Portland Community College's cultureSEast presents:

SAKE UNVEILED

on the history and science of Japanese "sake"

THURSDAY, MAY 17TH
12:00 - 1:00 PM
PCC SOUTHEAST - GREAT HALL

Made possible by: THE STUDENT ACTIVITY FEE
What are we covering?

- Saké
- Shochu (distilled spirits)
- Awamori (distilled spirits)
- Habushu (Pit Viper liquor)
- Umeshu (plum liqueur)
- Japanese Beer
- Japanese Whiskey
- And where to find all of this in PDX
By the way-

- This PowerPoint available to anyone who wants it
- Grab my business card and email me
Quick Language Lesson

日本酒

ni           hon           shu

PRONOUNCED:

“knee – hone – shoe”
This is that classic Japanese drink, served chilled or warm (more about this later)

In Japanese, it’s called “Nihonshu”

In English, we call it “Saké”

“Saké,” spoken as “oh-saké” in Japanese, means any kind of alcohol you can drink. Beer, wine, spirits, it’s all “oh-saké.”

My guess is it’s an old borrowing, and nuance was lost in translation
When speaking in English, even native Japanese speakers call it “Saké”

When speaking in Japanese, they’ll call it “Nihonshu”

Why should you care / Why does this matter?

- Generally you don’t have to care, everyone knows “Saké”
- But when talking to Japanese speaker, “Nihonshu” shows you know what you’re talking about
- Best to order it this way if you’re in Japan
- Opens up cultural doors
So, what is this drink called “Saké” / “Nihonshu”
(I’ll refer to it as both for maximum confusion)
Saké Brewing Basics:

KOJI MOLD + YEAST breaks down GRAIN (rice) into ALCOHOL & CO2
Beer & Saké Similarities

• Process is basically the same

• Both are fermented from GRAIN

• Once fermentation is done

• You’re meant to drink them young

• From ageing, they usually abstain
**日本酒 – Saké / Nihonshu**

**Differences between Saké & Beer**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MALTED BARLEY</th>
<th>RICE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contains AMYLASE</td>
<td>No AMYLASE enzyme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boiling breaks down starches into sugars</td>
<td>Yeast cannot metabolize the starch by itself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy for Yeast to attack</td>
<td>Koji mold is used to break starches down into sugars</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HOW SAKÉ IS MADE

1 - Rice is harvested

2 – Rice is Milled / Polished*

Very important step

Amount polished determines Saké grade
HOW SAKÉ IS MADE

3 - Rice is washed & steamed

4 – Koji Mold is applied

This is the mold that breaks down the rice starch into sugars that yeast can metabolize.
HOW SAKÉ IS MADE

5 – Koji Mold, along with yeast, is applied to the steamed rice.

• Applied in batches
  • (not all at once)

• Keeps healthy balance between freshly converted starches and yeast

• Process yields highest ABV (~20%) for any fermented, non-distilled beverage
HOW SAKÉ IS MADE

6 – Distilled Ethyl Alcohol is Added
 (in most cases)

• Adding Ethanol does a couple things

• (1) Helps bring out flavor and aromatics

• (2) Boosts volume

• (3) Raises ABV, but saké gets watered back down to 15 ~ 20% ABV

• “Junmai” is a type of nihonshu that does not have added Ethanol
HOW SAKÉ IS MADE

7 – Saké / Nihonshu is Pressed

8 – Filtered & Pasteurized
   • “Nigori” is unfiltered
   • “Namazaké” is unpasteurized

9 – Placed in Storage Tanks

10 – Pasteurized again before it’s Bottled & Shipped
   • Like beer, most Saké / Nihonshu is not aged
ENJOYING SAKÉ / NIHONSHU

HOT VS COLD
ENJOYING SAKÉ / NIHONSHU

• Most Saké / Nihonshu is enjoyed chilled

• It’s often brewed to be served one way or another (either hot or cold)

• Sometimes the same Saké / Nihonshu can be enjoyed either way
ENJOYING SAKÉ / NIHONSHU

