

A Brief Guide to Saké Types

Junmai

Junmai literally means “pure rice” and refers to a family of saké as well as a grade of saké within that family. Junmai or pure rice saké is made using only water, rice, yeast and koji. There is no distilled alcohol in junmai saké.

Ginjo/Junmai Ginjo

Ginjo saké is made with rice that has been refined down to 60% or less of its original size. Ginjos are elegant and refined while still offering some of the richer qualities of a junmai. Junmai Ginjo will be ginjo sake to which no alcohol has been added.

Daiginjo/Junmai Daiginjo

Daiginjo is saké made with rice which has been refined to 50% or less of its original size. These saké are elegant, light, complex and refined. Some can be wonderfully aromatic as well while retaining a Ginjo like purity of fruit. Junmai Daiginjo is pure rice saké to which no alcohol has been added.

Honjozo

Like junmai, honjozo describes a family of saké and a level of saké within that family. Honjozo saké is made with the addition of a small amount of distilled alcohol. The addition of which brings out additional aromatics and flavors. Honjozo makes an excellent warm saké, and all of Ai’s honjozo saké by the glass can be ordered warm in a two glass carafe.

Nigori

Nigori-Saké, literally meaning “cloudy saké” is a special category of saké with the lees still in the bottle. Nigori saké has a creamy mouthfeel and smooth, easy-going flavor.

Shochu

Shochu is Japan’s indigenous distilled beverage. Typically containing 25% alcohol, it is weaker than Western distillates but stronger than saké. Shochu can be made from a variety of ingredients, with rice, barley and sweet potato being popular options. Shochu can also be served in a variety of manners, such as chilled, on the rocks, with hot water and accompanied by a variety of fruit including traditional Japanese pickled plums. Ai’s service staff is well versed in shochu service and would be pleased to discuss the various options.

Sake Level	Tasting Profiles	Food Pairings
Junmai	Junmais tend to be robust and flavorful and range the gamut from sweet to very dry. They are versatile food sakés because of their range of personalities.	Grilled chicken and fish such as Hamachi Kama make a great counterpart to the rich, earthy Junmai style.
Ginjo/Junmai Ginjo	Rounder and more aromatic than their Junmai counterparts. Serve slightly chilled but can also be enjoyed warm.	The most versatile of food sakés, Ginjo and Junmai Ginjo pair well with a variety of sush and maki.
Daiginjo/Junmai Daiginjo	Crisp and ethereal on the palate. Daiginjo saké is rarely heavy or cloying. These sake should be served slightly chilled	Sashimi! In particular, delicate cuts of whitefish pair exceptionally well with the refined character of Daiginjo
Honjozo	Fuller bodied but very aromatic. Serve these versatile saké slightly chilled to warm.	As with Ginjos, Honjozo saké can be paired with a wide variety of sushi as well as grilled and fried foods.

SUPER FLIGHT 18
A flight sampling of the four different grades of saké

JUNMAI FLIGHT 9

Sparkling Saké, Ozeki Hana-Awaka, Hyogo Prefecture (250 ml)	9	20
Hakutsuru, Kobe Prefecture (1.8 L)	9	109
Masumi Nagano Prefecture (720 ml)	9	45
Kinro, Hyogo Prefecture (1.8 L)	8	100
Ozeki Dry, (1.5 L)	7	79
Kaguyahime, Kyoto Prefecture (500 ml)		35
Ichishima Karen, Niigata Prefecture (500 ml)		48
Suijin, Kyoto Prefecture (300 ml)		25

GINJO FLIGHT 13

Mano Tsuru Four Diamonds, Niigata Prefecture (500ml)		70
Bichuwajo, Okayama Prefecture (720 ml)		70
Watari Bune Ferry Boat, Ibaraki Prefecture (300 ml)		35
Rika Suimei, Totori (500ml)		55
Jokigen Happiness, Yamagata Prefecture (720 ml)		75
Shoin, Yamaguchi Prefecture (500 ml)		60
Mizuno Shirabe, Kyoto Prefecture (720 ml)		80
Dewazakura, Cherry Bouquet, Yamagata Prefecture (720ml)	11	75
Kaku-Rei, Niigata Prefecture (720ml)		85
Kikusui, Niigata Prefecture (720ml)	10	60
Ginjo Premier (720ml)	9	50

DAIGINJO FLIGHT 16

Sho-Une, Kobe Prefecture (1.8L)	12	150
Osakaya-Chobei, Hyogo Prefecture (720ml/1.8L)	14	100/200
Mizbasho, Gunma Prefecture (500 ml)	18	70
Mouriko, Yamaguchi Prefecture (720 ml)		80
Chiyomusubi, Totori Prefecture (500 ml)		85
Kubota Manjyu, Niigata Prefecture (720 ml)		250

HONJOZO FLIGHT 11

Kasumi Tsuru “Kimoto” Hyogo Prefecture (720 ml)		60
Fuji-Sake Apple Blossom, Saitama Prefecture (720 ml)	10	60
Madoka, Iwate Prefecture (720 ml)		55
Daishichi, Fukushima Prefecture (1.8 L)	9	109
Karatamba, Nishinomiya Prefecture (720 ml)	9	54

NIGORI SAKE/ORGANIC SAKE/SHOCHU

Yuki no Boshu Nigori Sake, Cabin in the Snow Akita Prefecture (300 ml)		33
Kamoizume Nigori Sake, Summer Snow Hiroshima Prefecture (500ml)		45
Sayuri Nigori Sake, Kobe Prefecture (720 ml)	9	45
Daishichi Kimoto Shizen Organic Sake, Fukushima Prefecture (720 ml)		75
Shonen Jidai Shochu Rice, Aged in old Cognac Barrels (750 ml)		65
Iichiko Shochu Barley (750 ml)	10	55
Hanamo Imota Shochu, Sweet Potato & Rice (750 ml)		80
Hakutsuru Organic hot sake, Kobe Prefecture (carafe)		10