Guide to SETO UCHI SAKE

To get to know Japanese sake, first start from Setouchi.

http://setouchitrip.com/
FROM SETOUCHI

An abundance of “rice” ripens in the warm sunlight, and “water” transforms itself into a crystal stream polished by the mountains. In Setouchi with an abundance of quality raw materials indispensable to sake-making, many breweries still preserve the traditional techniques of sake-making.

The Setouchi area is, in which every 700 islands dot along the coastline south of Japan, the largest area of Setouchi in Japan, and is a popular area among tourists in recent years.

Due to its mild climate, specialized in rice production, rice and various kinds of sake rice, including top grade rice such as “Setouchi Shikoku” and “Shikoku” indispensable to sake-making are grown. Also, water that greatly influences the diversity of sake abounds. The pure water provided bySetouchi’s mountains varies widely in quality from hard water to soft water, providing an environment to make sake. Discover the unique features of sake rice and sake water, and sake breweries have been established and operated for generations in Setouchi.

Sake-making in Setouchi began in Okayama in the Heian period (1100s) and since then, it has continued to evolve in Setouchi, where sake-making art takes on a form that fits Setouchi, and a new generation of sake breweries are improving and innovating the sake-making style created at the time.

What makes Setouchi’s sake special is the natural environment, including the rice and water, that each brewery has been able to maintain. In Setouchi, breweries have been able to continue their traditions, and they can continue to maintain the quality of sake that is unique to Setouchi.

If you explore Setouchi, where a great diversity of sake villages and breweries have been developed, you will discover "Setouchi" sake.

Setouchi Area
Setouchi, a gold mine of sake

There are many Setouchi sake breweries that remain in Setouchi. Some of them have existed for more than 100 years. Why not explore some of the sake breweries, while savoring the scenery, taste and culture that remain in Setouchi?

Kurashiki Bridge
- The world’s only bridge connecting over the river in Kurashiki
- One of the most famous bridges in the world

Inukashina Shrine
- The shrine is located in Inukashina
- It is said to be the oldest shrine in Japan

Kurashiki Bikan Historical Quarter
- This is the largest Edo-period town
- Best preserved town in Japan

HImeji Castle
- This castle is located in Hyogo
- It is the largest castle in Japan

Nara White Orchids
- The white orchids in Nara
- They are said to be the oldest in the world

Hirayamia Garden
- This garden is located in Hyogo
- It is one of the most beautiful gardens in Japan

Togo Onsen Hot Spring
- This hot spring is located in Togo
- It is famous for its hot springs and landscapes
The soft and warm flavors of sake will make your trip more pleasurable.

On these streets you can feel a relaxing and unique atmosphere where time seems to have frozen.

It takes a lot of hand-made work to prepare the rice.

If you explore the sake breweries, you will see Japan’s nature, culture, and people.

You can also experience the taste of sake in many ways, such as in casual settings or special events. It’s a great way to enjoy the unique flavors of sake.
**Sake manufacturing process**

**[Rice polishing]**
Brown “sake rice” is polished to remove fats and proteins that cause unpleasant tastes. Generally, the higher the sake grade, the more highly polished the rice is used for brewing in many cases. For some Daiginjō, it takes two whole days to polish rice.

**[Rice washing and soaking]**
The bran remaining on the rice surface is washed away, and after that, the rice is made to absorb water as required. Since such well-polished rice that is used for high-grade sake absorbs water at a high speed, the soaking time is precisely controlled in seconds by using a stopwatch.

**[Rice steaming]**
The rice is steamed for about one hour. It is said that a fresh of “sake rice” with its active koji has a hard and sticky feel and elastic, is suitable for propagation of koji mold (Aspergillus). However, in this process, picking up and crushing part off by finger to check whether the rice is properly steamed is called “human referee (true sake)”.

**[Koji making]**
The steamed rice is spread out and cooled down, and it is drawn into a mortar (mortar) and kneaded around a room temperature of 27°C, at which koji mold is inspired to making (true mal). Making time does vary. The taste of sake changes greatly depending on the condition of “Kanroku” (portion of year) requiring lactic acid to break through the internal root of the propending.

**[Shubo](fermentation starter/making)**
Shubo (motoc) is the culture of a mixture of koji and water and steamed rice with water added. “Shubo-koji making (starter culture)” by adding lactic acid requires about two weeks. “Koiro-koji starter culture” using natural lactic acid and bacteria disables the number of days just mentioned.

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**[Moromi (fermentation mash/making)]**
Koji, measured rice, and water are added to sake that is divided into three stages: “Mega are first stage,” “Naka are second stage,” and “Shubo” as third stage. This is called “Sake-koji three-way preparation for fermentation mash,” in which koji is converted to sugary enzymes, and a part solubles by yeast. The remaining fluid is moromi (fermentation mash).

**[Pressing]**
Moromi is pressed and divided into sake lips and sake. While the common “Hanba” type which press onto point until, there are also other stages of pressing, such as “Kikunen” “discovering” to preserve moisture in cloth sake bags under their own weight, and “Sho-en” with pressure in cloth sake bags under pressure as they are cracked in sake traditions (press).

**[Filtration]**
The pressed sake is left for a period of time and turbidity called “pot cave” removed from it by letting (removal of움듭음). In order to remove deposits and miscellaneous matter that still remain after that, the sake is filtered through charcoal or a filter. At this time, carefully filtered sake is called “Nippon sake.”

