is complete, the sake is pressed to separate the liquid from the remaining parts of the rice grains and other solids. A variety of pressing methods are used, from large pumps to more traditional wooden presses.

**First Pasteurization** Most sake is pasteurized before storage to kill off any remaining bacteria and allow the sake to be stored at higher temperatures.

**Nama/Namachozo:** Both these types of sake are not pasteurized at this point in order to keep a certain freshness which is lost during heating. They must be stored refrigerated at the brewery.

**Storage** At this point the sake is usually left in the brewery for several months before being released. This is typically done in large tanks, although some brewers prefer to bottle age their products.

**Koshu:** This style of sake is kept in the brewery and aged for about 2 to 5 years. While aging practices differ among breweries, the result is typically a sake with more intense flavors and aromas.

**Filtering** For many sakes, a carbon powder is added and the liquid is then run through a filter, removing unwanted flavor elements and any color the sake might have. However, particularly for higher grade sake, this step sometimes removes some of the desirable elements of the sake as well, and is therefore not performed.

**Dilution** Sake typically ferments to around 18% alcohol, and is usually diluted with water to bring that down to 15%. This is done to soften the sake and make it more balanced.

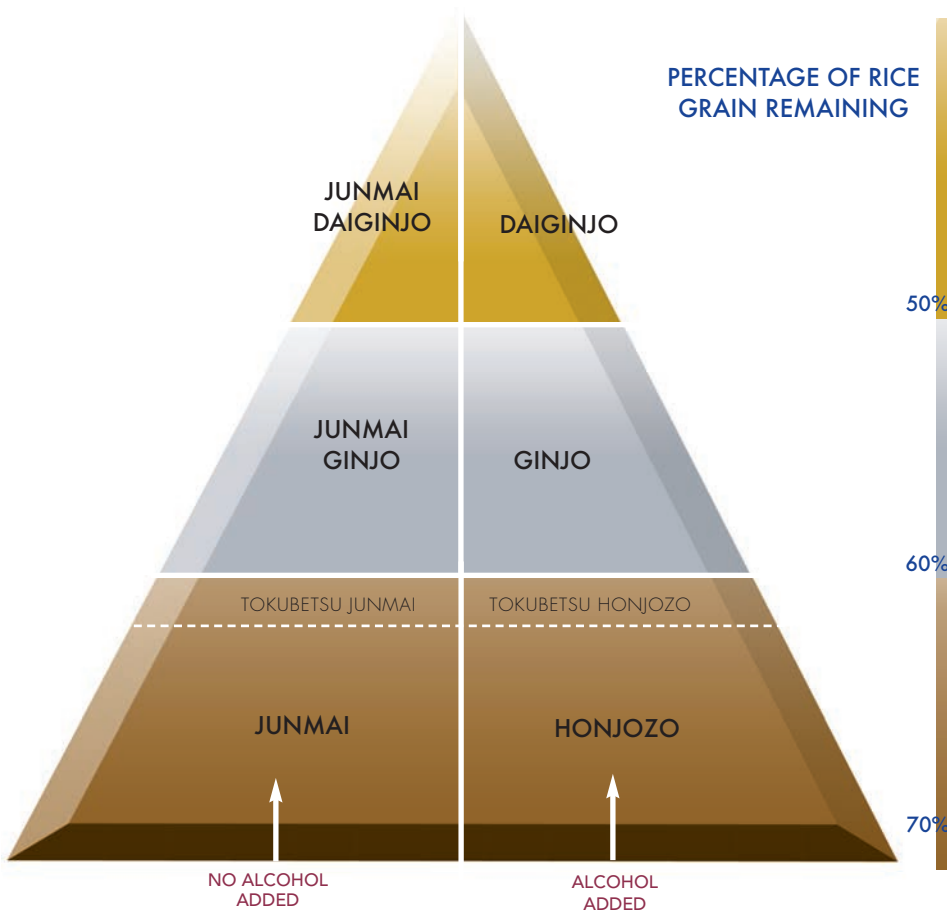
**Genshu:** Sake to which no water is added. It is a heartier style, and contains interesting flavors that are lost in dilution.

**Bottling/Second Pasteurization** Most sake is bottled right before shipping, although as noted before, some sake is also stored in bottle. At this point, it is usually pasteurized again to ensure that the product can withstand shipping conditions.

**Nama:** As opposed to namachozo, which undergoes the final pasteurization, nama sake is left completely unpasteurized.

## Premium Sake Tokutei Meisho-shu

The premium sake category contains eight classifications, although it accounts for only 25% of total sake production in Japan (the other 75% is known as Futsuu-shu, or table sake).



### MILLING PERCENTAGE:

(Measured as percentage of the original grain remaining)

#### Relevant Terms: Daiginjo, Ginjo, Honjozo

All sake is made from milled rice, but premium sake rice is more highly milled, resulting in a lower milling percentage. The more the rice is milled, the more ethereal, complex and fragrant the resulting sake becomes. The classifications refer to a legally required level of milling, and many brewers choose to exceed this amount in order to make an even more refined sake. The requirements are:

#### Daiginjo-50% Ginjo-60% Honjozo-70%

Note that Junmai does not have a requirement associated with it. Thus, junmai sake can be milled to any percentage, although is typically milled to nearly the same level as honjozo.

### TOKUBETSU DESIGNATION

#### Relevant Terms: Tokubetsu Junmai, Tokubetsu Honjozo

Some sakes are labeled as tokubetsu, or special. This simply means that there is something unique about the sake: better rice, higher polishing or just that brewers paid special attention to the batch. The term only applies to the junmai and honjozo classifications. It is similar in concept to a riserva in wine, although it carries no legal requirements.

### ADDITION OF ALCOHOL:

Some sakes have a small amount of brewer's alcohol added to them at the end of fermentation. This further breaks down certain components in the rice and helps pull those flavors into the sake. Because sakes are typically diluted before bottling, these alcohol added sakes do not have a higher overall alcohol level. In fact, they tend to be thinner on the palate and more aromatic, with a linear finish. Sakes to which no alcohol has been added are labeled with the word Junmai, and are typically rounder and creamier. It is important to note that neither style is seen as inherently superior to the other, and many of the finest sakes in Japan have some alcohol added.





## Sake Styles

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While classification can be useful in determining the quality of a sake (particularly within a brewery's lineup), it does not provide too much information about the overall profile of the sake. The only things indicated by classification are milling percentage and whether or not alcohol was added. While both are extremely important, there are many other factors which influence what kind of a product is in the bottle. The variety of rice, type of yeast, water and region can all provide clues as to how the sake will taste. Unfortunately, many of these details are often not included on the bottle. There is, however, one detail that is almost always written on the label, and it is usually even in the name of the sake: style.

Much like with beer, where one is concerned primarily with whether it is a stout, pilsner, lager, etc., the style of a sake is determined by changes to the standard production process. Therefore, a sake with no style indicated (i.e. a "regular" Junmai), employs all the usual production methods. If, however, that same sake was aged for 5 years instead of being released right away, it would become a Junmai Koshu, with Koshu being the style of the sake that indicates an abnormally long aging period. Styles can apply to any of the different classifications, and provide a wealth of information about the likely profile and ideal pairing of the sake. It should also be noted, however, that as opposed to classification, style has no legal implications or requirements. It is merely an attempt by the brewer to provide an indication to consumers about what the sake might taste like, and how it was made.

**These are the most commonly seen styles of sake:**

**Genshu:** Undiluted sake which does not have water added prior to bottling. It is therefore left at the higher alcohol level to which the sake normally brews (around 18-19%), making it suitable to pair with heavier foods or enjoy as an after-dinner drink.



**Nama:** Unpasteurized sake which must be kept refrigerated at all times. It typically has a fresher and livelier palate, with a bolder flavor profile. It is often released seasonally in early spring, immediately following the end of brewing season.



**Nigori:** Sake which is run through a coarser press after fermentation, leaving it slightly cloudy. It is up to the brewer how much rice sediment to leave in, and therefore how thick the sake is. While much Nigori sake is sweet, it can be made quite dry as well.



**Namachozo:** Sake that is stored unpasteurized, then pasteurized once at bottling. It retains some of the freshness of Nama sake, but is much more stable. Often shortened to Namacho.



**Koshu:** Sake which is aged by brewers for anywhere from three to five years. While practices differ greatly among brewers, Koshu sake tends to have more earthy and intense flavors and aromas.



**Yamahai/Kimono:** These terms refer to brewing methods in which the yeast starter is made in a more traditional method in which lactic acid is not added, but rather allowed to develop naturally. The creation of the yeast starter therefore requires both more time and labor. The methods tend to impart gamier, more pronounced flavors to the sake, as well as higher acidity.



## Junmai Honjozo

**JUNMAI SHU** Made with only rice, water and koji mold. The rice used must be polished to at least 70%. Often a full and solid flavor profile, clean and well structured. Note also Tokubetsu Junmai-shu, or “Special Junmai-shu,” which merely indicates more highly polished rice, or the use of very special sake rice.

**HONJOZO SHU** Made with rice, water, koji and a very small amount of pure distilled alcohol (“brewers’ alcohol”) to help extract flavor and aroma. Light, mildly fragrant, easy to drink.

### AMABUKI GINNO KURENAI JUNMAI

**SIZE:** 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$24.99  
**PREFECTURE:** Saga  
**MILLING:** 100%  
**RICE:** Saga No Hana  
**SMV:** +1  
**ALCOHOL:** 15%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
This sake is a revolution in the taste, color and aroma of sake. From the moment of the first unbelievable pour, the special qualities are quite apparent - a beautiful rosé color, coming from the use of ancient black rice, glistens in your wine glass. The flavor is lightly sweet with muted fruit undertones, but it’s the color that will truly draw you in. This is an ideal sake to serve for any celebration, and it makes the perfect gift!