• Often served straight from the bottle into simple glassware

• Is also served into a carafe first, then poured into small ceramic cups
日本酒 – Saké / Nihonshu

ENJOYING SAKÉ / NIHONSHU

• Can also be served from a metal or pewter vessel
ENJOYING SAKÉ / NIHONSHU

• This is my favorite method

• Chilled Saké poured in a glass that overflows into a square wood / lacquered vessel

• Not everyone serves it this way

• Enjoy figuring out how to drink it if it comes to you like this
ENJOYING SAKÉ / NIHONSHU

HOT SAKÉ

- Less common than chilled, but still common enough that most restaurants serve warm Nihonshu
- Typically heated up by pouring into carafe and submerging carafe in hot water
- Then served up in small ceramic cups
ENJOYING SAKÉ / NIHONSHU

HOT SAKÉ

• Seems to have been more common in older generations

• Not all Nihonshu lends itself well to being served warm

• Also comes down to personal taste

• Anecdotally, seems hot saké is more often enjoyed in the colder latitudes
GRADES of SAKÉ / NIHONSHU

Grades are Determined by Two Criteria:

1. How much the rice has been polished
2. Whether ethanol / water has been added
GRADES of SAKÉ / NIHONSHU

Polishing the Rice

- UNPOLISHED
- 70%
- 40%
日本酒 – Saké / Nihonshu

GRADES of SAKÉ / NIHONSHU

Polishing the Rice

• Strips the fats and proteins from the outer layer
• Exposes the inner, starchy core, makes it easier for the Koji mold and Yeast to do their thing
• The more the rice is polished:
  • The “higher” the grade
  • More subtle flavor / aromatics
  • Higher cost (production costs are that much more)
日本酒 – Saké / Nihonshu

GRADES of SAKÉ / NIHONSHU

DAIGINJO
“die – geen – joe”
Polished to 50% or less

GINJO
“geen – joe”
Polished to 60% or less

HONJOZO
“hone – joe – zo”
Polished to 70% or less

FUTSU-SHU
“foo – tosoo – shoe”
No polishing required
日本酒 – Saké / Nihonshu

GRADES of SAKÉ / NIHONSHU

DAIGINJO
“die – geen – joe”
Up here, tend to get milder flavors, more subtle aromatics

GINJO
“geen – joe”

HONJOZO
“hone – joe – zo”

FUTSU-SHU
“foo – tsoo – shoe”
Down here, tend to get richer, earthier flavors
日本酒 – Saké / Nihonshu

GRADES of SAKÉ / NIHONSHU

DAIGINJO
“die – geen – joe”

More expensive because of production costs. At least twice as much rice must be used to get same yield as FUTSU-SHU (since rice has to be polished down to at least 50% of its original size). Also, more expensive saké-grade rice is often used.

GINJO
“geen – joe”

HONJOZO
“hone – joe – zo”

FUTSU-SHU
“foo – tsoo – shoe”

Less expensive because no polishing required, also uses food-grade rice (less expensive than saké-grade)
GRADES of SAKÉ / NIHONSHU

Other than rice polishing, addition of ethanol & water also affects grade and labeling

Most Saké / Nihonshu adds Ethanol

- Ethanol dissolves organic solids, boosts flavor and aromatics
- Is then watered back down to 15 – 20% ABV range
- No other additives are used in Saké / Nihonshu

Saké / Nihonshu that does NOT have added ethanol and water is called:

JUNMAI

“june – my”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rice Milling Percentage</th>
<th>Alcohol-added Style</th>
<th>Pure Rice Style</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50% or Less Remaining</td>
<td>Daiginjo</td>
<td>Junmai Daiginjo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60% or Less Remaining</td>
<td>Ginjo</td>
<td>Junmai Ginjo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70% or Less Remaining</td>
<td>Honjozo</td>
<td>Junmai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Minimum Milling Requirement</td>
<td>Futsu-shu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
日本酒 – Saké / Nihonshu

There’s also SPARKLING SAKÉ / NIHONSHU

• Not very common

• “Zipang” is the only one I’ve found in PDX region

• This 250ml bottle runs about $7 retail (have found it online for cheaper)
日本酒 – Saké / Nihonshu

So where should you start?

