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THE BIBENDUM GUIDE TO
SAKE

BIBENDUM

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This guide was written and developed with the help and support of Natsuki Kikuya, founder of the Museum of Sake. www.museumofsake.co.uk

An Introduction to SAKE

What is sake?

It is a fermented alcoholic drink made from rice. Although it is often referred to as ‘rice wine’, the way it is produced is much more akin to beer.

Where does it come from?

Much like beer, you can make sake anywhere but historically it comes from Japan, which is responsible for most of the world’s high quality production.

In Japan, the term “sake” just means alcohol – you could be referring to beer, spirits or wine. If you are specifically talking about the drink made from rice then it’s known as “nihonshu”, which means ‘Japanese alcohol made from rice’.

What is it made from?

Rice grains, koji (a friendly kind of mould), water and yeast (although sometimes distilled alcohol is added too). Read more about the main sake ingredients in the box to the right.

3,500 Years Young

Japan has been making sake for over 3,500 years. Although local consumption has dropped in recent years, there has been an increasing focus on producing and drinking high quality premium sake.

Rice

An integral part of the Japanese diet for millennia, it is natural that rice forms the base of their national drink. Sake can be made with normal table rice (short grain), but there are also specific rice varieties that are used for making sake. These have a larger grain of starch in the centre, which is the key to making good quality sake. ‘Yamada nishiki’ is the king of sake rice because of its large starch grain centre.

Water

Making up roughly 80% of sake, as well as being crucial to the production process, it is natural to make the link between good quality water and good quality sake. Generally, hard water will produce a more robust, masculine style, and soft water produces a more delicate, feminine style.

Koji

Often referred to as the ‘miracle mould’, koji is a crucial ingredient in sake. Its role is to convert the starch in the rice into sugar, so this can then be fermented into alcohol.

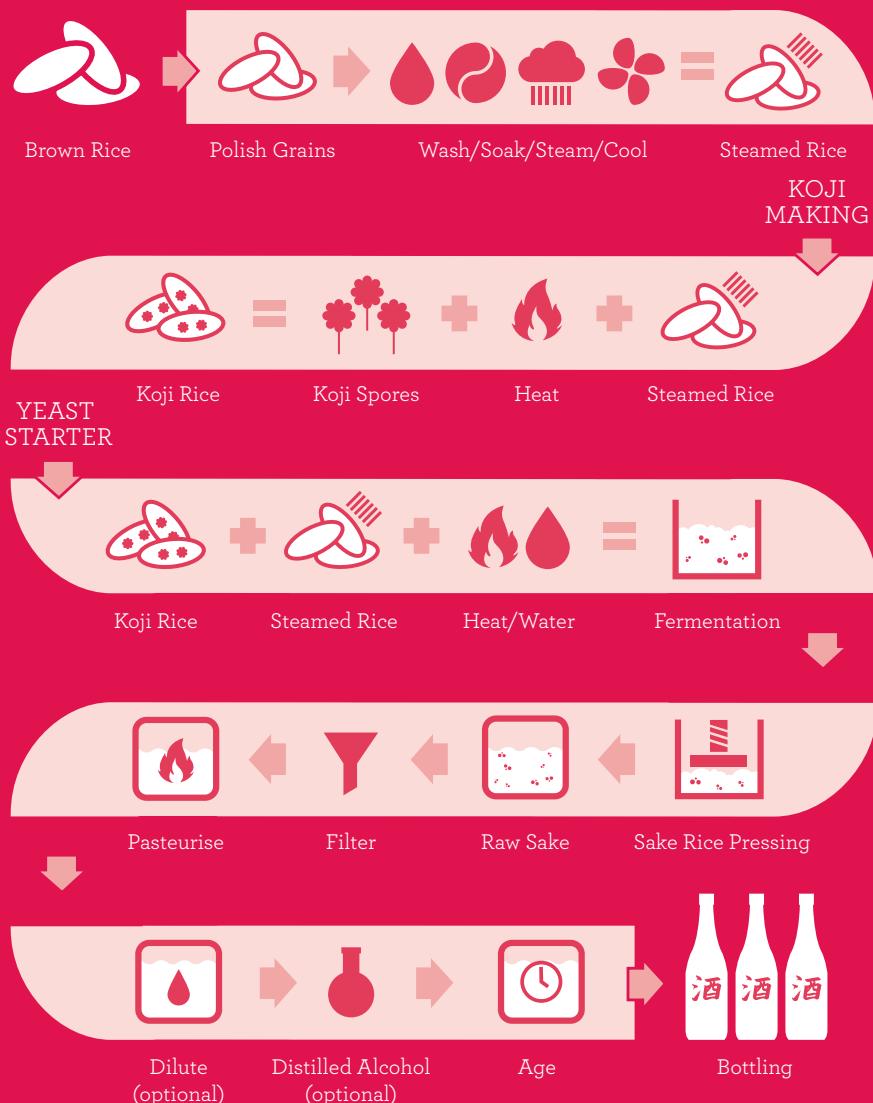
Yeast

Yeast plays a critical role in determining the aromas and flavours of sake. Yeasts are either natural, or they can be purchased. Commercial yeast strains are numbered, with No.7 and No.9 being the most popular choices. Many breweries have their own particular yeast strains that they prefer to use.

Distilled Alcohol

Some sake will have a small amount of brewer’s alcohol added to give it a clean, dry finish.