**[Hiire (pasteurization)]**
Since enzymes, etc. remain in the pressed sake, the sake quality is available. So, in order to stop the enzymes from functioning and extragraft heat bacteria which cause bacterial contamination, heat sterilization is performed, which is called “Hiire.” Common sake is shelf-stable because it undergoes heat treatment.

**[Addition of water]**
Most of fresh sake, which has an alcohol content of approximately 25%, is adjusted by adding water in order to make it easier to drink. Generally, it is adjusted to around 15%, while no water is added to some sake called “Genchu (undiluted sake).”

**[Shipping]**
Thanks to refrigeration technology, sake is made and shipped in various states, such as “Nara Sake (unpasteurized sake)” without hiire, “Kamatsuzake-shu” with only a short time after pressing, and “Naramasho-shu” with only a second time before bottling. All three of these tastes are completely different.
Exploring sake breweries in Setouchi

Sake tastes a thousand different ways. That is because there are community-based histories and traditions as well as makers’ hearts in relation to the number of sake breweries. If you visit a sake brewery, you will deepen your travel experience and the taste of sake you drink. And, you will surely desire to visit another sake brewery in pursuit of new encounters.

Why not travel to the Setouchi sake breweries, while enjoying the season, scenery, and human contacts?

Akashi Shurui Jozo
Walk 10 minutes from JR Uozumi Station

This sake brewery places importance on traditional handmade methods using only locally produced sake rice grown in Hyogo Prefecture. On top of that, they also regularly produce innovative types of sake. Valuing Japan’s identity with a large export volume, and earning an excellent reputation.

[Akashi Shurui Jozo]
1-3, Okura Hachiman-cho, Akashikai, Hyogo
TEL.079-919-0277
MAIL. info@akashishurui.co.jp
Closed: Saturdays, Sundays, and national holidays
Hours: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Time required for observation tour: 60 min.
Booking: Required

Okada Honke
Drive 10 minutes from JR Kakogawa Station

“Sadlen” is made by using the affluent river-bed water of the Kakogawa River, the largest river in Hyogo Prefecture, and 100% locally grown rice produced in the prefecture. This sake is a well-known brand popular for a mouth-watering taste (refreshing and dry) and a fresh flavor that is well-balanced between sweetness and dryness. Sake brewed and noted in the community, aiming at local production for local consumption.

[Okada Honke]
1021, Noguchi-cho Yoshino, Kakogawa-shi, Hyogo
TEL.079-851-0001
MAIL. okadahonke.ad@gmail.com
Closed: Open throughout the year
Hours: 9:00 AM - 6:00 PM
Time required for observation tour: 60 min.
Booking: Required

Kiku-Masamune Shuzo
Walk 10 minutes from JR Uozumi Station

“Japanese sake that keeps us from growing weary from drinking and complements cooking tasty.” A refreshing taste without any unpleasant taste or a sharp sensation makes Kiku-Masamune an ideal dry sake. At the Sake Brewery Museum established as an annex, you can learn the history of sake-making and see treasured tools of the art.

[Kiku-Masamune Shuzo]
1-17, Ii, Hosokawa-ku, Kake-shi, Hyogo
TEL.078-451-0001
MAIL. m-masamune@kikumasamune.co.jp
Closed: At year-end and New Year holidays
Hours: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Time required for observation tour: 60 min.
Booking: Required

Sake breweries in the Hyogo area

Ibaraki Shuzo
Walk 15 minutes from all stations

Founded in the late Edo period (1848). Now, the ninth-generation young owner-toji (master brewer) brews together with a small number of brewers, dedicated to their passion in the making of Japanese sake. Their challenge has attracted great attention, such as the launch of an aromatic sake using yeast extracted from natural flowers, while following long-standing tradition.

[Ibaraki Shuzo]
1377, Uozumi-cho Nishikyo, Akashikai, Hyogo
TEL.079-946-9561
MAIL. mail@iibarakishuzo.com
Closed: Open throughout the year
Hours: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Time required for observation tour: 60 min.
Booking: Required

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[Kiku-Masamune Shuzo]
1-17, Ii, Hosokawa-ku, Kake-shi, Hyogo
TEL.078-451-0001
MAIL. m-masamune@kikumasamune.co.jp
Closed: At year-end and New Year holidays
Hours: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Time required for observation tour: 60 min.
Booking: Required

Junaishiki Kiku-Masamune Taru Sake
This sake is characterized by the gorgeous and fragrant aroma that is tied to the nose, and the emotive and alluring characteristics of its aroma is marked by the aroma of cedar bark, expanding the flavor.

[Junaishiki Kiku-Masamune Taru Sake]
Exploring sake breweries in Setouchi

Kobe Shushinkan

In 2008, “Fukuji” graced the tables of the Nobel Laureates Dinner in Stockholm, and attracted the spotlight from around the world. As a community-based brewery, they focus their energies on the promotion of the local brand of sake with observation tours provided with multilingual support, in order to ensure handing down the traditions of sake-making and enjoying sake.