### AMA NO TO HEAVENS DOOR TOKUBETSU JUNMAI

**SIZE:** 300ml | 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$12.67 | \$24.99  
**PREFECTURE:** Akita  
**MILLING:** 55%  
**RICE:** Ginnosei (Organically grown but not certified)  
**SMV:** +4  
**ALCOHOL:** 16.2%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled, room temperature  
With sweet rice aromas surrounded with floral fresh herb spiciness, this slightly dry, medium-bodied sake



has mouthwatering apple flavors with an agreeable earthiness on the mid-palate. Clean and focused on the finish that accentuates its rice-like qualities.

### BLACK DOT HONJOZO

**SIZE:** 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$16.53  
**PREFECTURE:** Aichi Prefecture  
**MILLING:** 65%  
**RICE:** Local Rice  
**SMV:** Confidential  
**ALCOHOL:** 15%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled, room temperature, gently warmed  
A clean pure style of sake, with white mountain flowers on the nose. It has a wonderful clean and soft silky texture. The cleansing acidity also provides good structure and there is a subtle fruitiness with hints of mango, peach and pineapple



### BUSHIDO JUNMAI GENSHU KEG

**SIZE:** 19.5L  
**PRICE:** \$285.00  
**PREFECTURE:** Kyoto  
**MILLING:** 70%  
**RICE:** Koshihikari  
**SMV:** +6.5  
**ALCOHOL:** 18%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Slightly chilled, room temperature, gently warmed  
Bushido Way of the Warrior is an homage to the code of honor and morals developed by the Japanese samurai. This traditional code stresses honor, loyalty, self-discipline, and bravery. Sake on tap is unique, cost-effective, and environmentally friendly. Serve it alone in a variety of on-premise gastropubs and restaurants that go beyond traditional Japanese food, or try it in a sake cocktail. Tropical notes of passionfruit, mango, and peach with hints of white flowers and anise



### DEWATSURU KIMOTO JUNMAI

**SIZE:** 720ml, 1.8L  
**PRICE:** \$17.99 | \$33.99  
**PREFECTURE:** Akita  
**MILLING:** 65%  
**RICE:** Miyamanishiki/Menkoina  
**SMV:** +3



**ALCOHOL:** 14-14.9%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled, room temperature, warmed  
This old-style sake is produced in the original Kimoto brewing method, giving it a great mellow flavor and higher acidity. Its rustic nature allows it to stand up to grilled chicken, soups and fried foods. It is great for serving warm or sipping cold.

### HIDEYOSHI NAMACHO HONJOZO

**SIZE:** 300ml  
**PRICE:** \$9.33  
**PREFECTURE:** Akita  
**MILLING:** 65%  
**RICE:** Menkoina  
**SMV:** +0.5  
**ALCOHOL:** 14-16%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
This once-pasteurized sake is youthful and vibrant, with notes of toasted nut, fresh bread and lychee. Perfect for serving chilled, it matches well with crisp salads and fresh fish.



### HIKO'S SPECIAL TOKUBETSU JUNMAI

**SIZE:** 500ml  
**PRICE:** \$16.67  
**PREFECTURE:** Shiga  
**MILLING:** 65%  
**RICE:** Nihonbare/Tama Zakae  
**SMV:** +3  
**ALCOHOL:** 15%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled, room temperature  
Smooth and full body, beautiful floral notes with a hint of coffee. This sake has been handcrafted using only the finest ingredients: locally grown rice from Shiga called Tama Zakae, spring water from the foothills of Mt. Suzuka and the expertise of the Toji of the famed Nanbu Toji Guild.



### ICHISHIMA SILK DELUXE JUNMAI

**SIZE:** 500ml  
**PRICE:** \$23.75  
**PREFECTURE:** Niigata  
**MILLING:** 65%  
**RICE:** Gohyakumangoku  
**SMV:** -38



## Junmai Honjozo

(continued)

**ALCOHOL:** 10%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
Silk in a bottle, this sake is light and energetic. Its mild sweetness is well-integrated with good acidity. Refreshing notes of honeydew melon and cucumber make it an ideal sake to sip chilled, or even serve in cocktails.



### KAREN COY JUNMAI

**SIZE:** 500ml

**PRICE:** \$21.99

**PREFECTURE:** Niigata

**MILLING:** 65%

**RICE:** Gohyakumangoku

**SMV:** -23

**ALCOHOL:** 10-11%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
Aromas of lychee, apple, strawberry. Complex, sweet with good acidity.



### KATAFUNE TOKUBETSU HONJOZO

**SIZE:** 720ml

**PRICE:** \$22.50

**PREFECTURE:** Niigata

**MILLING:** 65%

**RICE:** Koshi Tanrei

**SMV:** -3

**ALCOHOL:** 15.5%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Slightly chilled, room temperature, luke-warm  
Round, mellow, off-dry, clean finish. This is the pinnacle of uma-kuchi (umami-rich) honjozo sake made by Takeda Shuzoten, a boutique sake house in the south-western part of Niigata Prefecture



### KIKUSUI FUNAGUCHI NAMAGENSU HONJOZO

**SIZE:** 200ml

**PRICE:** \$6.33

**PREFECTURE:** Niigata

**MILLING:** 55%

**RICE:** Gohyakumangoku

**SMV:** -4

**ALCOHOL:** 19%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
Since Funaguchi's birth in the 47th year of the Showa period (1976), it has become beloved all over Japan, popular for home and restaurant consumption. Full-bodied, and full of the fresh flavor of ripe fruits. Pop open an ice-cold Funaguchi to experience one of Japan's most popular and unique offerings for yourself



### KIKUSUI KARAKUCHI HONJOZO

**SIZE:** 720ml

**PRICE:** \$18.67

**PREFECTURE:** Niigata

**MILLING:** 70%

**RICE:** Gohyakumangoku

**SMV:** +7

**ALCOHOL:** 15%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled, room temperature, warmed

A sip of this sake brings the same intensity, dryness and clarity as that of a crisp wind. This palate cleansing quality and a hidden but ever-present umami make this brew the Kikusui Sake Company's most highly recommended sake to enjoy with food. A fun suggestion is to experience this sake anew with the passing of each season - try chilling the sake in summer, warming it in winter, and matching it to a wide berth of your favorite seasonal dishes.



### KIRINZAN CLASSIC

**SIZE:** 180ml, 300ml, 720ml, 1800ml

**PRICE:** \$6.33 | \$9.67 | \$16.67 | \$28.99

**PREFECTURE:** Niigata

**MILLING:** 65%

**RICE:** Gohyakumangoku & Koshiibuki

**SMV:** +6

**ALCOHOL:** 15%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Slightly chilled, room temperature, luke-warm  
Kirinzan Shuzo is located near Mt. Kirin (= Kirin-zan) in Tsugawa, Niigata. Kirin is a mythical creature much like a flying unicorn, is believed to bring about happiness and luck. Dry, clean, light and well-refined. This is a representative of the Tanrei Karakuchi sake made in Niigata, the heartland of Japanese premium sake production.



### KIRINZAN JUNMAI

**SIZE:** 720ml

**PRICE:** \$26.67

**PREFECTURE:** Niigata

**MILLING:** 60%

**RICE:** Gohyakumangoku/Yukinosei

**SMV:** +4

**ALCOHOL:** 15-16%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
Pure and clean. Dry but loaded flavors of herbs, melon, apple, anise and musky, earthy tones all rolled into one.



### KO'S HANA TOKUBETSU JUNMAI

**SIZE:** 300ml

**PRICE:** \$9.99

**PREFECTURE:** Shiga

**MILLING:** 60%

**RICE:** Gohyakumangoku/Nihonbare

**SMV:** -6

**ALCOHOL:** 15%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled, room temperature

Delicately balanced with aromas of golden delicious jasmine flower and hints of mineral, earthy notes combined with creamy marshmallow and bubblegum like flavors.



### KO'S JUN JUNMAI

**SIZE:** 300ml

**PRICE:** \$24.99

**PREFECTURE:** Shiga

**MILLING:** 60%

**RICE:** Nihonbare

**SMV:** +3

**ALCOHOL:** 15%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Cold, room temperature.

Beautiful aromas of summer stream, rain and wet stone. Rich and subtle herbal flavors with notes of young bamboo leaf and jasmine. Jun has a smooth, medium finish.



### MANOTSURU CRANE JUNMAI

**SIZE:** 300ml

**PRICE:** \$9.99

**PREFECTURE:** Niigata

**MILLING:** 65%

**RICE:** Koshiibuki

**SMV:** +8

**ALCOHOL:** 15%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
The red crane is a symbol of good luck. This is a junmai sake, which means it is pure rice sake (no alcohol was added). An elegant, slightly earthy sake with notes of stone fruit, pistachios, and white chocolate. Please drink this sake chilled or at room temperature. A great all-around sake, it goes well with a wide range of foods.



### MANOTSURU DEMON SLAYER HONJOZO

**SIZE:** 300ml

**PRICE:** \$10.33

**PREFECTURE:** Niigata

**MILLING:** 65%

**RICE:** Gohyakumangoku & Koshiibuki

**SMV:** +15

**ALCOHOL:** 15%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
This is an Onikoroshi ("Demon Slayer") sake, which means it is very dry. Medium-bodied sake with tantalizing fruit flavors and a pleasant nuttiness on the mid-palate. Hints of mineral on the very dry finish. Best served slightly chilled and is wonderful with all types of meat.



**MATSUNOI TOKUBETSU HONJOZO**

**SIZE:** 300ml, 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$13.33 | \$21.33  
**PREFECTURE:** Niigata  
**MILLING :** 58%  
**RICE:** Gohyakumangoku/Yukinosei  
**SMV:** +5  
**ALCOHOL:** 15-16%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled, room temperature  
Aromas of peach, almond, and hazelnut. Crisp, nutty and dry.



**MIDORIKAWA JUNMAI**

**SIZE:** 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$24.99  
**PREFECTURE:** Niigata  
**MILLING:** 60%  
**RICE:** Gohyaku-man-goku, Koshi-ibuki, Hokuriku #12  
**SMV:** +4  
**ALCOHOL:** 15-16%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
Clean, smooth, and gracious. Mild and refreshing acidity. Elegant aroma. Subtle nose of melon and ginger. All of the elements are well-balanced.