THE SAKE BREWING PROCESS



Tasting Sake

You can taste sake in exactly the same way you taste wine. However, what's valued in great sake is very different to what's valued in great wine.

Sake is about purity, not complexity: the shorter and cleaner the finish, then the more refined and elegant the sake.

Note that when tasting sake it is often sweeter than wine, with much less acidity and often a

more savoury, umami character which makes it so unique. Sake can have an alcohol content of up to 22%, although it is more common to find an ABV of around 15-18%.

Below you will find a wheel that highlights some of the main flavours you can find in sake.



Umami: The Fifth Taste

Umami is the fifth taste, along with sweet, sour, bitter and salty. Often described as a savoury layer of depth in food, umami is found in mushrooms, asparagus, soy sauce, cured meats and matured cheeses – as well as sake!

Sake Styles

The style of every sake rests upon the decisions that the toji (master brewer) makes. Think of it like beer production – the flavours are a result of the production process and the choices the brewer makes, rather than the origin of the grain and location of the brewery.

One of the main defining factors of sake is the polishing ratio used on the rice grains. Every grain of rice used to make sake is polished down to a certain percentage of its original size. The polishing process reveals each grain's starchy core, which is then turned into first sugar and then alcohol.

The exact ratio of the polishing defines the style of the sake – see the below graphic.

The reason the rice is polished is simply to remove any impurities on the outside of the rice, which can

lead to an uneven fermentation and unpleasant flavours. The higher the degree of polishing, the purer, more elegant and usually more expensive, the sake gets.

Premium sake styles only account for just over a quarter of all Japanese sake produced in Japan. The rest, known as Futsushu, has no minimum rice polishing requirements and allows for higher additions of ingredients such as brewer's alcohol. If you have ever drunk a warm, inexpensive sake, the chances are you were drinking a Futsushu sake.

Polish = Purity

The polishing ratio is an important indication of purity and quality. It is a measure of what's left of the grain after polishing. So the smaller the percentage, the more it has been polished.

'Junmai' means 'pure rice'. Junmai sakes have not had anything added. Non-Junmai sakes have distilled alcohol added at the end of fermentation. There are premium styles in both Junmai and non-Junmai.

JUNMAI STYLES

JUNMAI DAIGINJO

Rice polished down to at least 50% of its original size

Light bodied

Fruity and floral ginjo-ka characteristics such as pear, melon and tropical fruits like ripe banana

JUNMAI GINJO

Rice polished down to at least 60% of its original size

Light and delicate

Same fruity ginjo-ka characteristics as Daiginjo styles

JUNMAI

Junmai translates as "pure rice" i.e. no alcohol has been added

Rice polished down to over 61% with no maximum limit

Full bodied

Umami characteristics, notes of steamed rice

NON-JUNMAI STYLES

DAIGINJO

Rice polished down to at least 50% of its original size
Light bodied

Fruity and floral ginjo-ka characteristics such as pear, melon and tropical fruits like ripe banana
Some distilled alcohol added before bottling

GINJO

Rice polished to at least 60% of its original size
Light and delicate

Same ginjo-ka characteristics as Daiginjo styles
Some distilled alcohol added before bottling

HONJOZO

Small amount of brewer's distilled alcohol added before bottling

Rice polished to between 62% and 70%.
Alcohol makes the sake light, clean and crisp with a dry finish

Specialist Styles

KOSHU

This is sake which has been aged prior to release. These styles will be golden, amber or brown in colour and have rich, complex characteristics of caramel, toffee and nuts.

NAMA-ZAKE

Most sake is pasteurised to preserve it. Nama-zake styles are unpasteurised which means they are extremely delicate. As such they must be kept refrigerated after bottling. They have fresh characteristics of hazelnuts and chestnuts.

TOKUBETSU

Tokubetsu on a label means 'special'. If this is stated alongside any of the styles listed above then it means that either the sake was produced under special methods, or that a higher polishing ratio than required was used.

NICORI

Nigori roughly translates as cloudy, which reflects the appearance of this sake. Sake is always filtered, but sometimes the filter is less fine, allowing for larger particles of rice to be left in the liquid. This style is thicker than usual sake – think of it more like a milkshake – and is great served warm too.

SAKE LIQUEURS

Sake can provide a great base to other flavours and is often sweetened and altered with various flavours. Common styles include Japanese fruits such as Yuzu (a citrus fruit), Ume (a type of plum) and even Earl Grey Tea (pictured below).



Kanji

Kanji is the name used for the written characters of Japanese. Originating from China, they were adopted into the Japanese language and are now commonly used.

While our range of sakes will have a detailed back label written in English, here are some common kanji to look out for on a bottle. In their different combinations they make up the main styles.

PRONUNCIATION

If you pronounce Japanese words as you do English words then you will be very close to the actual Japanese pronunciation. Just remember that 'g' is always hard as in 'gate'.

KANJI PRONOUNCED MEANING

純	JUN	<i>'Pure'</i> - This refers to the fact that no alcohol is added to the Junmai styles.
米	MAI	<i>'Rice'</i> - This refers to the fact that no alcohol is added, it's just pure rice.
大	DAI	<i>'Big'</i> - This refers to the highest level of polishing.
吟	GHIN	<i>'Carefully examined'</i> - This refers to the higher polishing ratio that these styles undergo.
本	HON	<i>'Origin'</i> - This refers to the old, traditional methods used to produce Honjozo sake.
釀	JO	<i>'Ferment/Brew'</i> - Sake is a fermented product.
造	ZO	<i>'Produce'</i> - As with 'Hon', this refers to the old, traditional methods used to produce Honjozo sake.