Kobe Shushinkan
1-17, Mihosakamachi, Hisakado-ku, Kobe-shi, Hyogo
TEL: 079-461-1121
MAIL: sake@ksh.co.jp
Closed: All year-end and New Year holidays
Hours: 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM
January - November
Time required for observation tour: 60 min.
Booking Required

Nishiyama Shuzojo

Founded in 1849, this sake brewery is located at the center of Hyogo Prefecture, in Tanba, surrounded by abundant nature. Through year-round brewing, you can enjoy fresh sake (refined sake) at any time. Their vision is to offer sake that will turn customers into lifetime sake lovers.

Nishiyama Shuzojo
1717, Ichijima-cho, Naka-ku, Tanba-shi, Hyogo
TEL: 0795-86-3311
MAIL: main@nishiyama-shuzo.co.jp
Closed: Irregularly
Hours: 1:00 PM - 6:00 PM
Time required for observation tour: 30 min.
Booking Required

“Old Sake Brewery”

Sawa No Tsuru Museum

Although the old sake brewery that was built in the late Edo period and left intact had been open to the public as a museum, it was completely destroyed in the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake. After, it was restored to its former state, and has been designated as an important tangible folk cultural property in Hyogo Prefecture. You can see how sake-making used to be by following the exhibits step by step.

Old Sake Brewery” Sawa No Tsuru Museum
1-29-1, Okumori-machi, Nada-ku, Kobe-shi, Hyogo
TEL: 079-893-7778
MAIL: N/A
Closed: Wednesdays, and all Bank holiday and New Year holidays
Hours: 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Time required for observation tour: 30 min.
Booking Required for 10 people or more

Hakutsuru Shuzo

This majority brewery is representative of Nada in Kobe, a rich sake-making area in Japan. While upholding tradition, this brewery actively introduces new technology and upgraded facilities to meet the demands of the times. A museum and gallery under the theme "Learn and enjoy sake" to convey the appeal of Japanese sake from various perspectives offer an on-site experience.

Hakutsuru Shuzo
5-5, Sanyoshimamachi, Hisakado-ku, Kobe-shi, Hyogo
TEL: 079-833-8101
MAIL: info@akaiwa.co.jp
Closed: All year-end and New Year
Hours: 9:30 AM - 3:30 PM
(a) Time required for observation tour: 30 min.
Booking Required for groups

Akaiwa Shuzo

In "Akaiwa," a major Biwa sake producing area, sake is brewed by using an abundance of specialty rice called Omachimai and Asahimai. The taste is mellow, flavorful and nutritious from the crystal-clear water in combination with finely honed traditional skills. Breeders are devoted to making good-quality sake as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

Akaiwa Shuzo
1113, Kamato, Akashi-ku, Ohyama-cho, Hyogo
TEL: 0798-785-130
MAIL: info@akaiwa.co.jp
Closed: All year-end and New Year holidays
Hours: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Time required for observation tour: 30 min.
Booking Required

Kutsuwa Shuho-Hana-An Azi

It is astonishingly true and incredible, tree thriving out the presence of Yamanashi’s, The world’s most influential wineries, located in Yamanashi, are famous for its bloom of nearly 90 points.

Hakuturu Tanbo Hakutsuru-Nishiki

“Hakutsuru Nishiki” rice, brother sake rice to Yamanashi Hakutsuru, is developed over a ten-year period, is almost up to 38%, and only naturally ripening sake is cultivated for this small applicants, method of Hakutsuru, its aroma and personality truly Amemiya is appealing.

Nadagiku Shuzo

This brewery is managed by a lady toji (master brewer), a rarity in Japan. With the aim of producing high-quality sake-making, small-batch production was started in 1994. Using local sake rice, their motto is “sake brewing painstakingly handmade one step at a time.” The toji and young brewers pour their heart into sake-making as one day to day.

Nadagiku Shuzo
1-121, Tegara, Himoji-shi, Hyogo
TEL: 079-286-3111
MAIL: maa-hamountsu@ndigaku.co.jp
Closed: All year-end and New Year holidays
Hours: 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Time required for observation tour: 20 min.
Booking: Not required

Brand

Note: The blue bottle, which was served at the Nobel Laureates dinner, is available in the world. Being characterized by a taste possessing rich aromas, it also goes well with cheese and other Western foods.

Brand

The rare Yamada Nishiki harvested in “Akaiwa,” is the special area among the Yamada regions producing area in Japan. It is symbolized and the main brewery that has won in many years.

Brand

A maintenance of tradition and excellence representation of Hozaku, to rich aroma and ripeness go well with sea Beacon and found southern sea as well as other white-renowned ten from the lexicon area.

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Exploring sake breweries in Setouchi

**Itano Shuzo Honten**

The roots of this area go back to the Momotaro legend, one of Japan’s cherished folktales. As it is adjacent to “Kojo Castle,” where the demon having been dispelled by Momotaro waited, the name is also used as the brand name from these classic grounds. This long-established brewery adheres to traditional sake-making in winter (cold season brewing) as well as using the sake rice produced in the prefecture of “Hime-noru-uchi Okayama.”

**Kosho Shuzo**

This sake brewery is located in Ushimado on the coast of the Seto Inland Sea, a port town that flourished during ancient times. “Miyagawa,” made in this area, proved popular with the people who traveled by sea and fished for favorable winds and tide to set sail again. The appeal of this sake is its taste is good both when warmed and chilled and is known as unakuchi, which is not too sweet and not too dry, allowing the drinker to never tire from that taste.

