

## Fushimi, Kyoto – A Place of Water and Sake



Smooth and mellow. What is the secret of the sake made in Fushimi? The simple answer is found in the underground water of Fushimi, specifically the balance of elements such as potassium and calcium in the medium-hard water that is of the perfect quality and composition for making sake. It is said that the sake making process requires 14.4 liters of water to produce 1.8 liters of sake. Then add the dedication, expertise and sheer hard work of the sake brewers and the result is the excellent sake that continues to be made in Fushimi to this day.

Fushimi, a district of Kyoto, is blessed with abundant underground water. The area was previously known as Fushimizu or Fukusui, which refers to water running underground and emerging at a spring. The story of how the Gokonomiya-Jinja Shrine got its name is explained in an anecdote about the delicious water from a spring located inside the shrine. The imperial court itself, as an acknowledgment of the excellent quality of this water, bestowed the name Gokonomiya (fragrant water of the palace) on the most significant shrine in Fushimi. Gokosui (fragrant water from Fushimi) appears on the list of 100 famous natural water sources in Japan, along with the waters from other Fushimi springs, such as Shiragikusui, Kinmeisui and Ginmeisui, to name a few.

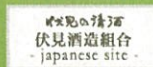


Sake brings out the best  
in washoku Japanese  
cuisine,  
designated an  
Intangible Cultural  
Asset by UNESCO



Fushimi developed as a settlement when Toyotomi Hideyoshi chose to build a castle there, which led to the development of a bustling castle town, and sake brewers soon saw the benefits of being close to such an outstanding source of water. In the years that followed, Fushimi benefitted from its role as a post station, as well as an important transport hub on the canal that connected Kyoto with Osaka and then onto Tokyo (known as Edo then). During the early Edo Period (mid-1600's) there are records of over 80 sake breweries located in Fushimi. During this period, Fushimi became synonymous with the production of quality sake throughout the land.

It is often said that locally produced sake perfectly complements the local cuisine. And so it makes sense that sake produced in Fushimi, Kyoto, is the ideal companion for Kyo-ryori, or Kyoto cuisine. Water – the crucial ingredient in sake – is also vital to washoku, or Japanese cuisine. The right sake makes the food taste better, and the right food makes sake more delicious – and this is all due to choosing the right water at the start of the process.



## Fushimi Sake Brewers Association

318 Nishiote-cho, Fushimi-ku, Kyoto City 612-8362

Tel: 075-611-4115 Fax: 075-611-4117

<http://www.fushimi.or.jp/>

Don't drink and drive. The legal drinking age is 20. Drink appropriately.  
Drinking while pregnant or during breastfeeding can be detrimental to the health of your child.





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# A Guide to the Sake Brands of Kyoto Fushimi

## Area map



1 Kizakura  
Kizakura Co., Ltd.



2 Tomio  
Kitagawahonke  
Co., Ltd.



3 Kyohime  
Kyohime Shuzo Co.,  
Ltd.



4 Kinshi Masamune  
Kinshi Masamune  
Co., Ltd.



5 Gekkeikan  
Gekkeikan Sake  
Company, Ltd.



6 Eikun  
Saito Shuzo Co., Ltd.



7 Shoutoku  
Shoutoku Shuzo Co.,  
Ltd.



8 Sho Chiku Bai  
Takara Shuzo  
Co. Ltd.



9 Tamanohikari  
Tamanohikari Sake  
Brewing Co., Ltd.



10 Tsurumasamune  
Tsurumasa Shuzo  
Co., Ltd.



11 Housyuku  
Toyosawa  
Honten Co., Ltd.



12 Keicho  
Heiwa Shuzo Joint-  
stock Company



13 Tsukino Katsura  
Masuda Tokubee  
Shoten Co., Ltd.



14 Momo no  
Shizuku  
Matsumoto  
Sake Brewing  
Co., Ltd.



15 Miyakotsuru  
Miyakotsuru-Shuzo  
Co., Ltd.



16 Takatori  
Yamamoto Kanzo  
Shoten Co., Ltd.



17 Shinsei  
Yamamoto  
Honke Co., Ltd.



# Sake Trivia

## Types of Japanese Sake

Japanese sake displays subtle changes in flavor depending on the season.  
It is also one of the few alcoholic beverages that can be enjoyed either warm or chilled.

### Sake types and their characteristics

#### Ginjo-shu

This is a type of sake made from white rice that has had at least 40% of its surface polished away (so that what remains is at most 60% of the size of the original rice grain), which is then brewed under intense scrutiny using a low temperature fermentation process. One can say that Ginjo-shu is the crystallization of the brewer's art, technique and experience. The result is a fruity, opulent fragrance and a smooth flavor.