**MINATO HARBOR YAMAHAI NAMAGENSU**

**SIZE:** 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$23.99  
**PREFECTURE:** Akita  
**MILLING:** 67%  
**RICE:** Miyama Nishiki  
**SMV:** +1  
**ALCOHOL:** 21%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
Undiluted and unpasteurized, this bold sake has intense yeasty aromas with strong notes of mushroom. Its robust flavors allow it to pair with heartier foods. It can also be poured as an after-dinner sake



**SHIRAKABEGURA TOKUBETSU JUNMAI**

**SIZE:** 300ml, 720ml, 1.8L  
**PRICE:** \$9.99 | \$18.33 | \$29.33  
**PREFECTURE:**

**MILLING:** 60%  
**RICE:** Gohyakumangoku  
**SMV:** +2  
**ALCOHOL:** 15%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled, room temperature, warmed  
Brewed with the renowned miyamizu waters, this sake displays pear and nutmeg aromas with flavors of green apple. The taste is thick and mellow with great aroma and flavor of rice.



**SUIGEI DRUNKEN WHALE TOKUBETSU JUNMAI**

**SIZE:** 300ml, 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$13.33 | \$20.67  
**PREFECTURE:** Kochi  
**MILLING:** 55%  
**RICE:** Akitsuho  
**SMV:** +7  
**ALCOHOL:** 15-16%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
Reserved aroma, gentle rice notes, perfect acidity and a fine finish combine to create the unique flavor profile of Suigei Tokubetsu Junmai. Chilling creates a freshness that is quite pairable with many dishes, but warming it reveals a wide reverberating breadth of flavor and harmony.



**TAKATENJIN SWORD OF THE SUN TOKUBETSU HONJOZO**

**SIZE:** 300ml, 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$11.33 | \$21.99  
**PREFECTURE:** Shizuoka  
**MILLING:**  
**RICE:** Yamada Nishiki/Haenuki  
**SMV:** +4  
**ALCOHOL:** 15.5%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
Melon, pear, and banana drive the aromas and combine with a subtle sweet touch highlighted by a subdued acidity in the butter-tinged flavor. Great depth and plenty of complexity.



**TENTAKA KUNI HAWK IN THE HEAVENS TOKUBETSU JUNMAI**

**SIZE:** 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$22.67  
**PREFECTURE:** Tochigi  
**MILLING:** 55%  
**RICE:** +3  
**ALCOHOL:** 15.6%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled, room temperature  
With slightly yeasty notes and

roasted walnut aromas, this well-rounded sake has a rich mouthfeel. Dry and crisp, the flavors are dominated by mixed nuts, fresh cut green grass and other earthier flavors. Medium-bodied, with a lengthy and dry finish. The sturdy, earthy flavors and firm acidity pair well with hearty grains, mushrooms, beef, or lamb dishes.



**TENTAKA ORGANIKA JUNMAI**

**SIZE:** 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$26.33  
**PREFECTURE:** Tochigi  
**MILLING:** 65%  
**RICE:** Organic Gohyakumangoku  
**SMV:** +7  
**ALCOHOL:** 15.3%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Slightly chilled, room temperature, warm  
Tentaka Organika is one of the few organic sakes produced in Japan. The area's natural underground springs provide Tentaka with a pure, fresh water source, which is also triple-filtered. This region, surrounded by three pristine rivers and picturesque mountains, has largely managed to avoid tourism which adds to the peaceful atmosphere. Clean, dry, and straightforward, with bright banana and mild melon aromas and soft, subdued rice flavors. Try with Brussels sprouts, butternut squash, and chestnut risotto or rabbit and shiitake terrine



**TOZAI LIVING JEWEL JUNMAI**

**SIZE:** 300ml, 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$7.99 | \$13.99  
**PREFECTURE:** Kyoto  
**MILLING:** 70%  
**RICE:** Koshihikari  
**SMV:** +6.5  
**ALCOHOL:** 14.9%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Cold, room temperature, slightly warmed  
The aromas of white grape, anise, and a hint of sweet rice are quite-complex. These same flavors come rushing through the medium-bodied palate which has a slightly creamy texture followed by a hint of white pepper and fresh herbal notes. The long, clean finish makes this a great sipping sake as well as a companion to a wide range of foods, from fish and shellfish to pork and light meats.

## Junmai Honjozo

(continued)



### TOZAI TYPHOON

**SIZE:** 720ml, 1.8L

**PRICE:** \$10.67 | \$23.99

**PREFECTURE:** Kyoto

**MILLING:** 70%

**RICE:** Local table rice

**SMV:** +1

**ALCOHOL:** 14.9%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled, room temperature, gently warmed  
Caramel, dried lemon rind, overripe apple and flowers with a soft, light body and yeasty, nutty, tea like flavors on the finish



### YAMATO SHIZUKU KIMOTO JUNMAI

**SIZE:** 720ml

**PRICE:** \$22.33

**PREFECTURE:** Akita

**MILLING:** 60%

**RICE:** Miyamanishiki

**SMV:** +5

**ALCOHOL:** 16%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled, room temperature, warmed

While this sake is being made, the steamed rice is mashed by hand painstakingly and with enormous care - such is the Kimoto brewing method. From this very traditional and laborious style of brewing, a uniquely umami-rich yet delicate and silky sake is born. The deep-flavored Junmai sake has highlights of bright acidity, and if heated gently, one can taste the rarer, more interesting traits clearly.



### YUHO ETERNAL EMBERS JUNMAI

**SIZE:** 720ml

**PRICE:** \$22.33

**PREFECTURE:** Ishikawa

**MILLING:** 55%

**RICE:** Notohikari

**SMV:** +6

**ALCOHOL:** 16%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Slightly chilled, room temperature, warm  
Raisin notes with touches of grainy nuttiness spread wide on the palate, then progress smoothly into the finish. A major trademark of this Yuho sake is that there is lots of umami without being cloying. A great sake to try warmed as well as slightly chilled. Pair with miso-glazed scallops on squid ink spaghetti, soba with Swiss chard miso pesto, or roast pork tenderloin with cilantro date relish.



### YUKI OTOKO JUNMAI

**SIZE:** 180ml, 720ml

**PRICE:** \$7.33 | \$22.67

**PREFECTURE:** Niigata

**MILLING:** 60%

**RICE:** Miyama Nishiki

**SMV:** +12

**ALCOHOL:** 15.5%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Slightly chilled, room temperature, warmed luke-warm.

Produced by Aoki Shuzo (est. 1717) in Niigata. Selected as one of "The Wonder 500" by Japanese Government in August 2015. Clean, bone dry, and well-refined. Serve chilled or warm. Yuki Otoko, bigfoot/yeti of Japan, is illustrated as a large hairy humanlike creature by Suzuki Bokushi in his masterpiece, Hokuetsu Seppu, the early 19th-century topographic essay on the life of the snowy southern Niigata region, where the brewery is located. It is written that Y.O. has helped travelers carry their loads and guided them through mountain trails. The brewery donates part of their proceeds to support local rescue activities.



### YUKI OTOKO YETI HONJOZO

**SIZE:** 300ml, 720ml, 1.8L

**PRICE:** \$11.99/\$18.99/\$37.33

**PREFECTURE:** Niigata

**MILLING:** 65%

**RICE:** Gohyaku-man-goku & Koshi Ibuki

**SMV:** +8.5

**ALCOHOL:** 15.5%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled, at room temperature, or warm  
Produced by Aoki Shuzo (est. 1717) in Niigata. Selected as one of "The Wonder 500" by Japanese Government in August 2015. Dry, clean, & light with hints of umami and sweetness. Smooth & refreshing like melting snow. Yuki Otoko, bigfoot/yeti of Japan, is illustrated as a large hairy humanlike creature by Suzuki Bokushi in his masterpiece, Hokuetsu Seppu, the early 19th-century topographic essay on the life of the snowy southern Niigata region, where the brewery is located. It is written that Y.O. has helped travelers carry their loads and guided them through mountain trails. The brewery donates part of their proceeds to support local rescue activities.



### YUKIKAGE SNOW SHADOW TOKUBETSU JUNMAI

**SIZE:** 300ml, 720ml

**PRICE:** \$13.99 | \$21.67

**PREFECTURE:** Niigata

**MILLING:** 58%

**RICE:** Gohyakumangoku/Koshi-Ibuki

**SMV:** +4

**ALCOHOL:** 14/15%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
Thanks to fermentation with the s-3 yeast and lower alcohol content, this sake has a light, soft, smooth taste and light fruity aroma of apple marzipan. Soft, light bodied and long finish.





## Junmai Ginjo/Ginjo

**JUNMAI GINJO-SHU** Brewed with labor-intensive steps, eschewing machinery for traditional tools and methods, using highly polished rice (at least 60%) and fermented at colder temperatures for longer periods of time. Light, fruity, refined.

**GINJO-SHU** Brewed with labor-intensive steps, eschewing machinery for traditional tools and methods, using highly polished rice (at least 60%) and fermented at colder temperatures for longer periods of time. Light, aromatic, fruity, and refined.

### AMABUKI STRAWBERRY NAMA GENSU JUNMAI GINJO

**SIZE:** 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$25.33  
**PREFECTURE:** Saga  
**MILLING:** 55%  
**RICE:** Omachi  
**SMV:** +1  
**ALCOHOL:** 16%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled, room temperature  
Strawberry flower sake yeast is used to give this sake a uniquely refreshing sweetness and fruitiness that is indeed reminiscent of plump, ripe strawberries. Luscious bottle loaded with new and interesting flavor

### CHIYONOSO SACRED POWER JUNMAI GINJO

**SIZE:** 300ml, 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$15.33 | \$30.67  
**PREFECTURE:** Kumamoto  
**MILLING:** 55%  
**RICE:** Shinriki  
**SMV:** +2.5  
**ALCOHOL:** 15.9%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
Rich, full flavored with fresh-cut green grass aromas and hints of tropical fruits with cantaloupe. The mouth feel is silky with mango and baked pear flavors and suggestions of crème brûlée, with excellent acidity leading the way to the finish.