- SakéOne
  - Local saké brewer in Forest Grove
  - They have a tasting room
  - Go there and start with a saké flight
  - Then have another saké flight
  - Have fun seeing what you like / don’t like

- Full disclosure: I’m a club member of SakéOne (like a wine club), I love that they’ve brought this piece of brewing culture to Oregon, I like their stuff and I find them really accessible
So where should you start?

• SakéOne
  tasting room open 11 – 5 everyday

820 Elm St
Forest Grove, OR 97116

[www.sakeone.com](http://www.sakeone.com)
日本酒 – Saké / Nihonshu

- AT THE STORE, check the label to see where it places on the DRY – SWEET scale
  - Keep in mind that even DRY Saké / Nihonshu can be a bit sweet

- AT A RESTAURANT, Saké / Nihonshu is grouped by grade. How DRY or SWEET it might be is often not listed
  - Just ask for something you feel like: DRY, SWEET or in the middle
  - Or ask for something lighter or richer
SAKÉ / NIHONSHU with FOOD

No real rules. Drink what works for you. But here are my rules:

• I don’t like it with Sushi
  • Sushi has a delicate sweetness that gets lost if I drink saké. Prefer hot tea or crisp beer.
  • Same with Tempura. Hot green tea or dry beer is better for me.

• I like it with heavier, savory food
  • Japanese curry, ramen, even spicy food, I prefer saké with these
  • I’ve read opinions from saké sommeliers that it pairs best with lighter food

• When in doubt, ask
  • If at a restaurant and not sure, just ask
  • If doing a saké flight, ask what food matches what you’re tasting
日本酒 – Saké / Nihonshu

Where can you find Saké in PDX

- **SakéOne**
  - Can buy their stuff at their tasting room or through their website. They also carry imports.

- **Any Japanese restaurant**
  - I have some recommended restaurants later in the presentation

- **Uwajimaya**
  - Japanese supermarket in Beaverton. They have a small library of saké. More info on Uwajimaya later in the presentation.
NEXT UP

焼酎

PRONOUNCED:
“show – chew”
LITERALLY

“burn(ed)”  “alcohol”

In other words, it’s a distilled spirit
SHŌCHŪ  ≠  SAKÉ (Nihonshu)

- SHŌCHŪ is not SAKÉ (nihonshu)
- Even in English, SHŌCHŪ is called “SHŌCHŪ”
焼酎 – SHŌCHŪ

QUICK DISTINCTION

SAKÉ
(nihonshu):

(1) BREWED
(only from Rice)

(2) DRINK IT RIGHT AWAY
焼酎 – SHŌCHŪ

**QUICK DISTINCTION**

**SHŌCHŪ:**

1. **FERMENTED**
   (variety of ingredients)
2. **DISTILLED**
   (only once)
3. **AGED**
   (6 months to 3 years)
4. **DRINK IT**
(1) FERMENTATION – What’s it made from?

- Most commonly fermented from:
  - Sweet Potato さつま芋 (satsuma imo)
  - Barley 麦 (mugi)
  - Rice 米 (kome)
  - Brown Sugar 黒糖 (kokutō)

- Also fermented from: Buckwheat, Aloe, Pumpkin, Chestnut, Tomato, Sesame, etc.

- Uses Koji & Yeast in fermentation (similar to saké, but this is the only similarity)
(2) DISTILLATION – “burning” the alcohol

- SHŌCHŪ is often called “Japanese vodka,” but it’s quite different:
  - 1) Vodka is distilled multiple times (this is why it’s a good mixing / cocktail alcohol)
  - 2) SHŌCHŪ is distilled only once
- Single distillation gives SHŌCHŪ a strong character of what it was fermented from
  - (rice, barley, sweet potato, etc)
- There is SHŌCHŪ that’s been distilled multiple times, but it’s almost never meant for consumption
- Is used as additive in saké, or to make plum liquor
(3) AGEING – smoothing out the flavor

- Typical ageing is at least 6 months, sometimes up to 3 years or more
  - Most commonly 6 months to a year
- Aged in a variety of vessels
  - Clay pots
  - Casks
  - Steel containers
Even after ageing, most SHÔCHÛ comes out clear

This is why it’s often compared to vodka, even though the flavor, character, and manner of drinking is completely different

Sometimes SHÔCHÛ can have a mild, golden hue

In most cases, though, it’s clear
(4) DRINKING SHŌCHŪ – Straight? On the rocks? With water?