Ideas for Selling Sake



Sake can seem overwhelming and mysterious, but it doesn't have to be. In our experience, once people have tried and enjoyed their first sake they want to try more and explore the different styles available. Here are some of our tips on how you can introduce sake to the uninitiated and get those orders flowing:

SIZE OPTIONS

For such a unique product it is important to provide consumers with an opportunity to taste before they commit to buying a bottle. Offering sake by the glass or carafe gives people more flexibility to experiment. We recommend a serving of 100ml when serving sake by the glass.

SAKE FLIGHTS

Offering a sake flight is a great way for consumers to have fun discovering their favourite styles, and learning a little bit about each as they go.

FOOD PAIRING

Why not recommend a sake to go with the special of the day or a dish on your menu? It's a great way to introduce consumers to sake, and it will help show how versatile sake can be with regards to food pairing. For example, oysters would work a treat with Junmai Daiginjo, rather than the classic pairing of Champagne.

EVENTS

Sake is quite a mysterious drink for many, so capitalise on consumers' curiosity by organising an event. By serving sake alongside different foods, you can highlight the drink's versatility and make it more approachable.

FAMILIAR ALTERNATIVES

If you're introducing sake to people, then it's worth recommending styles similar to what they know. For example, if they like Sauvignon Blanc then Junmai Daiginjo is a fitting sake alternative. If they enjoy a malt whisky, then chances are they'd love Koshu too.

BREWERY OF THE MONTH

You could focus on one producer per month, training staff and promoting the story behind the sake to consumers.

DRINK THE SEASONS

Sake is a very seasonal drink so why not put on an event to celebrate this? In winter, you can serve heated Honjōzo styles, instead of mulled wine. Or during spring, you could feature the fresh styles of unpasteurised Namazake.

SAKE COCKTAILS

Sake has a very distinctive flavour, and its umami richness is a great addition to many cocktails. Have a go at creating one of your own, or try out one of the recipes created for us by Giles Looker from Soulshakers on the following page.



Sake Cocktails

Sake has a very distinctive flavour, and its umami richness is a great addition to many cocktails. Have a go at creating one of your own, or try out one of these recipes below.

Junmai-jito

Ingredients

- 100ml Tenzan Brewing Co. Shichida Junmai 75
- 15ml Fiorente Elderflower liqueur
- 10ml lemon juice
- 6 grapes
- 6 mint leaves

Method

In a tall glass muddle the mint leaves, grapes, lemon juice & elderflower liqueur. Add the sake and top with crushed ice. Serve garnished with a mint sprig.



Umeshu Sour

Ingredients

- 25ml brandy
- 30ml Niizawa Sake Brewing Co. Kishinamien Umeshu (Plum)
- 20ml lemon juice
- 20ml sugar syrup
- Egg white (optional)

Method

Shake the ingredients together over ice. Serve in a large rocks glass over ice and garnish with a miniature plum, or cherry.



Fading Sun Martini

Ingredients

- 50ml Akita Takashimizu Junmai
- 5ml Fernet Branca
- 20ml Niizawa Kishinamien Earl Grey Tea Sake Liqueur
- 5ml sugar syrup

Method

Build ingredients in a Boston glass, stir, and strain into a chilled martini glass.

The Cheeky Plum

Ingredients

- 50ml Tenzan Shichida Junmai Ginjo
- 50ml Niizawa Kishinamien Umeshu Plum Sake
- 20ml lime juice
- 15ml sugar syrup
- 20ml lychee juice
- ½ plum

Method

Muddle the plum and other ingredients together, shake and strain into a rocks glass.

Putting Sake on Your Drinks List

Where sake sits on a drinks list is up to your establishment. There are many different ways to categorise sake, here are some ideas:

BY FLAVOUR

Use easy to understand categories such as 'Fruity and Floral' or 'Rich and Spicy.'

BY FOOD MATCH

Help diners understand which sake styles match with which foods by using headers such as 'Great with meat' or 'Perfect for spicy food.'

BY TEMPERATURE

List your sakes according to the temperature you recommend they are served at, chilled through to warm.

BY STYLE

Categorise your range by styles such as Honjozo, Junmai or Ginjo.

Another idea would be to integrate your sakes into your current wine list rather than giving them a separate section.

Unless you are an establishment with a lot of Japanese clientele, then we don't recommend using Kanji (Japanese letters) when listing sake, as for many consumers these can be intimidating and confusing.



Sake Training

Learn more about this versatile product at our Introduction to Sake workshop. This one-day session is delivered by our award-winning training team, alongside the UK's leading sake consultant, Natsuki Kikuya. It offers a great introduction to sake, covering the production process, as well as the various styles.

The in-depth training day will include a study of serving temperatures for different styles of sake, to challenge the preconceptions that sake has to be served warm. It will also include a food and sake matching seminar to offer alternative food matching ideas, including pairing sake with red meat and cheese – foods that are traditionally matched with red and sweet wines.

Contact us to find out more about our Introduction to Sake workshop.

Service & Storage

Sake has a good shelf life and once opened it can last for up to two weeks, as long as it's stored correctly. Generally, most styles of sake are best consumed within a year of bottling.