### DEWATSURU SAKURA EMAKI ROSE

**SIZE:** 360ml  
**PRICE:** \$12.67  
**PREFECTURE:** Akita  
**MILLING:** 60%  
**RICE:** Asamurasaki&Okunomurasaki  
**SMV:** -24  
**ALCOHOL:** 11.5%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled

In the romantic snow country of Akita Japan, just 5 minutes from Akita Seishu Brewery, in Daisen is the ancient ruins of Hotta No Saku, an active fort built for the Yamato Imperial Court in the Heian Era, 792-1185AD. When it was excavated, 1000 year old "Murasaki Mai," 'purple rice grains' from faraway lands in southeast Asia were found. These grains were the origins of purple rice strains developed over a millennium to grow in northern regions. In 1996 the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries along with the Association for the Revitalization of ancient rice petitioned Akita Seishu brewery to craft sake made with this ancient heirloom purple rice strains. Honored and inspired, Mr. Ito challenged his master sake brewers to capture the magnificent cherry-blossom-blush of color of this ancient rice. So Sakura Emaki came to be. Sakura means cherry blossom and refers to the beautiful flower, so emblematic of Japan, while Emaki refers to the illustrated scrolls on which the first ever novel The Tales of Genji were written and preserved. Enjoy a bottle of this unique sake and write your own great tale. Kanpai!



### ENTER.SILVER JUNMAI GINJO

**SIZE:** 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$25.67  
**PREFECTURE:** Aichi  
**MILLING:** 55%  
**RICE:** Mineharuka  
**SMV:** N/A  
**ALCOHOL:** 14.9%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
ENTER.Sake Silver is an aromatic Ginjo sake with honeysuckle on the

nose and floral notes of cherry blossoms. Has good weight on the palate with notes of mango, Asian pear, and honeydew melon. Finishes clean and smooth.



### FUKUCHO MOON ON WATER JUNMAI GINJO

**SIZE:** 300ml, 720ml  
**PRICE:** 300ml | \$13.99, 720ml | \$28.67  
**PREFECTURE:** Hiroshima  
**MILLING:** 55%  
**RICE:** Yamada Nishiki & Hatta Nishiki  
**SMV:** +3  
**ALCOHOL:** 16.5%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
The fruity nose of lime and melon is pressed to the forefront with bold hints of fennel, white pepper and allspice. The flavors gravitate to ripe cantaloupe and black licorice while the minerality from the soft water is evident in the finish. The slightly sweet and clean mid-palate finishes dry



### HAKKAISAN JUNMAI GINJO

**SIZE:** 300ml, 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$17.99 | \$33.33  
**PREFECTURE:** Niigata  
**MILLING:** 50%  
**RICE:** Gohyakumangoku, Miyama Nishiki  
**SMV:** +4  
**ALCOHOL:** 15.5%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
The rice and polishing ratio are all up to Daiginjo standards, however the sake is presented as Hakkaisan's signature Junmai Ginjo label. Has a delicate Ginjo aroma and a fine, crisp mouthfeel, with clean aftertaste and a strong reverent finish



### HIKO'S RESERVE JUNMAI GINJO

**SIZE:** 500ml  
**PRICE:** \$18.67  
**PREFECTURE:** Shiga  
**MILLING:** 60%  
**RICE:** Tama Sakae  
**SMV:** +3  
**ALCOHOL:** 15%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
Wonderful rich, fruity essence of banana and spices, finishing with a lovely and lengthy finish.

## Junmai Ginjo/Ginjo

(continued)



### KAKUREI JUNMAI GINJO

**SIZE:** 300ml, 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$14.99/\$28.33  
**PREFECTURE:** Niigata  
**MILLING:** 55%  
**RICE:** Koshi Tanrei  
**SMV:** +2.5

**ALCOHOL:** 15%-16%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled or slightly warm.

Aoki Shuzo is in the Minami-Uonuma district, which is well known as the best appellation for the cultivation of the most popular table rice Koshi Hikari. Slightly aromatic, lightly floral, hints of banana & pear. Soft clean finish



### KANBARA BRIDE OF THE FOX JUNMAI GINJO

**SIZE:** 300ml, 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$13.33 | \$25.99  
**PREFECTURE:** Niigata  
**MILLING:** 50%  
**RICE:** Gohyakumangoku  
**SMV:** +3

**ALCOHOL:** 16.5%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
Enjoy intense aromas of grilled nuts, pistachio, and a hint of white chocolate. Flavors of nuts and ripe honeydew explode at the front and finishes crisp with a hint of lingering sweetness. Try with Mandarin glazed duck, fig-stuffed pork loin, braised beef short ribs, or black cod with sweet miso glaze



### KIKUSUI BLUE JUNMAI GINJO

**SIZE:** 300ml, 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$10.33 | \$25.99  
**PREFECTURE:** Niigata  
**MILLING:** 55%  
**RICE:** Gohyakumangoku  
**SMV:** +2

**ALCOHOL:** 15%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
The clear nectar contained in this gorgeous blue bottle will impress upon you a gentle, fruity aroma and a light dry finish. A charming aspect is that that it draws out the inner flavors of accompanying dishes, however there is no single style of cuisine with which it absolutely must be paired. A fine choice for restaurants and beginners to sake



### KIKUSUI FUNAGUCHI AGED GINJO

**SIZE:** 200ml  
**PRICE:** \$6.33  
**PREFECTURE:** Niigata  
**MILLING:** 55%  
**RICE:** Gohyakumangoku  
**SMV:** -4

**ALCOHOL:** 19%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
Tempted by the irresistible notion that their flagship canned "Funaguchi" sake would be delicious if aged, Kikusui's development team pooled their efforts and created this Aged Unpasteurized Sake! As time passes in the cold Kikusui cellars, the active enzymes in the sake elevate the already present richness to new levels - the little red can has a hard time holding all the flavor in! Boasting 19% ABV, gorgeous floral aromatics, strong flavor and personality, this full-bodied sake is great at dinner-time or cocktail hour. For fun times and comfortable afternoons.



### KIKUSUI ORGANIC JUNMAI GINJO

**SIZE:** 300ml  
**PRICE:** \$15.33  
**PREFECTURE:** Niigata  
**MILLING:** 55%  
**RICE:** USA Certified Organic Akita Komachi  
**SMV:** +2

**ALCOHOL:** 15%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
Kikusui Organic Junmai Ginjo, inspected and certified by the infamously harsh scrutiny of the National Organic Program, carries itself with a quiet dryness and a respectful disposition. The front of the nose is reminiscent of ripened bananas, blending well with an understated honeydew flavor on the palate. Enjoyable chilled, and a pleasure to pair with light fare, as the quiet and amiable personality of this sake will not hinder the seasoning of your meal.



### KIMINOI EMPEROR'S WELL YAMAHAI JUNMAI GINJO

**SIZE:** 300ml, 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$16.67 | \$29.99  
**PREFECTURE:** Niigata  
**MILLING:** 58%  
**RICE:** Gohyakumangoku

**SMV:** +2  
**ALCOHOL:** 15%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled, room temperature, gently warmed  
This sake is produced by a traditional time-consuming method for preparing yeast starter called "Yamahai", which gives elusive "Umami" or richness and fullness of the flavor. Rich aromas, complex flavors, and elegant clean finish.



### KIRINZAN JUNMAI GINJO

**SIZE:** 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$36.67  
**PREFECTURE:** Niigata  
**MILLING:** 55%  
**RICE:** Gohyakumangoku  
**SMV:** +4

**ALCOHOL:** 15%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
This sake is characterized by faint Ginjo aroma and its full-bodied flavor. Its specialty is a balance of excellent flavor and aroma and a soft feel to the lips when imbibed.



### KUBOTA KOUJU JUNMAI GINJO

**SIZE:** 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$29.33  
**PREFECTURE:** Niigata  
**MILLING:** 55%  
**RICE:** Gohyakumangoku  
**SMV:** +2

**ALCOHOL:** 15%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
Has a gentle aroma and a semi-sweet acidity that evolves in your mouth. Notes of grain and flowers, with excellent umami. Most enjoyable chilled, but can be great warmed as well.



### KUBOTA SENJU GINJO

**SIZE:** 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$22.67  
**PREFECTURE:** Niigata  
**MILLING:** 50%  
**RICE:** Gohyakumangoku  
**SMV:** +5

**ALCOHOL:** 15%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
Aiming for a Sake that can be enjoyed with a meal, Kubota Senju boasts a modest bouquet and a timeless flavor that one does not tire of drinking. Velvety mouthfeel and excellent chilled, but quite this Ginjo is quite amicable to being enjoyed warmed as well.

**MANABITO GINJO**

**SIZE:** 720ml, 1.8L  
**PRICE:** \$19.33 | \$36.67  
**PREFECTURE:** Akita  
**MILLING:** 60%  
**RICE:** Gin No Sei  
**SMV:** +3

**ALCOHOL:** 15%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
 Clean, Crisp, Refreshing! Its dry entry has a slight zest of grapefruit. Opens to reveal white stone fruits—nectarine or peach. A tease of white chocolate gives a surprising finish. Its unique character envelops a wide range of pairings that will bring out the best in everyday foods.

**NANBU BIJIN SOUTHERN BEAUTY JUNMAI GINJO**

**SIZE:** 300ml, 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$13.99 | \$27.33  
**PREFECTURE:** Iwate  
**MILLING:** 50%  
**RICE:** Ginginga  
**SMV:** +1

**ALCOHOL:** 16%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
 The explosive nose of this medium-bodied sake exhibits a slight wood spice and floral aromas that quickly move towards apple compote and lively citrus notes akin to lime rind. From green fruit flavors upfront to a creamy mid-palate with some super ripe cantaloupe and honeydew, the mild acidity allows the minerality to exert itself on the finish.