**Juhachizakari Shuzo**

This sake brewery has a brand that features a purity like an innocent maiden and the silkiness of cherry blossoms. Since old times, this brewery has been known for its sake with umami that goes well with seafood from the Setouchi area. The brewers place importance on a balance between a mild aroma, rich taste, and unriveting sharpness.

**Tsuji Honten**

When the brewery was established, it was granted the title of “Gozenshu” as the domain’s sake for presentation. It is also a noteworthy brewery in which Okayama Prefecture’s first lady boss (master brewer) has been making sake since 2007. NISHIKURA next door to the brewery, has a directly managed shop, cafe and restaurant, and is popular with tourists.

**Marumoto Shuzo**

Although grapes are typically grown at wineries, it is often not the case that rice is grown at a sake brewery. They start rice-growing for sake-making. They aim to be a sake “Dassai” using 100% home-grown rice. They brew only Junmai-shii taking full advantage of the taste of rice, which provides a feeling of fullness as if eating brown rice and mellow umami.

**Miyashita Shuzo**

The representative brand is “Kawami Hōji” made by using preparation water pumped up 100 meters from underground. This sake brewery’s forte is dry sake in Okayama where sweet sake is typical. Under the guidance of a Biicho toji who was named as a contemporary master craftsman, a junior toji who has inherited his skills creates sake that preserves tradition.

**Sake breweries in the Okayama area**

- **Itano Shuzo Honten**
  - Drive 30 minutes from JR Akashi Station
  - 116, Itano-shi, Okayama-ken, Okayama
  - Tel: 086-295-0025
  - Closed: Sunday and national holidays
  - Hours: 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
  - Time required for observation tour: 60 min.
  - Booking: Required

- **Juhachizakari Shuzo**
  - Drive 15 minutes from JR Akashi Station
  - 8-16, Hiijima Tsurukuchi, Kurashiki-shi, Okayama
  - Tel: 086-577-7125
  - Closed: Saturday, Sunday, and national holidays
  - Hours: 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
  - Time required for observation tour: 60 min.
  - Booking: Required

- **Tsuji Honten**
  - Drive 18 minutes from JR Chugoku-Katayama Station
  - 116, Katazawa, Marina-shi, Okayama
  - Tel: 086-34-1105
  - Closed: All year-end and New Year holidays
  - Hours: 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
  - Time required for observation tour: 60 min.
  - Booking: Required

- **Marumoto Shuzo**
  - Drive 15 minutes from JR Katahama Station
  - 2685, Kameura-cho Hanjo, Asakuchi-shi, Okayama
  - Tel: 086-34-3350
  - Hours: 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
  - Time required for observation tour: 60 min.
  - Booking: Required

- **Miyashita Shuzo**
  - Drive 10 minutes from JR Akashi Station
  - 116, Itano-shi, Okayama-ken, Okayama
  - Tel: 086-295-0025
  - Closed: Sunday and national holidays
  - Hours: 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
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  - Closed: Sunday and national holidays
  - Hours: 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
  - Time required for observation tour: 60 min.
  - Booking: Required

- **Kosho Shuzo**
  - Drive 15 minutes from JR Akashi Station
  - 4-3-1, Ushimado, Ushimado-cho, Setouchi-shi, Okayama
  - Tel: 086-36-1302
  - Closed: Saturday, Sunday, and national holidays
  - Hours: 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
  - Time required for observation tour: 60 min.
  - Booking: Required

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Exploring sake breweries in Setouchi

**Umida Shuzojo**

Take the Hiroden Bus from JR Kure Station, and get off at Enoki Shrine Center rice.

This sake brewery is located in the eastern part of Hiroshima City. Mt. Iwakami in the background is a gigantic rock mountain, and the subsoil water flowing from here is pumped up 60 meters from underground and used as preparation water. Having the belief of making sake everyone can relish, sake is brewed with a rich and friendly mouth-watering feel.

**Homohuchi Munaka Junmai Ginjo**

This Junmai Ginjo is made by brewing “Munaka Nishiki” rice for five years. After bottling without filtration, it is set into rice storage. Even now it enjoys the ruby and refreshing taste.

**Enoki Shuzo**

Take the Hiroden Bus from JR Kure Station, and get off at Enoki Shrine Center rice.

Having a desire to make sake no one has ever experienced before and extend the range of Japanese sake, for the first time in Japan, they manufacture “Kijunshu” brewed with sake rice in place of water. The full-bodied, luxuriant, and rich flavor suggestive of friendly or wise having a rich and mellow finish is one and only. The small brewery on an island floating on the Seto inland Sea is gaining attention from around the world.

**Miyake Honten**

Sempuku was named after two inspirational women who provided faithful support to the founder, Seiichi Miyake. "Sempuku" from his wife's name and "Puku" from his mother's name. Once having opened an overseas factory in addition to a domestic one, they have recorded the largest volume of production in Japan. For these achievements, it was decided to monochrome "Saké king of sake" as part of the brand name. Even now, they deliver a well-traveled Japanese sake beyond the borders of Japan.

**Fujii Shuzo**

This is a time-honored brewery located in Takehara, a scenic town facing the Seto inland Sea and once flourishing in the sail-making industry. Blessed with water as crystal-clear as underground water used as tap water, an excellent quality is ensured. The unwavering definition of sake-making of Ryusui is "sake complementing the individuality of food" adhering to 100% junmai (pure rice).