• ABV is 25 ~ 30%, lighter than most distilled drinks, though can sometimes be more

• Typically served on ice, or with ice & water, but there’s nothing stopping you from ordering it straight

• There are SHŌCHŪ cocktails, but mostly it’s served on ice

• Personally, I’ll enjoy SHŌCHŪ straight when I want to get to know a particular kind, also during colder months

• During warmer months it’s refreshing on ice
(4) DRINKING SHŌCHŪ – FOOD PAIRING

- Great with anything
- In Japan, SHŌCHŪ is much more common than saké
  - SHŌCHŪ is consumed at about 2:1 ratio compared to saké
  - Finishes cleanly, doesn’t leave a lingering sweetness like saké
- If in a restaurant, and you’re not sure what to get, generally any given SHŌCHŪ is a safer bet than any given saké (but this also is about personal preference)
Where can you find SHŌCHŪ in PDX

• Most liquor stores I’ve been to in PDX have this bottle of “iichiko”
  • It’s all right. It’s also the only SHŌCHŪ liquor stores have.

• Most Japanese restaurants don’t have SHŌCHŪ on the menu. Two that do are:
  • Maki – in Tigard
  • Syun – in Hillsboro
Where can you find SHŌCHŪ in PDX

- Online retailers do carry SHŌCHŪ
  - The only ones that have a decent selection are the ones specializing in SHŌCHŪ or saké

- If you’re in the Seattle region, the Seattle branch of Uwajimaya does have SHŌCHŪ
  - But the local Uwajimaya in Beaverton does not
NEXT UP

泡盛

AWA MORI

PRONOUNCED: “awamori”
AWAMORI – What is it?

• Like SHŌCHŪ, AWAMORI is distilled
• Like SHŌCHŪ, AWAMORI is aged 6 months to 3 years
• Like SHŌCHŪ, it’s typically about 25 ~ 30% ABV
• Like SHŌCHŪ, it’s typically served on ice or with ice & water

• So what’s the difference between AWAMORI & SHŌCHŪ
AWAMORI – What sets it apart from SHŌCHŪ?

• In order to legally be called AWAMORI:
  
  • (1) It **must** be fermented & distilled from long-grain indica rice
  
  • (2) It **must** use a particular strain of black Koji mold in fermentation
  
  • (3) It **must** be made in Okinawa (Ryūkū Islands)
AWAMORI – What sets it apart from SHŌCHŪ?

- AWAMORI historically precedes SHŌCHŪ
  - Distillation came through Okinawa up to mainland Japan
- AWAMORI’s flavor and character are quite distinct
  - If you drink an AWAMORI, you know it’s AWAMORI
- Analogous to comparing Scotch & Bourbon: both are whiskey, but flavor / character is distinct
- AWAMORI & SHŌCHŪ are both the same kind of spirit, but their flavor & character are distinct
AWAMORI – What sets it apart from SHŌCHŪ?

• (1) Fermentation
  - Throw everything in fermentation vessel and done (saké & SHŌCHŪ are fermented in layers / batches)

• (2) Ageing
  - Aged almost exclusively in clay pots, sometimes served directly from them
  - Like SHŌCHŪ, even after ageing it comes out clear or sometimes with a mild, golden hue
  - AWAMORI where at least 50% of the content is aged at least 3 years is labeled 古酒 “koshu” (pronounced kūsū in Okinawan dialect)
Finding AWAMORI in PDX

- Have only found it in one liquor store in the greater PDX region

  Beaverton Liquor
  11423 SW Beaverton Hillsdale Hwy
  Beaverton, OR 97005

- Last I checked, they have two kinds of AWAMORI, both on the mild side. Check their Asian liquor section. The bottles do have “AWAMORI” written in English, but in small print.