STORAGE

Like wine, sake is best stored in dark, cool places with constant temperatures (ideally 10-12°C). The more delicate Ginjo/Daiginjo styles should be refrigerated.

Sake is best stored upright, so its screw cap does not rust.

Once open sake can be stored much longer than wine. It should be sealed with a Vacuvin or Verre du Vin and stored in a refrigerator for 1-2 weeks. As with wine, you should check that it's still in good condition before you serve it to consumers.

Sake is a great addition to an Enomatic machine too, allowing you to serve it by the glass with no risk of waste.

SERVICE

Temperature plays an important role in sake service, and it can be served between 0 to 55°C depending on the style. Generally, the more delicate Ginjo styles are best served chilled to enhance their fruity aromas. More savoury styles such as Honjozo and Futsushu benefit from being gently warmed.

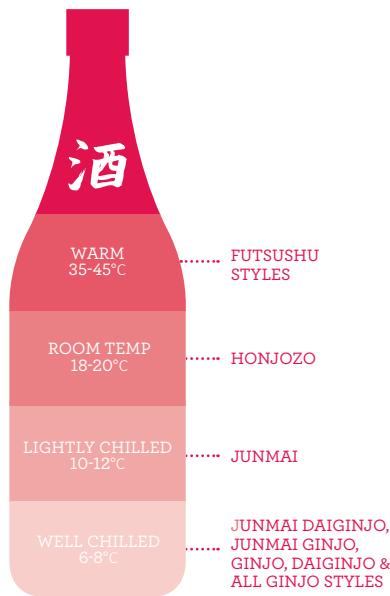
Traditionally, sake is served in small cups made from a variety of materials, but if you don't want to invest in specialist sake cups you can use what you have to hand such as wine glasses or even tea cups!

HOW TO HEAT SAKE:

Don't worry if you don't have a special sake heating machine, as you can heat sake up in a number of ways.

An easy method is to pour 500ml sake into a milk jug and warm up in a microwave at 800W for two minutes. Decant into a carafe to serve.

Alternatively, fill up an ice bucket with recently boiled water, and place the bottle in until it reaches the desired temperature. Be careful not to overheat the sake - a few minutes should be long enough for a gently warmed sake.



Sake Etiquette in Japan

In Japan, pouring etiquette is very specific as it has cultural significance. Servers are required to pour sake with both hands by the neck of the bottle, or alternatively the sake is left on the table for guests to pour for each other. These gestures signify respect and care for the other person.

Sake & Food Pairing

Think sake is reserved for sushi? Think again. It is surprisingly versatile and works well across menus from all corners of the globe. Whether it's steak, chocolate or cheese boards, sake offers a great way to make your menu stand out from the crowd.

Yuu Kitchen in London serves an array of South East Asian-inspired food. Bar manager Keira Page says, "Sake can be very delicate, so it will never overshadow the food. Sticking to the basics is key - we pair more oily dishes, such as our raw fish Hawaiian-themed Poke, with a drier sake. Spicy dishes, such as our spicy chicken wings, go best with a fruity or aged sake with natural acidity."

What about dessert? "I have a bit of a sweet tooth, so I like the Kishinamien Umeshu (plum liqueur) or Earl Grey Tea Sake Liqueur," she says. "The Atago no Matsu 'Waiting Love' sake is also great with dessert - it's fruity, sweet and lightly sparkled."



Hawaiian-themed Poke + Niizawa Hakurakusei Junmai Ginjo

Yellow fish, salmon, octopus and cobia drenched in a sesame and citrus dressing with soft avocado and corn: these subtle, fresh and spicy flavours match perfectly with the delicate Junmai Ginjo. The freshness of this sake cuts through the spice and complements the delicate fish, while its creamy texture is enhanced by the avocado.

Australian sirloin steak, homemade chilli dressing + Akita Takashimizu Honjozo

This fuller-bodied sake pairs well with the aged sirloin steak and its lightly-spicy sauce. More of a wine-like sake, the Honjozo has lovely savoury and umami characteristics that complement the meat, rounding the dish off perfectly.

Hot Carolina Reaper chicken wings + Shiraki Daruma Masamune 10 Years Old

These spicy, smoky wings are not for the faint-hearted - but neither is this 10 year old sake. The bold flavours in both complement and enhance each other without overpowering; the spice of the chicken brings out the sweet, nutty character of the sake.

Chocolate spring rolls + Niizawa Earl Grey Tea Sake Liqueur

Sweet ganache chocolate spring rolls with raspberry sorbet garnished with coconut, nuts and a shiso leaf, paired with the luxurious Earl Grey Tea Sake Liqueur - this is a dessert-lover's dream. The two match each other's sweetness, the sake adding a freshness to the sweet chocolate and acting as a palate cleanser alongside the sorbet.



AKITA SHURUI SEIZOH CO.

BASED

Akita

ESTABLISHED

1944 (but the individual breweries date as far back as 1656)

HOW TO SAY IT

Ah-kee-tah Shu-roo-ee See-zo

Traditionally sake is made in winter. Cold means stability. It means the brewmaster can control the fermentation. At the Takashimizu brewery in Akita, northern Japan, it gets really cold. During winter they'll shovel three metres of snow to keep the roads open.

Most of Takashimizu's staff have worked there their entire life. One of the longest serving is Toji Master, Hitoshi Kato. Constantly looking to improve his product, he works with a near superhuman level of precision. The resulting sake puts the quiet agricultural prefecture of Akita on the map. This region is said to have the purest water since the time of the Samurai.