**Kirei Shuzo**

The name of Kirei Shuzo located in Saizo has grown in reputation and popularity as a city of sake in Japan as much loved by sake drinkers nationwide, and impales long life and eternal prosperity, derived from the words “Sake in Saizo, kame wa marun” (a crane lives for a thousand years and a turtle lives for ten thousand years). The breeze is a strongly sour sake in Hiroshima where most of the sake is known to be sweet, attracting many fans of Japanese sake.

**Kamoizumi Shuzo**

Walk 4 minutes from JR Kure Station.

This brewery is located in Saizo, a brewing area representative of Hiroshima. This brewery started sake-making with rice and rice malt alone in 1965 as a pioneer of junmai (pure rice) brewing, who spread the name "Junmai no Kamoizumi" across Japan. In recent years, they have expanded the appeal of Japanese sake not only in Japan but also worldwide through exports to Europe, the US, Asia, and other regions.

**Enoki Shuzo**

Walk 4 minutes from JR Kure Station.

**Kirei Shuzo**

Walk 4 minutes from JR Kure Station.

**Fujii Shuzo**

Walk 4 minutes from JR Kure Station.

**Kamoizumi Shuzo**

Walk 4 minutes from JR Kure Station.

**Miyake Honten**

Walk 4 minutes from JR Kure Station.

**Shinkin Kimoto Junmai**

This Junmai-shu is brewed by polishing "Kichinen-mon" rice, the origin of Sempuku. Sempuku is one of the few sake breweries that use the new rice (not a variety rice) each season demonstrates a loyalty to sake-making.

**Enoki Shuzo**

2-4, Saijokamiichi-cho, Higashihiroshima-shi, Hiroshima

**Miyake Honten**

7-15, Honmachi, Takehara-shi, Hiroshima

**Homohuchi Munaka Junmai Ginjo**

This Junmai Ginjo is made by brewing "Munaka Nishiki" rice for five years. After bottling without filtration, it is set into rice storage. Even now it enjoys the ruby and refreshing taste.

**Kamoizumi Shuzo**

2-4, Saijokamiichi-cho, Higashihiroshima-shi, Hiroshima

**Enoki Shuzo**

2-1-15, Ondo-cho Minamiondo, Kure-shi, Hiroshima

**Homohuchi Munaka Junmai Ginjo**

This Junmai Ginjo is made by brewing "Munaka Nishiki" rice for five years. After bottling without filtration, it is set into rice storage. Even now it enjoys the ruby and refreshing taste.

**Miyake Honten**

Walk 4 minutes from JR Kure Station.

**Kirei Shuzo**

Walk 4 minutes from JR Kure Station.

**Kamoizumi Shuzo**

Walk 4 minutes from JR Kure Station.

**Fujii Shuzo**

Walk 4 minutes from JR Kure Station.

**Kamoizumi Shuzo**

Walk 4 minutes from JR Kure Station.

**Miyake Honten**

Take the Hiroden Bus from JR Kure Station, and get off at Enoki Shrine Center rice.

**Kirei Shuzo**

Walk 4 minutes from JR Kure Station.

**Fujii Shuzo**

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**Kamoizumi Shuzo**

Walk 4 minutes from JR Kure Station.

**Miyake Honten**

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Exploring sake breweries in Setouchi

Asahishuzo

As a brewery of 100% Junmai Daiginjo brewed with Yamada Nishiki, the media has become fixated with this sake and its high profile has now caught the attention of all the world. With the introduction of technology and facilities that enables year-round brewing, the finest quality sake under the motto “Making every effort for customers who drink this sake” is offered.

Asahishuzo
214-4, Shutsutomi Choagae, Isawasaki-cho, Yamaguchi
TEL: 0827-46-0120
MAIL: shop@asahishuzo.ne.jp
Closed: January 1
Hours: Twice a day from 11:00 AM and from 2:00 PM
Timing required for observation tour:30 min.
Booking Required
Up to 3 people at a time

Yamagata Honten

This is a small sake brewery facing the old Sanyo-dō Road. Sake, umeshu (plum wine), and other alcoholic beverages. Committed to “Making beautiful sake.” sake is brewed wholeheartedly with the belief that if sake is made heartily, it will convey the brewery’s feelings all over the world.

Yamagata Honten
2933, Daizyume, Shunan-cho, Yamaguchi
TEL: 0835-25-0018
MAIL: isakem@bconet.ne.jp
Closed: Saturdays, Sundays, and national holidays
Hours: 10:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Timing required for observation tour:30 min.
Booking Required

Miyoshikiku Shuzo

Miyoshikiku takes its name from “Its fragrant aroma, its color pastel, and its beautiful tastes.” This locally-based small sake brewery is located in a cold climate area ideally suited for sake-making in the upper reaches of the Yoshinogawa River, one of the Three major rivers of Japan, as if in the mountain’s embrace north to south. While being:arctic like Tokushima, it is characterized by a new way, rich taste.