- This is one of those bottles. I forgot what the other one was.
泡盛 – AWAMORI

HABU-SHU – a quick subset of AWAMORI

ハブ酒

“yellow-spotted Pit Viper”

“liquor”
泡盛 – AWAMORI

HABU-SHU – why Pit Vipers in liquor?

• Old practice on Okinawan Islands where a species of Pit Viper is common

• Pit Vipers are placed on ice, after passing out they’re gutted and bled

• Typically wake up briefly, go into aggressive striking pose before they finally die

• Placed in high-alcohol AWAMORI to preserve them and dissolve venom

• Lower alcohol AWAMORI / honey / herb mix is added later
泡盛 – AWAMORI

HABU-SHU – why snakes in liquor?

- Often sold in smaller bottles without the Pit Viper
- Not common to find, even in mainland Japan
- Vaguely similar to AWAMORI in taste, but is sweet owing to the honey
- Often called “snake saké” or “snake wine,” but is not saké and is not wine
- Haven’t found this in the U.S.
NEXT UP

梅酒
UME SHU

PRONOUNCED:
“oomay – shoe”
梅酒  –  UME SHU

“plum”  “liquor”

梅酒

- Sometimes called “plum wine,” but it’s not wine
- I’ve even heard “plum saké,” but it’s not saké
- Is technically a liqueur
So What is Umeshu?

• In English, seems to be general agreement to call it by its Japanese name, Umeshu

• Made by ageing plums and rock sugar in distilled SHŌCHŪ

  • Has a sweet, sour, medicinal plum flavor

  • The longer it’s aged, the stronger the plum flavor and darker the liqueur
So What is Umeshu?

- Typically around 15% ABV, can be lower / higher
- Often enjoyed on ice or mixed in cocktails
  - With cheaper Umeshu, I enjoy half Umeshu half club soda with ice (good summer cocktail)
  - If it’s aged for three years or longer, I prefer it straight or on ice
So What is Umeshu?

- This particular brand, Choya, is readily available in the U.S.
  - Can get tall bottles, or even single-serving jars, at Uwajimaya
  - Plums are edible. Try them.

- Can make your own version:
  - wash a bunch of plums, layer them with rock sugar in a jar, add vodka, wait at least 6 months before drinking
NEXT UP

ビール

BEER!!

PRONOUNCED:
“bee-ru”
A brief history of beer in Japan

- Earliest reference is 1727, Dutch Captain Johannes Thedens brought beer to Shogun as tribute.
- Earliest recorded brewing was in 1853 by scientist Kōmin Kawamoto (he read about brewing in a Dutch book).
- First brewery opened in Yokohama in 1869 by Norwegian-American William Copeland.
- Most popular style of beer now is pale lager / pilsner that’s slightly sweet, barely any hops, and finishes dry.
Modern beer in Japan

- Big Four control most of the market:
  - Asahi, Suntory, Kirin, Sapporo
  - Vast majority of restaurants have contract with one of them
  - So when you order a beer, you get what they have

- The Big Four all make a variety of beers, including dark beers, richer malt, added hops, etc, and every year new beers are put out

- Most beers, though, fall under that pale lager / pilsner style, are mildly sweet, and tend to have a dry finish
Modern beer in Japan

- On top of the Big Four, there’s a small Fifth

- Orion Brewing, the draft of choice in the Ryūkyū (Okinawa) Islands

- Taste in between that of heavier Kirin lager and sharper Asahi Super Dry
General agreement that the so-called “Super Dry” is a Japanese-style beer, as it’s a style born in Japan.

In 1987, Asahi put out their “Super Dry”
  - Extremely popular, led to the “Dry Wars,” similar to the Hop Wars of the Pacific NW.

Is made by adding enzymes that help yeast break down maltose.