#### Junmai-shu

This sake is made from rice and koji (rice mold). As the name suggests, only rice is used as an ingredient (junmai means 'pure rice'). The degree of polishing of the rice grains is not specified. Junmai-shu has a full-bodied flavor, but in recent years we are starting to see light-bodied Junmai-shu products on the market.

#### Honjozo-shu

Made from rice that has had at least 30% of its surface polished away (so that what remains is at most 70% of the size of the original rice grain) and koji (rice mold) as well as a limited amount of brewer's alcohol. Honjozo-shu has a flavor similar in body to Junmai-shu, however you may find it more crisp, dry and mellow.

### Specific Classes of Sake

Specific Class	Ingredients	Rice Polishing Ratio	% of koji (rice mold)	Requirements: taste, etc.
Junmai Daiginjo-shu	Rice, koji (rice mold)	at most 50%	at least 15%	Made using the Ginjo process Characteristic flavor and aroma; outstanding luster and color
Daiginjo-shu	Rice, koji (rice mold), brewer's alcohol	at most 50%	at least 15%	Made using the Ginjo process Characteristic flavor and aroma; outstanding luster and color
Junmaiginjo-shu	Rice, koji (rice mold)	at most 60%	at least 15%	Made using the Ginjo process Characteristic flavor and aroma; excellent luster and color
Ginjo-shu	Rice, koji (rice mold), brewer's alcohol	at most 60%	at least 15%	Made using the Ginjo process Characteristic flavor and aroma; excellent luster and color
Junmai-shu	Rice, koji (rice mold)	-	at least 15%	Excellent luster, color and flavor
Tokubetsu Junmai-shu	Rice, koji (rice mold)	at most 60%	at least 15%	Made using a special manufacturing process Outstanding luster, color and flavor
Honjozo-shu	Rice, koji (rice mold), brewer's alcohol	at most 70%	at least 15%	Excellent luster, color and flavor



Tokubetsu  
Honjozo-shu

Rice, koji (rice  
mold), brewer's  
alcohol

at most 60%

at least 15%

Made using a special manufacturing  
process Outstanding luster, color and  
flavor

### Other characteristic types of sake

#### Futsu-shu

This is a type of sake made from white rice that has had at least 40% of its surface polished away (so that what remains is at most 60% of the size of the original rice grain), which is then brewed under intense scrutiny using a low temperature fermentation process. One can say that Ginjo-shu is the crystallization of the brewer's art, technique and experience. The result is a fruity, opulent fragrance and a smooth flavor.

#### Gen-shu

Once the crude sake (moromi) has been pressed, no water is added. This is a full-bodied sake with an alcohol content of between 18% and 20%.

#### Honjozo-shu

Once the fermentation process is complete, the liquid is filtered through a rough cloth or strainer, and the result is Nigori-sake. The liquid is milky cloudy as opposed to clear, and the Nigori-sake has the flavor of the moromi. Nigori-sake that has not undergone heat processing still retains live yeast and enzymes, which can result in a light carbonation, which is why it can also be referred to as Kassei-shu ('active' sake).

### Yawaragi-mizu – Try some!

Yawaragi-mizu (lit. "alleviating water") is the practice of drinking water while one enjoys Japanese sake. By drinking a little water between sips of Japanese sake, you will retain a clear head and avoid succumbing to the effects of the alcohol.

The water thus alleviates the intoxication—hence the name Yawaragi-mizu.

伏見酒造組合  
- japanese site -

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## Things to See and Do in Fushimi

### Fushimi Inari Grand Shrine

There are over 30,000 Inari Shrines dotted all over Japan, and the Fushimi Inari Grand Shrine sits at the head of all of these sites. The Grand Shrine features the Romon grand gate (designated an Important Cultural Asset), the Haiden prayer hall, the Honden main hall (also designated an Important Cultural Asset), and a host of other sights that are resplendent in their vermilion color scheme. The corridor of tori gates is the defining image for many visitors to Fushimi Inari. These shrines are now popular with people involved in mercantile trades, but originally the inari shrine was for the veneration of rice cultivation. It is said that the Inari Daimyōjin deity was first enshrined back in February 711 (the Nara period). The Romon grand gate was a donation from Toyotomi Hideyoshi.



### Gokonomiya-Jinja Shrine

Known as a place to come to pray for the safe birth of one's child, back when this shrine was called Mimoro Jinja, it is said that in 862 (the Heian period) a spring of delicious fresh water was found in the shrine, and the Emperor Seiwa found the water so pleasant to drink that he changed the name of the shrine to Gokonomiya, or 'fragrant waters of the palace'. More recently, the shrine became famous as it served as the base of operations for the imperial force of the Satsuma fiefdom at the end of the Edo Period, during what is now known as the Battle of Toba-Fushimi. The rock garden in the shrine is said to have been designed by famed artist Kobori Enshu, and one can find the camellia—said to be Enshu's favorite plant—in the shrine environs. The main gate is made from timbers salvaged from the entranceway to Fushimi Castle, constructed by Toyotomi Hideyoshi.