**OZE NO YUKIDOKE OMACHI JUNMAI GINJO**

**SIZE:** 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$29.99  
**PREFECTURE:** Gunma  
**MILLING:** 55%  
**RICE:** Omachi  
**SMV:** +5  
**ALCOHOL:** 17%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
 The rice used in this sake is the grandfather of all sake rice - Omachi. This lends more defined and complex flavor characteristics and adds more of an earthy quality. It has a plush umami and a crisp finish. It is an ideal match for many dishes.

**RIHAKU WONDERING POET JUNMAI GINJO**

**SIZE:** 300ml, 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$13.33 | \$26.67  
**PREFECTURE:** Shimane  
**MILLING:** 55%  
**RICE:** Yamada Nishiki  
**SMV:** +3

**ALCOHOL:** 15.2%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
 This well-rounded sake with notes of banana and very-ripe honeydew aroma has clean, crisp acidity that highlights its light-to-medium body. The lingering finish moves from juicy fruitiness to green, herbal notes making it a great food companion.

**TENSEI SONG OF THE SEA JUNMAI GINJO**

**SIZE:** 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$29.33  
**PREFECTURE:** Kanagawa  
**MILLING:** 50%  
**RICE:** Yamada Nishiki & Gohyakumangoku  
**SMV:** +3.5

**ALCOHOL:** 16%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Slightly chilled, room temperature, warm  
 A rare opportunity to try sake made with Yeast #9 sourced from the brewery that discovered it. The result is lively and intense flavors of saltwater taffy salinity that evokes memories of the beach. Song of the Sea is an ode to the brewery's seaside location in Kanagawa. A medley of apple, banana, and melon lead the aromas and carry through on the palate. Intense throughout with a crisp, clean finish.

**TOZAI WELL OF WISDOM GINJO**

**SIZE:** 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$18.67  
**PREFECTURE:** Osaka  
**MILLING:** 60%  
**RICE:** Gohyakumangoku/Nihonbare  
**SMV:** +5.5  
**ALCOHOL:** 14.9%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
 Aromas of peach and powdered sugar. The flavors head toward apricot, peach skin, and a touch of anise. This medium bodied sake presents a unique combination of a dry, crisp sake that also has amazing complexity of flavor.

**Junmai Daiginjo/Daiginjo**

**JUNMAI DAIGINJO-SHU** A subclass of junmai ginjo-shu, brewed with very highly polished rice (to at least 50%) and even more precise and labor intensive methods. The pinnacle of the brewers' art. Generally light, complex and fragrant.

**DAIGINJO-SHU** A subclass of ginjo-shu below, brewed with very highly polished rice (to at least 50%) and even more precise and labor intensive methods. The pinnacle of the brewers' art. Generally light, complex and quite fragrant.

**BORN GOLD JUNMAI DAIGINJO**

**SIZE:** 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$27.33  
**PREFECTURE:** Fukui  
**MILLING:** 50%  
**RICE:** Yamada Nishiki  
**SMV:** +1

**ALCOHOL:** 15%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
 This Muroka Junmai Daiginjo is stored unpasteurized in -10° C after brewing, and is pasteurized only once immediately before shipping. The absence of carbon filtration (aka, Muroka) leads to a large presence of flavor and a lively aroma.

**BORN MUROKA NAMAGENSHU JUNMAI DAIGINJO**

**SIZE:** 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$41.67  
**PREFECTURE:** Fukui  
**MILLING:** 50%  
**RICE:** Yamada Nishiki  
**SMV:** +4  
**ALCOHOL:** 17%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
 Matured for one year at -10° C. The nose on this unpasteurized Daiginjo is made up of rose pedals, cooked banana and tropical fruit. This is a really plump and viscous Nama that is both smooth and soft. There are a ton of ripe flavors to choose from honeydew melon, to a sweet fruit compote, to honeycomb.

## Junmai Daiginjo/Daiginjo

(continued)



### CHOKAISAN JUNMAI DAIGINJO

**SIZE:** 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$32.67  
**PREFECTURE:** Akita  
**MILLING:** 50%  
**RICE:** Miyama Nishiki  
**SMV:** +1  
**ALCOHOL:** 15%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled

A unique yeast derived from flowers gives this exceptionally elegant sake a pronounced floral bouquet. Tones of licorice and fresh herbs, coupled with a hint of Asian pear, make this a perfect example of everything Junmai Daiginjo has to offer. Serve as an aperitif, or with salads and lighter fare



### DASSAI 23 JUNMAI DAIGINJO

**SIZE:** 300ml, 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$39.99 | \$84.67  
**PREFECTURE:** Yamagata  
**MILLING:** 23%  
**RICE:** Yamada Nishiki  
**SMV:** +4  
**ALCOHOL:** 15%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled

This Junmai Daiginjo was born from a single challenge - polishing Yamada Nishiki to the limit of limits - 23% remaining of the original rice grain. The nose presents an irresistibly elegant flowery bouquet with a soft, delicate, honey-like sweetness, and the flavor blooms exquisitely in your mouth. The long finish is a gentle waterfall of flavor that hits the center of your palate and dissipates into bliss-like mists, begging for another sip



### DASSAI 50 JUNMAI DAIGINJO

**SIZE:** 300ml, 720ml, 1.8L  
**PRICE:** \$11.67 | \$27.67 | \$52.67  
**PREFECTURE:** Yamagata  
**MILLING:** 50%  
**RICE:** Yamada Nishiki  
**SMV:** +3  
**ALCOHOL:** 15%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled, room temperature

A refreshing, engaging, round flavor are what make the full-bodied Dassai 50 such a popular, well-known, and delicious sake to experts and consumers in Japan and overseas. Excel-

lent with food or alone, and delicious at all temperatures. A Junmai Daiginjo suitable for daily consumption for a very reasonable price.



### DASSAI BEYOND JUNMAI DAIGINJO

**SIZE:** 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$475.00  
**PREFECTURE:** Yamaguchi  
**MILLING:** Less than 23%  
**RICE:** Yamada Nishiki  
**SMV:**

**ALCOHOL:** 16%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled, room temperature

The concept behind this sake is "To make something Beyond the limit of 23%". This concept came to them about 10 years ago, and for the past 4 years went through 8 tanks until the last brought them to a breakthrough. They do not want people to think that because the rice polishing ratio is high it is good sake, and hope that drinkers can concentrate on the flavor. About that flavor, they went through various trials to create a beautiful, delicate elegance. Their goal was, at the moment the sake meets the mouth, that the umami of the sake spreads throughout you, with richness, depth. We use the same specs as 23%, however Beyond.



### ENTER.REVOLUTIONS JUNMAI DAIGINJO

**SIZE:** 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$89.99  
**PREFECTURE:** Yamaguchi  
**MILLING:** 23%  
**RICE:** Yamada Nishiki  
**SMV:** N/A  
**ALCOHOL:** 16%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled

ENTER.SAKE REVOLUTIONS is finished by spinning in a centrifuge press similar to a record turntable. As the sake is slowly spun, the centrifugal force gently presses the sake yielding some of the smoothest sake possible. This sake begins with a graceful, elegant aroma and finishes delicately sweet and smooth. There are wonderful tropical notes of pineapple, ginger, and green melon on the palate that finishes completely dry with slight minerality



### GINGA SHIZUKU DIVINE DROPLETS JUNMAI DAIGINJO

**SIZE:** 300ml, 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$23.99 | \$48.67  
**PREFECTURE:** Hokkaido  
**MILLING:** 50%  
**RICE:** Yamada Nishiki  
**SMV:** +3  
**ALCOHOL:** 15.6%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled

This sake is drip-pressed (shizuku), a rarity by itself, and it is the only sake in the world drip-pressed in an ice igloo which is rebuilt every year. Inside, the temperature remains about 28° F with 90% humidity and no unwanted bacteria cannot survive in these conditions, allowing them to make the cleanest, most pure ultra-premium sake possible. Truly the "Rolls-Royce" of sake. Spice, minerality, and banana skin dominate the aroma profile of this shizuku pressed sake. Medium-bodied with a clean impact. Melons, herbs, vanilla essence and concentrated mineral flavors keep the sake focused well into its long, ethereal finish.



### HAKURYU WHITE DRAGON DAIGINJO

**SIZE:** 300ml  
**PRICE:** \$27.33  
**PREFECTURE:** Niigata  
**MILLING:** 40%  
**RICE:** Yamada Nishiki and Takane Nishiki  
**SMV:** +4  
**ALCOHOL:** 16%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled

Light fruity and super smooth, this sake is one of Niigata's finest. Enjoy this with lighter fare such as sashimi and other raw fish. Just a fantastic example of the light style of Niigata brewing



### HIDEYOSHI FLYING PEGASUS DAIGINJO KOSHU

**SIZE:** 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$139.99  
**PREFECTURE:** Akita  
**MILLING:** 40%  
**RICE:** Yamada Nishiki  
**SMV:** +4.5  
**ALCOHOL:** 15%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled, room temperature

Very rare, limited-edition, koshu (aged) sake. An exquisite blend of

3,5 and 8 year old, ultra-premium sake, meticulously aged to retain crystal clarity and elegant aroma. Flying Pegasus is indeed other-worldly! Elegant aromas of mushrooms, dates and fig on the nose; glide rich and satiny smooth on the palate. Pours like liquid diamonds!



**KATSUYAMA DEN JUNMAI DAIGINJO**

**SIZE:** 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$85.67  
**PREFECTURE:** Miyagi  
**MILLING:** 35%  
**RICE:** Yamada Nishiki  
**SMV:** +1  
**ALCOHOL:** 16%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled, room temperature  
 Brewed with a traditional sake brewing method, Den features a fruity aroma and distinct rich flavors. This sake has the true characteristics of a Junmai Daiginjo. Its crisp and clean umami stands out clearly and lingers as a distinctly mouthwatering aftertaste. It is an excellent choice to pair with tuna and salmon sushi/sashimi. It also goes well with meat and meat dishes prepared in both Japanese and western style. Den means "tradition," referring to the traditional way this sake is brewed. The name Den also can mean "to convey" thoughts and feelings.