It’s a pilsner that cuts cleanly off the palate, lack of aftertaste compliments Japanese food really well.
Craft Beer in Japan, Quick Overview

• Experiencing a boom right now in Japan

• Classic styles like IPAs, also lots of beers made with Japanese ingredients
  • Interesting flavors and styles, but can be gimmicky

• Limited, though, by three major factors:
  • (1) Big Four lock on restaurant business
  • (2) Beer regulation & taxes
  • (3) Home brewing illegal in Japan
ビール – BEER

Craft Beer in Japan and its limitations

• (1) Big Four Lock on Restaurants
  • Almost all restaurants are locked into a contract with one of the Big Four, not allowed to serve craft beer

• (2) Beer Regulation & Tax Laws
  • In order to make your own beer, must show you have capacity to produce 60,000 liters / year (was 2,000,000 until 1994)
  • Most small pubs can’t produce / sell this much per year

• (3) Home Brewing is Illegal
  • No amateur brewing industry to bolster craft beer startups
ビール – BEER

発泡酒 – Happōshu – Beer, but not legally Beer

- Literally “sparkling alcohol”
- Everyone makes their own Happōshu (the Big Four and small craft breweries)
- Low-malt (max 25% of fermentables can be malt)
  - Low purines / uric acid, good for gout sufferers
- Taxed & Regulated completely differently from Beer
ビール – BEER

発泡酒 – Happōshu – Beer, but not legally Beer

• (1) Licensing & Regulation
  • Whereas beer requires 60,000 liter capacity, Happōshu license only requires 6,000
  • Lots of smaller places can produce & sell this amount, so accordingly produce a lot of Happōshu

• (2) Finding Happōshu
  • So far, have not found it in the U.S.
ビール – BEER
発泡酒 – Happōshu – Spring Valley Brewing, in Kyoto
ビール - BEER
発泡酒 - Happōshu - Spring Valley Brewing, in Kyoto
Finding Japanese beer in PDX

- Uwajimaya in Beaverton
- Best selection
  - Has most major brewers (including Orion)
  - Has lots of craft beers
Finding Japanese beer in PDX

- Fuji to Hood Beer Festival
  - Collaborations between PDX and Japanese breweries
  - This year saw a lot of Saisons
  - Personal favorite was a rice lager brewed from saké lees
  - Keep an eye out on fujitohood.com
  - Don’t know if this will happen again, hope it does
NEXT UP

PRONOUNCED:
You know how it’s pronounced
THE BEGINNING

• First whiskey distillery founded in 1923 by Shinjiro Torii* (fascinating guy)

• Student of his, Masataka Taketsuru, lived in Scotland from 1918-24, studied organic chemistry, learned distilling, became a master blender

• Together produced Suntory Whiskey Shirofuda, Japan’s 1st whiskey

• In 1934, Taketsuru founded Nikka Whiskey, Japan’s 2nd distillery
Why the Popularity?

- In 2001, Nikka’s Yoichi Single Cask won Whiskey Magazine’s ‘Best of the Best’

- Since then, worldwide interest in Japanese whiskey went through the roof

- So what makes Japanese whiskey Japanese?
LINEAGE of JAPANESE WHISKEY

- Torii & Taketsuru, founders of Japanese whiskey, spent a lot of time in Scotland studying Scotch.
- A number of Japanese whiskeys use peat smoke, making them resemble Scotch.
  - But this oversimplifies things.
- Japan’s whiskeys are really a blend of Scottish, American & Canadian styles into something that’s its own thing.
  - So what is that thing?
What makes Japanese whiskey Japanese?

1. Most barley malt used is imported from Scotland (the Scots get theirs from the EU)

2. Most whiskey ageing is done in MIZUNARA, a species of Japanese White Oak
   - Though, like this picture shows, whiskeys can be aged in a variety of barrels

3. Japan’s climate has big impact on maturation process
   - Cold, dry winters and hot, humid summers age whiskeys faster
What makes Japanese whiskey Japanese?