AKITA SHURUI SEIZOH CO.



TAKASHIMIZU JUNMAI DAIGINJO

(Ta-kashee-mee-zu Jun-my Dy-ghin-joh)

This is a rich and fragrant sake with flavours of pear and apple. It is very well balanced with a dry finish.

Available in 72cl.

Rice: Akita Sakekomachi

Polishing Ratio: 45%

ABV: 15.5%

Temperature: Chilled

Serve: Alongside fish and seafood

Try if you like: Viognier



TAKASHIMIZU KIMOTO JUNMAI

(Ta-kashee-mee-zu Kee-moh-toh
Jun-my)

This sake is very refreshing with a smooth, mellow banana flavour and a long finish.

Available in 72cl.

Rice: Miyamanishiki 24%, Table Rice 76%

Polishing Ratio: 60%

ABV: 15.5%

Temperature: Warm (or at room temperature)

Serve: With steak

Try if you like: Savoury Italian whites such as Soave or Gavi



TAKASHIMIZU JUNMAI

(Ta-kashee-mee-zu Jun-my)

This Junmai has subtle aromas of sweet rice, and a clean finish.

Available in 72cl.

Rice: Miyamanishiki 24%, Table Rice 76%

Polishing Ratio: Koji Rice 60%, Kake Rice 65%

ABV: 15.3%

Temperature: Lightly chilled (also served warm)

Serve: With a wide range of dishes

Try if you like: Chardonnay

AKITA SHURUI SEIZOH CO.



TAKASHIMIZU HONJOZO

(Ta-kashee-mee-zu Hon-jo-zoh)

A very well-balanced sake, with a smooth, velvety texture and a strong, savoury, umami finish.

Available in 72cl

Rice: Miyamanishiki 25%, Table Rice 75%

Polishing Ratio: Koji Rice 60%, Kake Rice 65%

ABV: 15.5%

Temperature: Warm (served at a range of temperatures)

Serve: Heated, like mulled wine

Try if you like: Mulled Wine



TAKASHIMIZU SEISEN FUTSUSHU

(Ta-kashee-mee-zu Say-sen Fut-su-shoo)

A great entry-level sake to introduce younger customers to the category: well balanced, versatile and accessibly priced. A rounded acidity makes this a favourite and approachable style sake.

Available in 180cl

Rice: Miyamanishiki, Akita Sakekomachi

Polishing Ratio: Miyama-Nishiki 60%, Akita Sakekomachi 65%

ABV: 15.5%

Temperature: Hot, chilled or at room temperature

Serve: Pour at the table in the visually impressive 180cl bottle

Try if you like: Hot toddy



TAKASHIMIZU JUNMAI NICORI

(Ta-kashee-mee-zu Jun-my Nee-gor-ee)

Powerful flavour and distinctive texture, with notes of ginger, Asian pear and cantaloupe.

Available in 30cl

Rice: Miyamanishiki 24%, Table Rice 76%

Polishing Ratio: Koji rice 60%, Kake rice 65%

ABV: 15.5%

Temperature: Chilled

Serve: As an aperitif, or with a wide variety of meats and spicy foods

Try if you like: A hard milkshake or White Russian



NIIZAWA SAKE BREWING CO.

BASED

Miyagi

ESTABLISHED

1873

HOW TO SAY IT

Nee-zah-wah

After surviving the Great East earthquake of 2011, Niizawa brewery was left with several battle scars. Not least the monumental task of needing to find a new home for their brewery. They created a new state of the art facility, complete with their own polishing machines, allowing them to create an exclusive sake that is polished down to a minute 7%!

Wanting to give back to those whose lives were devastated by the earthquake, a portion of their Umeshu (plum sake) is donated back to the local community.

Hakurakusei is named after a local mythical legend and this range is the ultimate for food pairing. It is proven to complement a wide range of foods, from roast lamb to mackerel with beurre blanc. Today Niizawa sake is served to business class passengers on Japan Airlines and poured in top venues throughout the UK.

NIIZAWA BREWING CO.



HAKURAKUSEI JUNMAI DAIGINJO

(Hak-ooh-rak-ooh-say Jun-my Dy-ghin-joh)

This Junmai Daiginjo has fragrant aromas of muscat grapes and pineapple. It is refreshing, with rich, complex flavours that open up over time.

Available in 72cl.

Rice: Omachi

Polishing Ratio: 40%

ABV: 15.8%

Temperature: Chilled

Serve: With blue cheese

Try if you like: Sauvignon Blanc



HAKURAKUSEI JUNMAI CINJO

(Hak-ooh-rak-ooh-say Jun-my Ghin-joh)

This is the signature sake of the brewery. It initially appears subtle and delicate, but gradually offers aromatic notes of banana and grapefruit.

Available in 72cl.

Rice: Kura no Hana

Polishing Ratio: 55%

ABV: 15.8%

Temperature: Chilled

Serve: As an aperitif or with lighter dishes such as carpaccio of beef

Try if you like: Chenin Blanc



HAKURAKUSEI SPECIAL JUNMAI

(Hak-ooh-rak-ooh-say Special Jun-my)

With rich flavours of rice, and a soft, round texture, this is a textbook Junmai style. It has a pronounced umami and mineral flavour with a lingering finish.

Available in 72cl.