Miyoshikiku Shuzo
1681, Beito-cho Sanda, Miyoshiki-shi, Tokushima
TEL: 0881-72-0033
MAIL: miyoshikikushuzo.co.jp
Closed: irregularly
Hours: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Timing required for observation tour:60 min.
Booking Required

Chiyonokame Shuzo

This long-established brewery preserves its sake-making tradition handed down over 300 years dating from the Edo period using local rice, water and air. The brewers devote their energies to growing rice without use of pesticides (reducing the amount of pesticides; reduced pesticide cultivation), growing quality sake rice in cooperation with local farmers while the brewers themselves participate in rice-planting.

Chiyonokame Shuzo
12F-1, Hinoike, Ichikicho, Kita-gun, Ehime
TEL: 0893-44-2101
MAIL: shokai_kemokki.softbank.jp
Closed: Inquire
Hours: Inquire
Timing required for observation tour:30 min.
Booking Required

Nishimoto Shuzo

Founded more than 200 years ago, this traditional brewery is located in Uwajima, a small town in the southwest of Ehime. The brewery’s president who is also Ehime Prefecture’s oldest toji (master brewer) possesses the locally used sake-making ingredients. Kasuzake made by picking in sake less, Japanese picking melons and cucumbers that are grown in Ehime is also popular. It is a locally brewed item in which you can taste Japanese sake by picked fruits.

Nishimoto Shuzo
805, Minna-cho Miyosakishita, Uwajima-shi, Ehime
TEL: 0895-35-7508
MAIL: nakaya@kira.jp
Closed: Saturdays and Sundays
(May be open between November and December)
Hours: 10:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Timing required for observation tour:30 min.
Booking Required
Up to 10 people at a time

Yagi Shuzobu

"Yamatan Masamune" which has a clear taste was named after the famed sword “Masamune.” This brewery brews high-quality sake using nature’s gift of crystal-clear school water from Mi. Ishibuchi, the highest peak in eastern Japan and the Shikoku Mountains. With devotion to quality, the brewers put their hearts and souls into sake-making, and also make contributions to restoring earlier techniques by tackling the challenges of kanashiro (crack brewing) that once supported sake-making.

Yagi Shuzobu
3-3-8, Asahicho, Imabari-cho, Ehime
TEL: 0891-22-6700
MAIL: yagi@yagishuzobu.jp
Closed: Sundays and national holidays
(April to December only)
Timing required for observation tour:30 min.
Booking Required

Yamatan Masamune Ginjo-shu

This Ginjo-shu is brewed with the Shimonoseki sake rice produced in the Shimonoseki area. It is widely popular due to its savoriness and dry finish with an elegant aroma, pleasantly spreading throughout the mouth.

Yamatan Masamune Ginjo-shu

Speciality selected Yamada Nishiki rice produced in Hiiyoshi Prefecture is also available for a prolonged period of time by being aged in a fully automatic and mild tank. It is recommended to freeze it and then drink as a smooth
As English-speaking guide is not available, but there are many other attractive sake breweries. There are many other locally-based sake breweries producing choice sake, for which an English-speaking guide is not available. Explore the Setouchi area, and discover sake breweries that appeal to your sense of taste while enjoying the differences.

**Kikuchi Shuzo**

The sake brew preserves the tradition of "being quality-oriented" as their motto with the use of water from the Takahashigawa River boasting excellent water quality and a Biwako trout’s prominent skills that are always highly regarded at respective competitive shows.

**(Brand) Sanzen**

Drive 15 minutes from JR Bicchu-Takahashi Station

**Shiragiku Shuzo**

Traditional "Umakuchi" sake is brewed only using sake rice, including Okayama’s specialty rice and their original sake rice, with importance placed on the natural goodness of Okayama’s advantage in sake making.

**(Brand) Taiten Shiragiku**

Drive 15 minutes from JR Bicchu-Takahashi Station

**Muromachi Shuzo**

This brewery has a history of more than 300 years. Their creed is to make local sake only using Omashimai rice produced in Okayama Prefecture and the Omachi cold spring water. This sake has reached a highly acclaimed position in international alcoholic beverage competitions.

**(Brand) Sakura Muromachi**

Drive 15 minutes from JR Bicchu-Takahashi Station

**Kamotsuru Shuzo**

Only using the best possible rice, water and toyu, all effort is made to brew during the cold season and by handmade sake-making. Tradition is preserved in the making of Kamotsuru-specific high-quality sake, placing importance on the umami of rice.

**(Brand) Kamotsuru Gold**

Walk 6 minutes from JR Bicchu-Takahashi Station

**Iwasaki Shuzo**

This brewery is located in Hagi facing the Sea of Japan. You can enjoy the umami and sweetness of rice that goes so well with seafood. Making use of regional features, this is a community-based sake-making.

**(Brand) Choyo Fukumusume**

Drive 6 minutes from JR Koto Station

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**Kanemitsu Shuzo**

This representative brand was named after "Santoka," a haiku poet from Yamaguchi Prefecture, who loved traveling and sake. A traditional taste produced with sharply honed skills, commitment to sake-making, and thorough obsessiveness.

**(Brand) Santoka**

Walk 5 minutes from Kamotsuru Shuzo Station on the JR Sanyo Line

**Nagayama Shuzo**

This brewery aims to make local sake by using the qualities of nature of Yamaguchi Prefecture. Its sharp, rich taste is highly regarded by many cooks as a sake that maximizes the taste of dishes.