### Jonangu

Said to protect the area from calamity and misfortune, Jonangu was established when the imperial court was moved from Nara to Kyoto, with the aim of protecting the new



capital and by extension the whole country. The shrine is known for its "kyokusui no utage" tradition, whereby in spring and fall poems are composed by a stream on which cups of sake are set afloat to be drunk by the participants. Jonangu actually has five different shrine gardens, called Rakusuien, each with its own unique appearance. The gardens have over 100 different types of plants described in the Tale of Genji. Jonangu is located in Toba, which for 150 years was the location for a cloistered government. Shirakawa, Toba, Goshirakawa and Gotoba Joku oversaw the running of the country over four imperial generations.



## Sake Breweries

Many of Fushimi's sake breweries are located along the Go-kawa River, a branch river of the Uji-gawa River. When Toyotomi Hideyoshi ordered the construction of Fushimi Castle, the Go-kawa formed part of the outer moat. During the Edo Period this waterway served as the transportation link with Osaka, with jukkukubune and sanjukkukubune boats carrying their cargo back and forth, transporting rice and sake. One stretch of this waterway has been designated as an Important Neighborhood Area for Landscaping by Kyoto City. It is a wonderful place to take a stroll, illuminated by retro-style street lighting and with all the electrical cables buried, one can simply walk and enjoy the evocative scenery.



## Jukkukubune / Sanjukkukubune

Visitors to Fushimi can enjoy the scenery of the sake breweries from the water, thanks to the jukkukubune and the sanjukkukubune boat service. There is a reason to enjoy the area from a boat during all four seasons, be it sakura cherry blossom, weeping willow, hydrangea, autumn leaves, or a snowscape in winter. It is a real opportunity to relive the glory years of the port of Fushimi when the river was bustling with cargo and commerce. The jukkukubune was used to transport rice and sake. The sanjukkukubune was also known as the kashobune and served as a passenger ferry, an official vessel of the bakufu (feudal government), and the kashobune had a pass to get through checkpoints. Both vessels used to transport people and goods to and from Osaka via the Yodo River.



- Services run from April through to the end of November
- No services on the jukkukubune on Mondays (unless Monday is a national holiday)
- The sanjukkukubune runs on Saturdays, Sundays and national holidays (no service on weekdays)



## Fushimi Ningyo

The Fushimi Ningyo is said to be the oldest clay figurines in Japan. These clay dolls were taken home as souvenirs by people who came from all over Japan to visit the Fushimi Inari Grand Shrine. Each region in Japan has its own style and history when it comes to clay figurines. At the end of the Edo Period there were over 60 kilns producing these figures in Fushimi, but now there is only one left – Tanka – which has been making Fushimi Ningyo for 260 years from its location right in front of the main gate of the Fushimi Inari Grand Shrine. There are said to be around 2,000 different designs of these ancient clay figurines. They are also known as Inari or Fukakusa Ningyo.



## Remains of the Fushimi Magistrate's Office

When Kobori Enshu served in the office of the magistrate of Fushimi, the location was moved from Shimizu-dani to its current location. Kobori Enshu was known as a proponent of tea, and enjoyed hosting court nobles and wealthy merchants in an ascetic manner according to the way of tea. It is said that Tokugawa Iemitsu, the third Shogun of the Edo Period, called in to visit with Kobori Enshu when he traveled to Kyoto. During the Battle of Toba- Fushimi, the Magistrate's Office became the headquarters of the militia known as the Shinsengumi, as well as the forces from the Aizu fiefdom. The imperial force of the Satsuma fiefdom was a mere 150m away at Gokonomiya Shrine, and its shelling of the Magistrate's Office destroyed and burnt it. Some parts of the garden were relocated to Gokonomiya Shrine, where they can still be seen today.



## Terada-ya

The port of Fushimi was always busy, due the number of people traveling between Osaka and Kyoto by river ferry. Terada-ya was the inn of choice for people awaiting their berth on the next ferry. The Terada-ya is also where Sakamoto Ryoma used to meet with representatives from the Satsuma and Choshu fiefdoms during the turbulent years at the end of the Edo Period. The Terada-ya was the location of the incidents connected to internal tensions in the Satsuma fiefdom, as well as where Sakamoto Ryoma was cornered by government forces seeking his arrest. Sakamoto was able to escape only thanks to the intervention of his future wife, Oryo. Visit the Terada-ya to experience the turbulent atmosphere of the end of the Edo Period.