Rice: Yamadanishiki

Polishing Ratio: 60%

ABV: 15.8%

Temperature: Lightly chilled (or at room temperature)

Serve: With rich foods like grilled eel

Try if you like: Pinot Noir

NIIZAWA BREWING CO.



ATACO NO MATSU "WAITING LOVE" SPARKLING

(A-ta-go No Mat-soo)

There are a few sparkling products on the market, but these are mostly either surprisingly sweet or off-dry. This sake is considerably drier, refreshing and delicate. It works brilliantly as an aperitif or with oysters.

Available in 36cl.

Rice: Kuranohana, Hitomebore

Polishing Ratio: 55%

ABV: 13%

Temperature: Very Chilled

Serve: With Colchester oysters, as an aperitif or with light dishes

Try if you like: Prosecco



KISHINAMIEN UMESHU (PLUM SAKE LIQUEUR)

(Kish-in-a-me-in Oo-meh-shu)

This is sake that has been macerated with ume plums. It has a rich sweetness, flavours of almonds and a pronounced plum character.

Available in 72cl.

ABV: 11%

Temperature: Well chilled

Serve: With chocolate desserts

Try if you like: Amaretto



EARL GREY TEA SAKE LIQUEUR

This is not your traditional sake but an elegant liqueur with a sake base. This Earl Grey Tea Sake Liqueur is a ready-made artisanal product ideal for any 'ice tea' cocktail. Elegant blend of aromatic earl grey tea, sake and sugar.

Available in 72cl.

ABV: 12%

Temperature: Chilled

Serve: With cloudy lemonade and a splash of soda, the perfect Japanese summer tea

Try if you like: Pimms



YUCHO SHUZO

BASED

Nara

ESTABLISHED

1719

HOW TO SAY IT

Yoo-cho Shoo-zo

Yucho Shuzo is situated in Nara, the region considered as the birthplace of sake. Young owner and brewer, Yoshihiko Yamamoto, uses locally grown rice and fresh water from their deep wells to create this elegant and fresh sake.

Kaze no Mori is one of the most sought-after sakes in Japan. This sake was bottled straight after pressing and is unfiltered ('muroka'). Natural carbon dioxide effervescence may also be present – so take care when opening, it might pop like champagne! This sake should be served chilled and needs to be kept refrigerated.

YUCHO SHUZO



KAZE NO MORI ALPHA 3

(Ka-zay No Mor-ee)

This is an unfiltered and undiluted sake. It has flavours of juicy nectarine and yellow plums, with a hint of vanilla pod. It is soft and rich on the palate, with a delicate spritz.

Available in 72cl.

Rice: Hattannnnishiki

Polishing Ratio: 50%

ABV: 14%

Temperature: Chilled

Serve: Ice cold with barbequed meats

Try if you like: Belini



TENZAN SAKE BREWERY CO.

BASED

Saga

ESTABLISHED

1875

HOW TO SAY IT

Ten-zan

Named after Mount Tenzan, which stands proudly above the brewery, this is one brewery that does things a little differently. Instead of creating highly polished styles, they prefer to focus on expressing the abundant natural resources surrounding them. The spring water from Mount Tenzan runs into the Gion river, which passes the front door of the brewery. This naturally hard water creates a uniquely rich and textured sake. No dilution or carbon filtration is practiced; a rarity among modern producers. The result is a range of sake as close to nature as possible.

TENZAN SAKE BREWERY CO.



SHICHIDA JUNMAI GINJO

(She-chee-da Jun-my Ghin-Joh)

This Junmai Ginjo has a great balance between sweetness and acidity. It has delicate aromas of Japanese pear and sweet yoghurt.

Available in 72cl.

Rice: Yamadanishiki 20%,
Saga no hana 80%

Polishing Ratio: 55%

ABV: 16%

Temperature: Chilled (or at room temperature)

Serve: Alongside seared Iberico pork

Try if you like: Viognier



SHICHIDA JUNMAI 75

(She-chee-da Jun-my)

This unique sake is made with rice polished to 75%. With aromas of Japanese Nashi pear, it is a rich, complex and umami-filled sake. It has pleasant acidity and beautiful balance.

Available in 72cl.

Rice: Yamadanishiki

Polishing Ratio: 75%

ABV: 15.3%

Temperature: Lightly chilled (or warm)

Serve: With flavoursome protein dishes like lamb and seared mackerel

Try if you like: Chardonnay



TENZAN NAMA NICORI

(Ten-zan Na-ma Nee-gor-ee)

This unique sparkling sake has never been pasteurised and is slightly cloudy. It has a delicate fizz with pure sweetness, a creamy texture of coconut, green apples and pineapples, with an acidic balance. It won the gold medal for IWC sparkling sake category in 2014.

Available in 72cl.

Rice: Yamadanishiki

Polishing Ratio: 55%

ABV: 16%

Temperature: Chilled. Keep refrigerated

Serve: With Yakitori chicken, sweet duck and Chevre style cheese

Try if you like: Natural wine



TENZAN YUZU-SHU (CITRUS SAKE LIQUEUR)

(Ten-zan Yoo-zoo-shu)

Full of rich citrus flavours of yuzu, this yuzu-shu is sweet and fresh with a clean finish.

Available in 72cl.