- (4) Many Whiskeys do not have Age Statement
  - Limited stock, rising demand
  - Ageing is faster in Japan anyway
  - Distilleries making their own blends without Age Statements

- (5) Blending does not happen between Distilleries
  - There’s no Johnny Walker-style blended whiskey. Distilleries only blend their own whiskies.
What makes Japanese whiskey Japanese?

• (6) Legally, what even is a Whiskey?
  • Canada, Ireland, Scotland, EU all require ageing of at least 3 years to call it “Whiskey”
  • U.S. & Japan have no such law
  • This is why we can get “white” whiskey in the States, and why many Japanese whiskeys can’t legally be called “whiskey” in Europe

• All right, so where can you find Japanese whiskey in PDX?
Japanese Whiskey in PDX

- Almost every liquor store has Japanese Whiskey selection

- Best selection I’ve seen:
  Tenth Avenue Liquor Store
  925 SW 10th Ave
  Portland, OR  97205
  Downtown, one block from Multnomah County Central Library

- Online spirit sellers have huge selection
Japanese Whiskey in PDX

- Keep an eye out for Whiskey & Ramen Fest
- Held in November this last year
- Was promotional event for Suntory Toki
- No standing website, found announcement in local PDX newspaper
- This particular whiskey, Suntory Toki, has a young bite, works nicely in highballs / cocktails
- Unknown if Whiskey & Ramen Fest will continue, but hope it will
References

Reading List

• **Sake Confidential**: A Beyond-the-Basics Guide to Understanding, Tasting, Selection, & Enjoyment  
  -John Gauntner

• **The Shochu Handbook**: An Introduction to Japan’s Distilled Drink  
  -Christopher Pellegrini

• **Craft Beer in Japan**: The Essential Guide  
  -Mark Meli

• **The Way of Whisky**: A Journey Around Japanese Whisky  
  -Dave Broom

• **The Little Book of Japanese Whisky**: A Fast Guide to the Finest of all Drinks  
  -Piero Martini
Japanese Businesses in PDX

The following is a quick list of Japanese businesses in the greater PDX region. Some have Japanese booze, some don’t.

Of course this list is not exhaustive. These are just places I recommend.
Japanese Businesses in PDX

RECOMMENDED:

SHO – Great all-around Japanese restaurant in Southwest PDX, sushi, set Japanese dishes, good selection of saké, has saké tastings, great homemade desserts, make their own line of salad dressings, can sometimes catch seasonal Sumo tournament

www.shorestaurant.com
Japanese Businesses in PDX

RECOMMENDED:

MAKI – Small restaurant in Tigard (best to make a reservation), often has hard-to-find sushi items, has lots of tasty izakaya style dishes, good selection of SHŌCHŪ, order their black tea pudding for dessert

www.makirestaurant.com/Dinner.html
(if you go to makirestaurant.com, it says their site is under construction)
Japanese Businesses in PDX

RECOMMENDED:

Syun – Pronounced “Shoon,” is in Hillsboro, traditional izakaya-style restaurant, of course has sushi but I go for the izakaya comfort food, boasts the largest selection of SHŌCHŪ in the Pacific NW

www.syun-izakaya.com
Japanese Businesses in PDX

RECOMMENDED:

UWAJIMAYA—Japanese supermarket in Beaverton (also has stuff from all over Asia), huge selection of Japanese beer and saké, has Japanese cream puff chain Beard Papa, also Japanese bookstore Kinokuniya

www.uwajimaya.com
(multiple locations in Pacific NW)
Japanese Businesses in PDX

RECOMMENDED:

Kayo’s Ramen – In NE Portland, this is the best ramen I’ve had on any continent. Good saké selection (has a rare one called “Dassai”), fast service.

www.kayosramen.com
Japanese Businesses in PDX

RECOMMENDED:

Oyatsupan Bakers – You don’t know Japanese food until you’ve had Japanese pastries. Go here.

www.oyatsupan.com
Japanese Businesses in PDX

RECOMMENDED:

Mio’s Delectables – Specializes in Japanese desserts, does not have a storefront but you can find them at the PSU Farmer’s Market. These are the best desserts you’ll ever have.

www.miosdelectables.com