**KIKUSUI SAKAMAI JUNMAI DAIGINJO**

**SIZE:** 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$41.67  
**PREFECTURE:** Niigata  
**MILLING:** 40%  
**RICE:** Kikusui  
**SMV:** +3  
**ALCOHOL:** 15%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
 Kikusui sake rice (father of the renowned Gohyakumangoku sake rice) had been all but lost to the world for half a century... that is until Kikusui Sake Company stepped in. They spearheaded the effort to revive this ancient strain from only 25 grains, and now attempt to pay homage to its legacy of elegance. After they gently and methodically polished away the outer 60% of the rice grains, their brewers set to work and were rewarded with a pure, mellow aroma. The flavor is affable and

light, and carries itself deliberately over the pallet. It is bolstered by the complexities and natural dryness brought to the table by the ancient Kikusui sake rice. Enjoy slightly chilled for a rare drinking experience



**KIRINZAN JUNMAI DAIGINJO**

**SIZE:** 720ml, 1.8L  
**PRICE:** \$57.99 | \$167.99  
**PREFECTURE:** Niigata  
**MILLING:** 45%  
**RICE:** Gohyakumangoku  
**SMV:** +3  
**ALCOHOL:** 15%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
 This well-dressed Daiginjo has a nose filled with ripe peach, strawberry, pomegranate, and cotton elements. What a light and bright sake, with each grain of rice milled to 45% one can taste the cleanliness in this brew. There are citrus tones throughout the soft and even flow that jump out in the crispness of the finish. A nicely elegant sake that is as cool and clean as stream water.



**KONTEKI PEARLS OF SIMPLICITY JUNMAI DAIGINJO**

**SIZE:** 300ml, 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$13.99 | \$27.99  
**PREFECTURE:** Kyoto  
**MILLING:** 50%  
**RICE:** Yamada Nishiki  
**SMV:** +2  
**ALCOHOL:** 15.5%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
 A bouquet of bright floral aromas is the perfect beginning for this crisp Junmai Daiginjo. Clean flavors of honeydew and lemon dominate but a subtle hint of licorice sneaks up once you get to the long and elegant finish. This is a great sipping sake but also a wonderful companion to a scallops, pork and other light meats.



**KONTEKI TEAR OF DAWN DAIGINJO**

**SIZE:** 300ml, 720ml, 1.8L  
**PRICE:** \$13.99 | \$27.33 | \$55.33  
**PREFECTURE:** Kyoto  
**MILLING:** 50%  
**RICE:** Yamada Nishiki  
**SMV:** +3  
**ALCOHOL:** 15.5%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
 The aromas of anise, banana, and a hint of sweet rice are quite complex. These same flavors come rushing through the full-bodied palate followed by such a pleasantly long and clean finish that you'll hurry back for more!



**KUBOTA HEKIJU YAMAHAI JUNMAI DAIGINJO**

**SIZE:** 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$41.99  
**PREFECTURE:** Niigata  
**MILLING:** 50%  
**RICE:** Gohyakumangoku  
**SMV:** +2  
**ALCOHOL:** 15%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled, room temperature  
 As they utilize the traditional Yamahai brewing method, this Kubota Hekiju is granted extra deep flavors, yet still carries a light and clean mouthfeel and goes down easily. Best enjoyed at body temperature or chilled.



**KUBOTA MANJU JUNMAI DAIGINJO**

**SIZE:** 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$64.67  
**PREFECTURE:** Niigata  
**MILLING:** 50%  
**RICE:** Gohyakumangoku  
**SMV:** +2  
**ALCOHOL:** 15%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
 Presented by Asahi Brewery, Kubota Manju is the paramount of the "Kubota" series. Has a plush, creamy texture, and several layers of complex flavor and umami. Enjoyed chilled, this sake can reveal the calm and complex portrait of existence.

## Junmai Daiginjo/Daiginjo

(continued)



### MIDORIKAWA DAIGINJO

**SIZE:** 720ml

**PRICE:** \$167.99

**PREFECTURE:** Niigata Prefecture

**MILLING:** 40%

**RICE:** Koshi Tanrei & Hokuiriku #12

**SMV:** +5

**ALCOHOL:** 17%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled

This special Daiginjo sake is made with all the craftsmanship and efforts of this kura such as labor intensive koji-making and slow low-temp fermentation in a small vat. Several batches made from two sake rices, Koshi Tanrei and Hokuiriku #12 are tasted and then blended after matured at low temperature for at least two years. Very defined and precise. Top flight producer of clean, pristine, connoisseur sake. Midorikawa Shuzo won a gold medal at Japan National Sake Competition in 2008.



### NANBU BIJIN 10 YEARS AGED DAIGINJO

**SIZE:** 720ml

**PRICE:** \$500.00

**PREFECTURE:** Iwate

**MILLING:** 35%

**RICE:** Yamada Nishiki

**SMV:** +1

**ALCOHOL:** 15%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled, room temperature

This extremely limited sake is not pressed, but allowed to drip from the lees in bags by the power of gravity alone. It is then aged in 1.8L bottles or a full 10 years in exceedingly cold temperatures, and then transferred into 720ml bottles for shipping. This sake is the legacy of the former brew master, who has since passed away, but whose spirit lives on in these special bottles. Possesses an extremely silky texture, and a heavenly aroma like Japanese fruits. Not even for sale in Japan



### OZE NO YUKIDOKO JUNMAI DAIGINJO GENSHU

**SIZE:** 720ml

**PRICE:** \$49.99

**PREFECTURE:** Gunma

**MILLING:** 40%

**RICE:** Yamada Nishiki



### TAKATENJIN SOUL OF SENSEI JUNMAI DAIGINJO

**SIZE:** 720ml

**PRICE:** \$40.67

**PREFECTURE:** Shizuoka

**MILLING:** 50%

**RICE:** Yamada Nishiki

**SMV:** +5

**ALCOHOL:** 16.8%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled

Aromas of clean honeydew rind, grainy rice with a touch of earth. The impact on the palate is soft and rich but not cloying. A gentle sweetness envelops the tongue while the clean, high-strung acidity does the work. It has loads of body but is able to maintain tightness and structure. While spicy honeydew and dry anise dominate up front, the finish is dry with good spicy white pepper and jasmine notes.



### TATENOKAWA 18 JUNMAI DAIGINJO

**SIZE:** 720ml

**PRICE:** \$113.67

**PREFECTURE:** Yamagata

**MILLING:** 18%

**RICE:** Yamada Nishiki

**SMV:** -6

**ALCOHOL:** 16%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled, room temperature

This sake uses rice polished down to 18% of the original grain size - the highest polishing ratio in the entirety of Japan. Furthermore, instead of blending the brewer only bottles the best portion of the pressed sake (called the "nakadori") as it holds the best flavor. With magnificent aromatics and a complex, brilliant flavor, Tatenokawa 18 is the essence of luxury. A true gem.



### TATURIKI AKITSU JUNMAI DAIGINJO

**SIZE:** 720ml

**PRICE:** \$268.33

**PREFECTURE:** Hyogo

**MILLING:** 35%

**RICE:** Yamada Nishiki

**SMV:** 0

**ALCOHOL:** 16%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled, room temperature

The sake brewing conditions in this area are beyond perfect - the grounds are covered in a fine morning mist, and the soil used to grow the rice is rich in calcium and montmorillonite, and Honda Shoten will only do business with farmers who grow as organically and naturally as possible. The rice is dried naturally, making for high-quality brewing. Boasts a very light nose of honeysuckle and musk melon, a light to medium body and a gorgeous true depth of flavor, and a clean cut finish.



### TEN TO CHI HEAVENS AND EARTH JUNMAI DAIGINJO

**SIZE:** 300ml, 720ml, 1.8L

**PRICE:** \$11.99 | \$32.99 | \$71.33

**PREFECTURE:** Niigata

**MILLING:** 50%

**RICE:** Koshi No Tanrei

**SMV:** +5

**ALCOHOL:** 15.5%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled

Niigata Agricultural Institute, Niigata Sake Institute, and the consortium of Niigata sake breweries spent 15 years to launch a new sake rice variety, called Koshi Tanrei. The rice is grown only in Niigata, only for Niigata sake producers. Ten To Chi "Heaven and Earth" is one of the first Koshi Tanrei-based sakes that have been made commercially available in Japan. Launched in US in 2011. Dry, mild, clean, medium bodied, and lightly aromatic



### YAMATO SHIZUKU JUNMAI DAIGINJO

**SIZE:** 720ml

**PRICE:** \$42.67

**PREFECTURE:** Akita

**MILLING:** 40%

**RICE:** Akita Komachi

**SMV:** 0

**ALCOHOL:** 16%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled

"It has a vibrant aroma and light textured body with smooth finish. The richness of the rice is still present and comes together to create an incredibly enjoyable sake"



## FOCUS: Sake Rice

All rice is not created equal, and Japan is famous for producing some of the world's highest quality rice. Individual seedlings are grown in a nursery before being planted by hand in the paddy. This ensures even development and consistent quality. There are many different varieties of rice, and about 100 are used to make sake. Higher-end sakes use sake-specific rice varieties, which are larger and have the starch concentrated in the center. Their larger size makes these sake rice more difficult to grow, but able to be highly milled without breaking. Every rice variety has its own unique attributes, and will contribute greatly to the body and flavor of sake. While larger producers buy rice from all over the country, smaller brewers use predominantly local rice, adding a regional profile to their products that makes them distinct.