ABV: 8%

Temperature: Well chilled

Serve: As a refreshing alternative to Limoncello or use in cocktails

Try if you like: Fruit Ciders



SHIRAKI BREWERY

BASED

Gifu

ESTABLISHED

1835

HOW TO SAY IT

She-raki

Aged sake or Koshu is identifiable at once by its colour and aroma. Imagine a delicate peaty Scotch Whisky and you're nearly there. Considering how delicate sake is, it shouldn't be able to age this long. But it can. And it does. The age statement on a bottle refers to the youngest sake added to the blend. Shiraki has tanks from 1979, a portion of which goes into each sake produced. But just like a chef's most treasured spice, only a touch is used for these young blends. It's in the older blends where these older sakes come into their own.

SHIRAKI BREWERY



DARUMA MASAMUNE 3 YEARS

(Da-roo-ma Masa-moo-nay)

This sake is sweet and has a pronounced umami character. It's a beautiful golden colour, with rich flavours of dried fruit and a lingering finish.

Available in 72cl.

Rice: Table Rice

Polishing Ratio: 70%

ABV: 16%

Temperature: Lightly chilled (or warm)

Serve: Pair with Mediterranean flavours such as parma ham

Try if you like: Cognac or Armagnac



DARUMA MASAMUNE 5 YEARS

(Da-roo-ma Masa-moo-nay)

This aged sake has aromas of spice such as cloves and nutmeg and a hint of cedar and toasted nuts. It's mellow and rich with a refreshing finish.

Available in 72cl.

Rice: Table Rice

Polishing Ratio: 70%

ABV: 17%

Temperature: Lightly chilled (or warm)

Serve: In place of brine for a unique dirty martini

Try if you like: Stout or Porter



DARUMA MASAMUNE 10 YEARS

(Da-roo-ma Masa-moo-nay)

Matured for 10 years to obtain a beautiful tawny colour. It has aromas of spice, cedar and nuts. It is soft and smooth with a long, complex finish.

Available in 72cl.

Rice: Table Rice

Polishing Ratio: 70%

ABV: 18%

Temperature: Lightly chilled (or warm)

Serve: Alongside richly flavoured dishes such as Katsu

Try if you like: Dry Oloroso Sherry



DARUMA MASAMUNE 20 YEARS

(Da-roo-ma Masa-moo-nay)

Matured for 20 years to achieve its beautiful dark colour of molasses, this sake has characteristics of toasted caramel and maple syrup. It has outstanding depth and sweet, mellow flavours with a long, lingering finish.

Available in 72cl.

Rice: Table Rice

Polishing Ratio: 70%

ABV: 18%

Temperature: Room temperature (served at a range of temperatures)

Serve: As a digestif in place of a malt whisky

Try if you like: Islay Scotch Whisky



ENTER.SAKE

BASED

Aichi, Kyoto, Yamaguchi

ESTABLISHED

1864 (Sekiya Brewer Co.)
1791 (Matsumoto Sake Brewing Co.)
1770 (Asahi Shuzo Co.)

ENTER.Sake is a boutique sake collection curated by fully-trained sake sommelier Richie Hawtin. Richie has been exploring the world of sake for 20 years during his many trips to Japan as one of the world's leading electronic music artists. Originating inside his now dormant residency at Space in Ibiza, Richie created Europe's largest sake bar, stocked with special sakes not available anywhere else outside of Japan. Now ENTER.Sake is beginning a new phase, taking its sake collection to restaurants, bars and wine stores across the USA and Europe.

The Black Honjozo, Silver Junmai Ginjo and Gold Junmai Daiginjo sakes are produced by Sekiya Brewery Co. in Aichi, Shuhari Junmai Daiginjo is produced by Matsumoto Sake Brewing Co in Kyoto, while the Revolutions Junmai Daiginjo is made by Asahi Shuzo Co. in Yamaguchi.

ENTER.SAKE



BLACK HONJOZO

(Hon-jo-zoh)

A clean, pure style of sake, with white alpine flowers on the nose. It has a clean and soft, silky texture. The cleansing acidity provides good structure and there is a subtle fruitiness with hints of mango, peach and pineapple.

Available in 18cl, 72cl and 180cl.

Rice: Gohyakumangoku, Table Rice

Polishing Ratio: 65%

ABV: 15%

Temperature: Warm (served at a range of temperatures)

Serve: As introduction to premium sake

Try if you like: Dry Gewurztraminer



SILVER JUNMAI GINJO

(Jun-my Ghin-Joh)

An aromatic Ginjo sake with honeysuckle on the nose and floral notes of cherry blossoms. It has a good weight with notes of mango, Asian pear and honeydew melon.

Available in 72cl.

Rice: Mineharuka

Polishing Ratio: 55%

ABV: 14.5%

Temperature: Chilled

Serve: With roast chicken or pork

Try if you like: Pinot Gris



COLD JUNMAI DAIGINJO

(Jun-my Dy-ghin-joh)

This Junmai Daiginjo is elegant, with tropical notes on the nose. It is completely dry, with a slight minerality and smooth finish.

Available in 72cl.

Rice: Yumesansui

Polishing Ratio: 50%

ABV: 14.5%

Temperature: Chilled

Serve: With smoked salmon or mackerel

Try this if you like: Off-dry Vouvray



SHUHARI JUNMAI DAIGINJO

(Shoo-har-ee Jun-my Dy-ghin-joh)

This sake is rich and fleshy, with notes of honeysuckle and lemon pith, followed by white peach, ripe pear and winter melon on the palate. It's slightly effervescent, with an incredibly long finish.

Available in 72cl.