**(Brand) Yamazaru**

Drive 15 minutes from JR Hagi Station

**Nagayama Honke Shuzojo**

The dry sake is brewed with good-quality medium-hard water, the source of which is a karst tableland. Under the concept of "tasting and taste of rice," the aim is to make "SAKEE," a world-class brewed alcoholic beverage.

**(Brand) Taka**

Drive 10 minutes from JR Koto Station

**Yachiyo Shuzo**

This small sake brewery is located in Hagi, having a rich history. The sake brewer creates an elegant aroma as well as an elegant sweetness by using Yamada Nishiki cultivated with reduced pesticides in their own rice fields. They aim to be a sake Domaine engaged in each process from rice growing to sake-making.

**(Brand) Yachiyo**

Drive 30 minutes from JR Hagi Station

**Nishino Kinryo**

Since the Edo period, it has been called "Sanuki no Konpira sake" and loved by local drinkers. The aim is to produce a sake with a plump and round mouth-watery taste and relaxed feeling.

**(Brand) Kinryo**

Walk 10 minutes from JR Hagi Station

**Morikuni Shuzo**

This sake brewery located on Shodoshima facing the Seto Inland Sea is a rare small island brewery. While preserving tradition, this brewery established in the current Heisei period enjoys introducing innovative steps in its sake-making.

**(Brand) Mori**

Drive 6 minutes from Kusakabe Port
To know and choose better tastes

Explore the tastes of sake in Setouchi

How many tastes and aromas does sake have?
Are there any other alcoholic beverages that have an infinite number of tastes depending on the differences in raw materials, making, how to drink...?

While being preserved by tradition, sake brewing techniques actually progress and evolve day by day. Among them, frequently seen designations are picked up and introduced. Even a little knowledge of the following should make your world of sake even more delicious.

Specially designated sake
This designation is based on the Act on Sealing of a Sake Tax and on Liquor Business Administration, according to raw materials, manufacturing methods, pasting and aging, and so on. Sake is classified into eight different types: "Shinshu," "Daiginjo-shu," "Junmai-shu," "Junmai Daiginjo-shu," "Takemurasu Junmai-shu," "Jympho-shu," and "Takemurasu Junmai-hontou-shu.

Seasonal limited sake
In Japan, having four seasons, there are seasonal sakes that can only be made during a particular time of the year. In general, sake making begins around October, and the initially made sake is released first as "Shinshu," "Harata (aged)," or "Shinkushou." It is a sake version of Nouvelle that has attractive bouquet due to its fresh tastes. When the new sake is aged passing spring and summer in the brewery. It is called "Hakuihoshi" or "Hakui." It is stripped during the cool season around September and October. The taste is refined and enriched by the aging process in one of the features of Japanese sakes. Furthermore, with the hope that people can enjoy sake pleasantly even during summer when they have their appetite, Nukada sake is made around July. Various types of Nukada sake have appeared, such as a refreshing type like sake wine, and a higher proof Genmai type to drink with ice as it is chilled. Sometimes cool bottle designes should also be noted.

Shirakusu sake (spring sake)
This is one of the sake pressing methods. Without applying pressure, sake-dipping method is collected, which requires time and effort. Since this is a special pressing method, the production volume is small, and sake is often presented at Shinshu Koryokai (sake sake testing competition) or the like. As the sake is collected in a 20 liter container called saki, it is also called "Talk in a sake" or "Sotan sake.

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Nigori sake
Sake is transparentized by filtering through sake bags for pressing or with a press after alcoholic fermentation of rice. Nigori sake is in a turbid state because it is coarsely filtered in the pressing process. In many cases, it has a slightly sweet aftertaste, derived from flavor of rice. According to the turbidity, the name can change to "Yu-nigori." There is also a Name-Japanesization type that is stripped in the new sake season.

Kinsu
This is a traditional way of making sake with the sake of the power of nature, which had been common up until the Meiji period. The sake is a complex mixture of wild strong acidity and deep richness. The strong nature of sake further expands into a deeper taste when it is tempered. It appears as if the type of sake conveys the long history of Japanese sake.

Appeal of "Kan-zake (warmed sake)," reaching the pinnacle of umami of sake!
Being drinkable in different temperature zones, such as at room temperature or chilled, is sake’s special appeal. Among other alcoholic beverages in the world, only sake seems to be commonly served warm. Heating it increases its umami and its mouth-watering sensation becomes mild. The taste spreads magically. According to the heating temperature, it is called by an atmospheric name specific to sake as Hitotada-kan (about 35 degrees), Nuru-kan (about 40 degrees), Tobikiri-kan (55 degrees or Higher), and so on.
Sake in Setouchi extends beyond national cooking borders

Appeal of sake extending beyond national cooking borders

The combination of sake and western-style foods that breaks down stereotypes such as a sake should be served only with Japanese food is transcending not only Japanese but also people outside of Japan. A wide selection of sake is enjoyable to drink in various ways. The combination of sake and dishes is lightheartedly enjoyable just like red or white wine selected as “a thick taste for a meat dish” or “a light taste for a fish dish.” There are more and more restaurants serving sake not for “eccentricity” but as “a drink best suited for a particular dish.” There are also other reasons why sake goes well with various dishes. Japanese people eat various foods originating from both the West and the East together with rice as a staple food. Since rice goes well with a wide variety of dishes, sake made from rice could also be well-matched with any dish depending on the condition. Enjoy sake not only at meals while traveling but also at your everyday table.