## Specialty sake

There are many other types of sake that are less often seen than the main categories listed on the previous page. Some of these are industry marketing terms with little meaning or significance, others constitute vastly different types and styles of sake

**NIGORI-ZAKE** Nigori-zake is cloudy sake, sake that has not been pressed fully from the fermenting rice solids. That is nigori-zake, which simply means “cloudy sake.” The “clouds” are nothing more than unfermented rice solids deliberately left floating around inside. There are several styles or forms that nigori-zake can take. Much nigori-zake is sweet and smooth and creamy in texture. Then there is the “o chunky you’ll want to eat it with a fork” variety of nigori-zake. Naturally, nigori-zake does not offer the subtlety and refinement of good premium sake. Although it can indeed be tasty and fun, the remaining lees and their flavor easily overpower any other fragrances or gentle nuances of flavor. Also, nigori-zake should always be served a bit chilled.

**SPARKLING** sake is the hottest category in the sake world, and appeals to those who like fresh, bright and complex flavors and feelings similar to a sparkling wine. Some sparkling sakes are carbonated and some have a secondary bottle fermentation, and all do well served chilled in a sparkling wine flute.

**INFUSED** This is rather popular form of the drinks. It includes fruits flavors such as plum, yuzu, apple, and peach. It is sweet and fruity and ideal for mixing cocktails and with dessert pairing.

### Nigori/Unfiltered



**DAKU JUNMAI NIGORI**  
**SIZE:** 500ml  
**PRICE:** \$21.33  
**PREFECTURE:** Niigata  
**MILLING:** 70%  
**RICE:** Gohyaku-man-goku, Koshi-Ibuki  
**SMV:** -12  
**ALCOHOL:** 15%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
Bright, spritzy, and crisp in the palate, complex flavors of strawberry, melon, honey and a tingle of citrus tones that are zesty and sweet



**DASSAI 50 JUNMAI DAIGINJO NIGORI**  
**SIZE:** 300ml | 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$12.67 | \$27.67  
**PREFECTURE:** Yamagata  
**MILLING:** 50%  
**RICE:** Yamada Nishiki  
**SMV:** +3  
**ALCOHOL:** 16%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
Unlike most other Nigori sake, this sake is not too sweet and leaves no clogging finish. Instead, this Nigori is a full flavored, refreshing, and semi-dry.



**DEWATSURU JUNMAI NIGORI**  
**SIZE:** 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$15.99  
**PREFECTURE:** Akita  
**MILLING:** 65%  
**RICE:** Akinosei/ Menkoina  
**SMV:** +3  
**ALCOHOL:** 14%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
Bright and clear as the natural spring from which its water is sourced, this sake displays up-front aromas of green apples and sweet melons with hints of citrus fruits and sweet almonds. On the palate, it is delicate, dry, and creamy with a pleasant, clean finish



**HIKO'S MILKY JUNMAI NIGORI**  
**SIZE:** 300ml  
**PRICE:** \$10.67  
**PREFECTURE:** Shiga  
**MILLING:** 70%  
**RICE:** Hida Homare  
**SMV:** -12

**ALCOHOL:** 15%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
Earthy, herbal, nutty, fig aromas with a clean and exceptionally smooth with a medium finish



**KIKUSUI PERFECT SNOW JUNMAI NIGORI**  
**SIZE:** 300ml  
**PRICE:** \$11.99  
**PREFECTURE:** Niigata  
**MILLING:**  
**RICE:**  
**SMV:** -19  
**ALCOHOL:** 21%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
Don't let the name fool you, Perfect Snow is a bold and 21% ABV Nigori. It is white, cloudy sake reminiscent of pure snow with a crisp, dynamic flavor despite its sweet and full-bodied.



**KO'S KASUMI JUNMAI NIGORI**  
**SIZE:** 300ml | 500ml  
**PRICE:** \$9.33 | \$14.67  
**PREFECTURE:** Shiga  
**MILLING:** 70%  
**RICE:** Tamazakae  
**SMV:** -12  
**ALCOHOL:** 14.9%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
Cloudy white with aromas of cherry, lychee, and hints of bubblegum and malted milk. Because Kasumi is unfiltered, it has an exquisite chalky fine grained texture with a long finish and luscious mouth-feel



**MANOTSURU COUNTLESS VISIONS JUNMAI GINJO NIGORI**  
**SIZE:** 300ml  
**PRICE:** \$11.67  
**PREFECTURE:** Niigata  
**MILLING:** 50%  
**RICE:** Koshi No Tanrei  
**SMV:** -8  
**ALCOHOL:** 15%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled.  
This is a Nigori sake, which means it was unfiltered and has more rice particles; this creates a cloudy sake with a distinctive sweet. Tropical notes of starfruit and guava hit the palate with a refreshing burst of flavor along with anise and melon flavors. A creamy and spicy finish.



Shake before serving chilled. The label is inspired by the Sado Island Noh poet Zeami.



**RIHAKU DREAMY CLOUDS  
TOKUBETSU JUNMAI NIGORI**

**SIZE:** 300ml | 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$11.33 | \$23.99  
**PREFECTURE:** Shimane  
**MILLING:** 59%  
**RICE:** Gohyakumangoku  
**SMV:** +3  
**ALCOHOL:** 15.5%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
The nose is led by steamed rice, fresh red plums, and suggestions of roasted peanuts. Bright and lean in the mouth, unlike many Nigori, and the impact is chewy with sweet rice flavors intermingling with the nutty and slightly fruity characteristics of the sake



**TOZAI SNOW MADEN JUNMAI  
NIGORI**

**SIZE:** 300ml | 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$7.99 | \$13.99  
**PREFECTURE:** Kyoto  
**MILLING:** 70%  
**RICE:** Gohyakumangoka and Gin-Ohmi  
**SMV:** +6.5  
**ALCOHOL:** 14.9%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
This is fairly thick and chewy nigori, but it is still surprisingly dry. The aromas are bright and fresh and they show a lovely ricey and fruity combination. In the mouth, this sake has solid weight and gives the same flavors of fresh fruit and creamy

fresh rice that your nose told you about. The finish has a pleasant astringency and is nicely mellow, beckoning you for another mouthful. You will rarely taste a classier nigori at this price, and this may be the ultimate food-friendly nigori.

**Sparkling**



**DASSAI 50 JUNMAI DAIGINJO  
NIGORI SPARKLING**

**SIZE:** 360ml  
**PRICE:** \$19.99  
**PREFECTURE:** Yamagata Prefecture  
**MILLING:** 50%  
**RICE:** Yamada Nishiki  
**SMV:** +3  
**ALCOHOL:** 16%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
Utilizing the true Champagne method, this sparkling sake undergoes a secondary fermentation within the bottle. Exhibits a vivid flavor and a delicate yet full body, with a clear-cut semi-sweet finish. Cuts oil well, and great for celebrations. In the interest of preserving the quality of your Dassai 50 Sparkling Nigori, be sure to keep the bottle refrigerated at all times.



**HIDEYOSHI LACHAMTE  
SPARKLING SAKE**

**SIZE:** 280ml  
**PRICE:** \$11.99  
**PREFECTURE:** Akita  
**MILLING:** 65%  
**RICE:** Akita Komachi  
**SMV:** -79  
**ALCOHOL:** 8%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled

A playful straw-lemon in color with medium-fine perlage and a persistent mousse, this sparkling sake shows lively notes of white peaches and honeysuckle that are underscored by hints of toasted almonds and minerality. On the palate, this sake is demi-sec with a perfect texture and zesty acidity that unfold over a lengthy finish.

**Infused**



**KINOENE YUAGARI YUZU SAKE**

**SIZE:** 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$22.99  
**PREFECTURE:** Chiba  
**MILLING:** 100%  
**RICE:** Saga No Hana  
**ALCOHOL:** 9%

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
This sweet, refreshing blend of premium sake and aromatic yuzu juice is perfect chilled or on ice. For a unique accent, add it to your favorite cocktail or desert.



**TOZAI BLOSSOM OF PEACE  
PLUM SAKE**

**SIZE:** 720ml  
**PRICE:** \$13.33  
**PREFECTURE:** Kyoto  
**ALCOHOL:** 10.5%  
**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** Chilled  
This is a semi-sweet plum sake with ample aromas of almond and marzipan. Perfectly ripe plum flavors dominate the palate while the smooth, slightly sweet, and lip-smacking long finish ensures you'll want another sip or glass!



## Understanding Sake Labels

Despite their beauty and simplicity, sake labels can be quite intimidating. However, with a little training, they quickly become much more manageable. When examining a bottle, the first step is to turn it around, as all Craft + Estate Sake selections have style, specifications and even food pairings listed in English on the back label. However, for those wishing to delve a little deeper and interpret front labels, even a little knowledge can go a long way. Observe the label below:



The first thing to note about sake labels is that the naming system is rather confusing. This is because almost all companies produce under a meigara or brewery name. The above sake, for example, is from the Akita Seishu company, even though this information is not present on the label (although it appears on the back label). Rather, the label shows only the brewery name, Dewatsuru. For many products, particularly those of lower grades, the brewery name is also the sake name, and is only qualified by the classification. For example, this same company produces a Kimoto Junmai under the Dewatsuru brand, which is simply called Dewatsuru Kimoto Junmai. However, because the Junmai Daiginjo shown above is at the top of the Dewatsuru line, Akita Seishu decided to give it the additional name Hihaku. It should also be noted that these names are often thematically related, and are typically quite beautiful. Thus, dewatsuru translates as “crane of the Dewa [region],” while hihaku means “white wings.”

### Commonly Used Characteristics

<b>Daiginjo:</b>	大吟醸
<b>Ginjo:</b>	吟醸
<b>Junmai:</b>	純米
<b>Honjozo:</b>	本醸造
<b>Tokubetsu:</b>	特別
<b>Koshu:</b>	古酒
<b>Genshu:</b>	原酒
<b>Nama:</b>	生
<b>Namachozo:</b>	生貯蔵
<b>Yamahai:</b>	山廃
<b>Kimoto:</b>	生もと

The next step in interpreting labels is understanding a little about the characters written on them. For the most part these characters are kanji, or the Chinese symbols used in Japanese. While visually pleasing and rather poetic, they are difficult to read for a number of reasons, even to those somewhat familiar to the Japanese language. This is because the brewers often choose relatively rare characters, use old or unique pronunciations, or write them in a stylish but hard to read brushstroke style. The good news, however, is that this applies predominantly to the sake name and brewery name, which is almost always listed in English near the bottom of the label. The other characters, explaining the sake’s classification and its style, are usually written in easily read characters which are always the same. Therefore, if one takes the time, it is not too hard to begin to recognize them. They will typically appear, as in the label above, to the side of the name and in a clearer font.