Rice: Yamadanishiki

Polishing Ratio: 50%

ABV: 14%

Temperature: Chilled

Serve: With grilled meat

Try if you like: Chablis



REVOLUTIONS JUNMAI DAIGINJO

(Jun-my Dy-ghin-joh)

This sake has elegant aromas of tropical fruits like pineapple, ginger and green melon. It is completely dry, with a slight minerality and delicately smooth finish.

Available in 72cl.

Rice: Yamadanishiki

Polishing Ratio: 23%

ABV: 16%

Temperature: Chilled

Serve: With shellfish or delicate white fish

Try if you like: Gruner Veltliner



HEAVENSAKE

BASED

Miyagi, Yamaguchi

Heavensake is the art of Regis Camus, a multi award-winning Champagne cellarmaster. Camus lent his unrivalled blending skills to both expressions of Heavensake, pioneering a change in the tradition of sake-making by forging a union between two of the world's most discerning cultures for making alcohol. The Japanese tradition of excellence is upheld by two leaders in the craft of sake brewing. The houses of Dassai (for the Junmai Daiginjo) and Urakasumi (for the Junmai Ginjo) were chosen to help realise the vision of Heavensake. Their expertise and dedication to perfection set the scene for the creation of a drink of absolute purity and refinement.

HEAVENSAKE



JUNMAI CINJO

(Jun-my Ghin-Joh)

Delicate nose of apple blossoms and a hint of citrus on the nose. On the palate, this sake has flavours of white guava and honeysuckle, with a subtle umami aftertaste.

Available in 72cl.

Rice: Yamadanishiki, Toyo Nishiki, Kurano Hana

Polishing Ratio: 51%

ABV: 15%

Temperature: Chilled, ideally 5C

Serve: With ceviche or caviar

Try if you like: Champagne



JUNMAI DAICINJO

(Jun-my Dy-ghin-joh)

Beautiful floral aromas of lily and iris, as well as herbal notes. It has flavours of juicy pears, wild berries and muscat grapes on the palate.

Available in 72cl.

Rice: Yamadanishiki

Polishing Ratio: 35%

ABV: 16%

Temperature: Chilled, ideally 5C

Serve: With charcuterie

Try if you like: Albarino

OUR SAKE PRODUCERS: WHERE ARE THEY?

- 1 AKITA SHURUI SEIZOH CO.
- 2 NIIZAWA SAKE BREWING CO.
- 3 YUCHO SHUZO
- 4 TENZAN SAKE BREWERY CO.
- 5 SHIRAKI BREWERY
- 6 ENTER.SAKE
- 7 HEAVENSAKE



Glossary

<i>Akita</i>	A type of sake rice, originating from the Akita province of Japan.
<i>Dai</i>	Big.
<i>Futsushu</i>	Ordinary sake with no minimum polishing requirements. Addition of other ingredients such as brewer's alcohol allowed.
<i>Gin</i>	Sing (i.e. aromatic).
<i>Hon</i>	Origin.
<i>Honjozo</i>	Premium light, crisp and dry sake with polishing ratio 62-70% with a small addition of brewer's alcohol.
<i>Jo</i>	Ferment/brew.
<i>Jun</i>	Pure.
<i>Junmai</i>	Least polished (>60%) premium sake with no added alcohol. Junmai literally translates as 'pure rice'.
<i>Junmai Daiginjo</i>	Light, delicate and floral super-premium sake polished to <50% with no added alcohol.
<i>Junmai Ginjo</i>	Light and delicate premium sake polished to <60% with no added alcohol.
<i>Kanji</i>	Written Japanese characters.
<i>Koji</i>	The 'miracle' mould used to convert starch in the rice into fermentable sugar.
<i>Koshu</i>	Premium sake aged before release. Rich colour and flavours.
<i>Kura no Hana</i>	A type of sake specific rice.
<i>Mai</i>	Rice.

<i>Miyamanishiki</i>	A premium type of sake specific rice.
<i>Nama-zake</i>	Unpasteurised sake. Extremely delicate with nutty characters.
<i>Nigori</i>	Cloudy sake, which has had less filtration than regular sake.
<i>Nihonshu</i>	Japanese alcohol made from rice.
<i>Polishing ratio</i>	How much a rice grain has been polished to reveal its starchy core. Measured as the remaining percentage of the original grain, e.g. a grain polished to 50% will be half its original size. Smaller the percentages, mean the grain was more polished.
<i>Saga no hana</i>	A premium type of rice used solely for sake production.
<i>Sake Liqueurs</i>	Sake that has been flavoured and sweetened, often with Japanese fruits.
<i>Shinpaku</i>	The starchy core of the rice grain.
<i>Toji</i>	Master brewer.
<i>Tokubetsu</i>	Means ‘special’ and will accompany other labelling terms to indicate that special methods have been used during production, e.g. the rice grains may have been polished to a higher ratio than required.
<i>Umami</i>	Translates as ‘a pleasant savoury taste’ and is one of our five senses of taste detected on the palate.
<i>Ume</i>	Referred to as a type of plum in the west, but is actually more similar to an apricot.
<i>Yamadanishiki</i>	A famous type of rice used solely for sake production. Known as ‘the king of sake specific rice’ owing to its large starchy core.
<i>Yeast</i>	Used to ferment sugars into alcohol.
<i>Yuzu</i>	A type of citrus fruit used in Japanese cuisine (similar to a small grapefruit or lime).
<i>Zo</i>	To produce or make.

Notes



BIBENDUM