Combination of sake and western dishes enhances mutual tastes

01. Pink de Courtesan: spoilt horse, named after a horse realness noun, are arranged on a plate. What pairs well with the solid taste is good sake of a unique body and richness. Some people say that it blends with the taste of the dish in the mouth feeling of a brandy-like flavor.
02. Pink stewed with hamaguro, coconut milk, and various spices is arranged as a plate. The richness of coconut milk and the stimulation of spices are captivating. What goes well with this unique taste is underarmored sparkling sake. The taste of the mouth is invigorated and the taste of the dish is accentuated.
03. This dish is dressed with a rug sauce in which sauce is densely combined by simmering chopped liver together with sake. What is consistent with the pronounced taste is hamamatsu sake that the texture of a fatty rice is perceptible. The flavor as it wrapping the whole makes us feel the powerful heat that makes our palates surrender to the dish.
Shirozake

Originally, “Takakura” with peach (monot) blossoms soaked in sake because it led to “Momosuke”, literally meaning a hundred years was drunk at Chotaku-no-Sekku (sake festival) on March 5th. In the middle Edo period, however, Shirozake came into fashion as it was easy to drink, and it reportedly took the place of Takakura. Shirozake is made by adding reiin (sweet cooking rice wine) and shochu (distilled spirit) to steamed rice, brewing for a certain period of time, and mixing it. This sake is sweet and mellow having a unique flavor. Unlike amazake, it has an alcohol content of around 9%.

For Japanese people, sake is familiar as it is enjoyed at mealtimes, while it is also drunk during festivals, events and other special occasions with various wishes in mind. Japan’s unique sake culture having been passed down for generations is introduced here.

Sake on special occasions

Sake Matsuri (festival)
Sagano, Hachimanchikokuramachi-shi, Kyoto

Sake, in the Kansai area, underwent dramatic development by the soft water brewing method from the late Meiji period to early Showa period. “Gekkeikan” is a sake brewery in Gosei known as one of the three major sake brewery locations in Japan. The festival takes place every October, with many kinds of events at multiple sites around JR Gose Station. The festival becomes crowded with more than 350,000 visitors from all over Japan for two days, and one of the most popular sites is the “Gekkeikan” brewery. Since about 1,000 brands of local sake from around the nation can be comparison-tasted, many sake drinkers are drawn to the festival. Also, each of the seven sake breweries along the Sagano don showcases their own events, and the sake limited to Sake Matsuri has attracted the attention of many sake aficionados.

Shobuzake

As one of the ceremonies performed to drive away evil spirits with the use of "Shibu (Japanese iris)" at Tange-no-Sekku (boys' festival) on May 5th, Shibu roots are chopped and soaked in sake for about 30 minutes. If the roots cannot be easily obtained, you can enjoy graciousness together with an aroma by pouring sake in a cup with Shibu leaves in it, which is not as strong as roots. Other ceremonies having been performed to drive away evil spirits include “Shibuyu (thick with Shibu leaves)” and “Shibuzaka (ink colored).” From ancient times, the scent of Shibu has been believed to kill the body of evil spirits and disease, and in fact, it is said to be much prized as an oriental medicine in China.

Kikuzake

This sake with chrysanthemum flowers (kiku) floated or soaked is drunk at Chotaku-no-Sekku (chrysanthemum festival) on September 9th of the lunar calendar. It is said to have originated from a Chinese custom according to the philosophy of yin and yang, the largest single-digit odd number “9” is considered to be yang (positive). Since September 9th this year is enormous with too much yin’s power (negative energy), the festival is said to have originated for reasons of purification. In China, the chrysanthemum is believed to have life-prolonging power, and in Japan, the nobility during the Heian period drank Kikuzake while appreciating chrysanthemum flowers to pray for a long life. It is still held as an event at temples and shrines.

Otoso

This sake made by marinating “Tosens,” a combination of several crude drugs, in sake and minto in drinks to pray for a year of perfect health. On New Year’s Day, the whole family drinks it with a special-purpose sake set called “Tosens” in order from the youngest to the oldest, while chanting “Tosens kore nometia ikka kurusumichi makka, ikka kore nometia shikyakushiki makka” (If everyone drinks this, the family will never suffer, and when the family drinks it, one life (about 4 kilometers) will be clean of diseases). The sake in which the flavors of various crude drugs are widely spread is strongly unique, but it can be made easy to drink by adjusting the amount of minto. It may be called an alcoholic beverage for medical purposes rather than a New Year’s ritual drink.

Exploration of Nada no Sakagura (sake breweries in Nada)
Ishigakumakoka and Nada-ko, Kodai-shi, Biwako

Nada-shi is counted as one of the three major sake brewing locations in Japan. Nada-Gogo consisting of five areas has been known as a sake producing location from old times. “Exploration of Nada no Sakagura” a stamp rally event in Nada’s sake culture is a unique event carried out in Nada over a period of one month from mid-October. With the participation of sake breweries in three areas of Nada-Gogo, the bus service “Nada no Sakagura Meguru Bus” makes a stop at each sake brewery. At each sake brewery, you can not only learn Nada’s sake making history and culture but also enjoy a variety of events. Of course, you can taste Nada’s choice sake. If you collect stamps by exploring the sake breweries and enter a drawing, you may win the grand prize.