## Serving Sake

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For those new to sake, one of the most daunting things about it can be figuring out how best to serve it. This is largely because it is often served in a wide array of vessels, and at a range of different temperatures. Much of this has to do with changes in technology and consumption preferences over the years, but it is also important to note that there is no one standard, and one should consume sake in whatever way feels most appropriate.

**Temperature** It is a common misconception that sake should be served hot. In fact, most premium sake should be served chilled, preserving the balance and more delicate aromas. The majority of hot sake is mass produced sake that is served from an 18 liter box that has been sitting heating machine all day. The heat actually impairs the tongue's ability to taste the sake's flaws. It is a shame to serve premium sake this way. That being said, there is a tradition of serving warm sake in Japan, particularly during the winter months in colder regions such as Akita and Niigata. These sakes should be served gently warmed (ideally heated in a double-boiler), never piping hot. In the end it is matter of preference, and many sake are enjoyable at a range of temperatures, a versatility that is unique in the beverage world.



### Vessels

**Tokkuri/Ochokko:** The combination of a carafe (tokkuri) and small cup (ochokko) is the most commonly seen method of serving sake. When drinking warm sake, the tokkuri is an effective way to maintain the temperature of the sake for longer. And the small size of the ochokko ensures that it is emptied and refilled often, something important in Japan, where it is customary to pour for your guests. Unfortunately, the ochokko also limits one's ability to appreciate the subtler components of a sake, particularly one that is more aromatic in style.



**Masu:** This 180ml wooden box was originally a unit of measurement for rice, seen as roughly the amount one person could eat in a single meal. When sake was first produced, it was brewed in tanks of the same wood, so it was natural to serve the sake in the masu they already had lying around. Now that sake is made in stainless steel tanks and stored in glass bottles, the aromas and flavors of the masu generally overwhelm the sake, so it is not recommended to drink sake from one. For this reason most restaurants that choose to use a masu either use a lacquer version or put a glass of the same size inside it, allowing them to keep the aesthetic without ruining the sake. Although the masu is becoming increasingly rare, it is still the standard unit of measurement for sake, which is why most bottles come in the 720ml and 1.8L sizes.



**Stemware** While not traditional, wine glasses might be the best vessels for appreciating sake, particularly the more aromatic Ginjo and Daiginjo grades. A small white wine or port glass is ideal for most sakes, and should be used the same way as when drinking wine. Swirling the glass will aerate the sake, releasing aromas and enhancing appreciation of its subtler aspects. Even in Japan, many sake bars are now serving sake in glassware (or stemless glasses).



# How to Taste Sake

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For those familiar with tasting wine, the basics of tasting sake will seem very similar. This is because a lot of the same methods and concepts apply. However, the ranges for many of the components are different, as is what to expect. Therefore, starting again from the beginning is not a bad idea. It is also important to remember that what is being tasted is not wine, and should not be judged on the same scale.

**Serving and Glassware** One of the first difficulties that arises when people go to taste sake is that they are often unsure of how and even where to even pour the sake. This is because sake is usually served in one of several traditional Japanese containers, and can be both chilled and heated. The quick response is that sake can be served perfectly well in a wine glass, and should generally be served chilled.

**Color** Although sake is naturally a light amber color, it is typically charcoal filtered to make it completely clear. However, some brewers prefer not to filter, preserving certain flavors which are removed along with the color during filtration. Also, Koshu can become a darker yellow color, while Nigori sake is purposefully made a cloudy white.

**Nose** Sake features a wonderful array of aromas, ranging from subtle to quite pronounced. The bouquet can be anywhere from rice, nuts and yeast to flowers, green fruits and grass. It is important to think of the overall balance between these components, and it is seen as a problem if one element, such as yeastiness, is dominant. It should also be noted that some sakes are purposefully made to have very little aroma, and this is not necessarily a flaw.

**Palate** The true breadth of sake is found on the tongue. While each style has characteristically different profiles, there is a great deal of variation within each classification as well. Here is a list of what to look for:

**Sweetness/Dryness** One of the easiest characteristics to recognize. Most sakes fall in the semi-dry range, although there are certainly products on both extremes. It is also important to keep in mind that while SMV is related to dryness, it is not a perfect indicator, and each sake should be judged on its own.

**Acidity** While the range of acidity in sake is not as large as in wine, its relative importance is similar. Therefore, it is one of the key distinguishing features when comparing different sakes. It also has a large influence on how a sake pairs with various foods.

**Texture** Even among clear sakes, there is a notable difference in texture and mouth-feel. Some feel very light and clean, while others are a bit chewier. Junmai sakes especially often seem to be slightly thicker.

**Umami** “Umami” is a term that has been gaining recognition in the food world in general, and refers to a basic taste (like sweet, sour, bitter, etc) that is described as “richness” or “deliciousness”. Scallops, parmesan cheese and mushrooms are all said to have umami. Sake can also have umami, and to varying degrees. This is also a stylistic choice, and a great sake can have a lot or a little umami. When pairing sake with food, it is best to march umami with umami.

**Simplicity/Complexity** Because of the wide range of polishing ratios, this factor becomes very important for sake, particularly when selecting the appropriate product for a given situation. The more highly polished Ginjos and Daiginjos will be more refined, but also more delicate and might not pair up as well with heavier foods. Simpler Honjozos and Junmais are also ideal for casual settings and can usually be served at a wider range of temperatures.

**Finish** As with other drinks, the finish of a sake is important as well. Some will disappear quickly, while others will linger for a while. Depending on the style of sake, either might be preferable.

## Sake and Food Pairing

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Sake is made to go with food. It is rare in Japan to drink without at least snacking on something, and most sakes are not at their best unless they are enjoyed alongside a meal. Sake also pairs with a lot more than just sushi! While a delicate Daiginjo can indeed be a great pairing with raw fish, sake has a broad spectrum of flavors and can be an excellent match for an equally wide range of foods. A hearty, acidic Kimoto sake is perfect with fried foods, while undiluted Genshu can stand up to steak and BBQ! Even oysters can have their flavors enhanced and their brininess toned down if matched with the right sake.

When deciding which sake to choose in a particular situation, classification is probably the most important factor. Lighter and more refined Daiginjos and Ginjos are best with equally delicate foods that will not overpower them, and are a wonderful way to celebrate a special occasion. The richer Junmai and Honjozo sakes, conversely, are great for everyday enjoyment and will match better with more flavorful foods. The style of a sake and the region it comes from can also provide a great indication of what profile to expect which foods to pair with.

While it may sound complicated to have to consider so many factors, because sake has lower acidity than wine, it is exceptionally food friendly and rarely will you encounter a pairing that absolutely doesn't work. You may overpower your sake with too rich a food (or vice-versa!), but it certainly won't ruin your meal. So don't worry too much, and make sure to experiment on your own.

# Sake Glossary

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**Daiginjo** The highest grade of premium sake, with a milling percentage of 50% or less.

**Futsuu-shu (Seishu)** Sake that is not classified in one of the premium categories, and does not have a minimum milling requirement. Often what is drunk locally near the brewery.

**Genshu** Undiluted sake, to which no water is added prior to bottling. Typically 18-20% AbV.

**Ginjo** Super premium sake, with a milling percentage of 60% or less.

**Honjozo** Premium sake, with a milling percentage of 70% or less.

**Junmai** Sake made using only rice, koji-kin, water and yeast. No alcohol is added after brewing. Can apply to the Daiginjo and Ginjo grades as well.

**Koji-kin** A mold used to convert the starches in rice into sugar. When it is combined with steamed rice, the resulting mash is called koji.

**Koshu** Sake which is aged for anywhere from three to about five years before being released.

**Kura** The sake brewery. It is staffed by kurabito, literally “people of the brewery.”

**Masu** Traditional wooden box used to serve sake. Holds 180ml.

**Milling Percentage** The level the rice is milled to before being used for brewing. It is measured as the amount of the original grain remaining. Also known as seimaibuai.

**Nama** Unpasteurized sake which must be kept refrigerated at all times.

**Namachozo** Sake that is pasteurized only once, after bottling. Does not necessarily need to be kept refrigerated, but care should be taken with storage.

**Nigori** Sake which is cloudy, because some of the rice solids are left in the sake after brewing.

**Ochokko** Small cups used for drinking sake, usually filled from a tokkuri.

**SMV** The Sake Meter Value is a measure of specific gravity, and gives an impression of the overall sweetness of the sake. The higher the number, the drier the sake. Also known as nihonshu-do.

**Toji** The master brewer, who oversees the brewing process and the operations of the brewery. It is his job to maintain harmony among the brewery workers.

**Tokkuri** Carafe used to serve sake, usually for sake that has been heated.

**Tokubetsu** Sake made with extra care or special ingredients. The term applies to the Junmai and Honjozo classifications.

**Tokutei Meisho-shu** The eight premium sake classifications: Honjozo, Junmai, Tokubetsu Honjozo, Tokubetsu Junmai, Ginjo, Junmai Ginjo, Daiginjo and Junmai Daiginjo.

**Yamahai/Kimoto** Traditional brewing methods in which the yeast starter is made in a more labor-intensive manner and without the addition of lactic acid, therefore requiring longer to develop. Sakes made in this way tend to be earthier and have higher acidity.

**Yeast Starter** Concentrated yeast population necessary to start fermentation. Made by combining yeast, water and koji. Also known as shubo or moto.



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ATLANTIC BUSINESS CENTER 2 • 1822 SOUTHWEST 2ND STREET • POMPANO BEACH, FL 33069

TEL: 954.861-2520 • FAX: 954.861.2521

APRIL 2017