



Aged shochu long-matured in flavorful casks

JUKUKA BATSUGUN

Refreshing aged shochu matured in ex-sherry casks. Sweet with a great aroma. Can be enjoyed straight, on the rocks, or mixed with cold or hot water.

Ingredients: rice, rice koji  
ABV: 25%  
Distillation method: vacuum



A flavor you'll never tire of, day in, day out

BATSUGUN

Batsugun's flagship vacuum-distilled shochu. Made with white koji for a gentle flavor that makes for a great evening tipple. Great on the rocks, mixed with cold or hot water, or mixed with oolong tea.

Ingredients: rice, rice koji  
ABV: 25%  
Distillation method: vacuum



Proudly rich and flavorful atmospheric-distilled shochu

KURO KOJI BATSUGUN

Atmospheric-distilled shochu fermented with black koji. Enjoyable depth and richness. Traditionally enjoyed warm, but also great with hot or cold water or on the rocks.

Ingredients: rice, rice koji  
ABV: 25%  
Distillation method: atmospheric

Batsugun Shuzo

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THE HISTORY OF KUMA SHOCHU

Kuma Shochu: Born from the History, Climate & Culture of Hitoyoshi-Kuma



Abundant Water & Unique Climate

The Kuma Valley is located at the southernmost tip of Kumamoto Prefecture, deep in the mountains of Kyushu. The cool waters of the Kuma River—famed for its rapids—nourish the fields, while the valley's distinctive climate and significant temperature variations create one of the prefecture's prime rice-growing areas. The frequent dense fog in the region allows for fermentation and storage at relatively low temperatures, which helps give Kuma

shochu its refreshing aroma. The soft water from the Kuma River system is ideal for shochu making and helps enhance the gentle sweetness of the rice. The rich aroma and deep flavor of Kuma Shochu can only be produced in the Hitoyoshi-Kuma region.

Tradition & Evolution

Rice shochu production in the Hitoyoshi-Kuma region is believed to have started about 500 years ago. Distillation

techniques were supposedly brought over through trade with southeast and continental Asia. Today, 27 distilleries preserve the traditional techniques honed by their predecessors, offering a variety of flavors that have evolved over time.

In 1995, Kuma Shochu was designated as a Geographical Indication by the National Tax Agency, establishing it as a world-class shochu brand and attracting attention from around the globe.

WHAT IS KUMA SHOCHU?

- Must be made with rice (including rice koji) grown in Japan
- Mash must be made with Hitoyoshi-Kuma water and shochu must be distilled in a pot still and bottled in Hitoyoshi-Kuma.

Batsugun Shuzo

拔群酒造



You must be 20 or older to drink. Do not drink and drive.  
Drinking alcohol during pregnancy and breastfeeding may affect the development of the fetus or infant.  
Drink in moderation. Please recycle.



**Upper left:** The chimney to the rear of the distillery was supposedly in use until the 1960s.

**Upper right:** Ex-sherry casks, most of which were made in southern Europe, are used for aging.

**Left:** Bottles are reused for Batsugun shochu. This kind of recycling is well-established in the community.

**Right:** Making koji requires precise temperature control.

■ BATSUGUN SHUZO (Taragi) ■

# Diligently making shochu you'll want to end every day with

■ HISTORY

**Breaking away from the pack**

"We chose this name because we want to make high-quality shochu that's leagues ahead of the rest."

These are the words of Tatsuhiko Nishi, the third president of Batsugun. It was his grandfather Tsuneichi, a leader of forestry and agriculture, who entered the packed world of shochu in 1923 to compete with the over 50 other breweries in the Hitoyoshi-Kuma area. At the time,

industry modernization brought along a dramatic increase in lumber demand for coal mining timbers, railroad ties, pulp for paper, utility poles, and more. Amidst this, the town of Taragi became a lumber hub in Hitoyoshi-Kuma, attracting people, commerce, and capital. Shochu became the go-to way to welcome these newcomers.

Although sweet potato shochu flourished after the war due to rice shortages, the past 50 years were dominated by rice

shochu. The desire of Batsugun's founder to create delicious rice shochu is carefully preserved to this day.

Since installing a vacuum distiller in the 1970s, over 90% of Batsugun's shochu is vacuum distilled. Souvenir shops have contributed greatly to sales. Sweet cask-aged shochu sold in *tokkuri* carafes are available in souvenir shops throughout the prefecture and are popular with tourists.

vacuum-distilled Batsugun is 100% white koji mold, and the atmospheric-distilled Kuro Koji Batsugun uses the Kawachi NK black koji mold. To take advantage of the individuality each koji brings to the product, Batsugun spares no effort to make koji that will produce savory, sweet, and robust shochus.

Batsugun's goal: a shochu that you want to end every day with and will never get tired of. To achieve this, they strive to increase quality, but they also must work equally hard to balance the cost. To keep customers coming back, they make sure to make delicious shochu that isn't too expensive. In this way, they work ceaselessly to achieve their ideal shochu.

■ ABOUT US

**Anything and everything for quality**

Although most distilleries in Hitoyoshi-Kuma make shochu in the coldest period of winter, Batsugun also makes batches in spring and fall, as well. Batsugun focuses on koji production as they believe it is critical to making good shochu when using vacuum distillation. To that end, instead of using a traditional stone koji room, they use automated equipment to make sure the koji is consistent. The temperature can't go below 15°C even in the middle of the night, or else the koji mold will not fully propagate throughout the rice.

The type of koji mold used depends on what product it will be used for. The

Batsugun uses new equipment and puts great effort into koji and fermentation so that they can bring out sweet and savory flavors in their shochu.



**Left:** An old town road runs through the property. **Center:** A store beloved by the locals. Shochu available for purchase here. **Right:** For generations, Batsugun's style has been to try new things. Even the stone koji room has been removed.



Batsugun protects the environment with a mind for careful use of limited resources because their shochu ingredients and employees benefit from nature's gifts. They hold over 10 workshops a year with local kids, where they clean and recycle collected bottles, and they also occasionally hold shochu education classes for kids.