



Brilliant fragrance and fruity flavor

SAIBA

Pure rice shochu similar to sake, with ginjo yeast and white koji. Elegant fragrance and mild fruity flavor are the result of low-temperature fermentation. Best served on the rocks, with water, or mixed with soda.

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



A satisfying drink only possible with atmospheric distillation and black koji

HOMARE NO TSUYU

Koji handmade with Hitoyoshi-Kuma rice, fermented in clay pots, atmospheric distilled, and aged in clay pots. Satisfying pure rice shochu with soft sweetness of rice and unique black koji aroma.

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



Matured in casks, amber-colored honkaku shochu

TOKI NO FUIN - KOHAKU

Hand-fermented in pots and aged in casks to make an amber, atmospheric-distilled shochu similar to whiskey. Great on the rocks.

Ingredients: rice, rice koji  
ABV: 30%  
Distillation method: vacuum  
Aged: 10 years

Fukano Shuzo

333 Gonoharumachi, Hitoyoshi, Kumamoto Prefecture  
Tel: 0966-22-2900  
<https://www.shop-fukano.jp>



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.

Fukano Shuzo

深野酒造



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:* Working the koji by hand means workers can observe and assure quality all the way to the end of the process. *Upper right:* Sherry, bourbon, and whiskey casks line the walls of the storehouse. Cask-aged shochu is becoming popular in places like the U.S. *Left:* Shochu quietly waiting to be shipped. *Right:* Shochu is stored in both large and small pots, but vacuum-distilled shochu is usually stored in the bigger pots.

|| FUKANO SHUZO (Hitoyoshi) ||

# Using traditional clay pots & pushing atmospheric distillation to the limit

|| HISTORY

**Making almost 50 types of shochu**

Located 5 minutes by car from the Hitoyoshi Interchange, Fukano Shuzo was founded in 1823 by Tokiji Fukano, a native of Kurume, Fukuoka Prefecture. While visiting the Sagara domain to trade rice as a merchant, he noticed Hitoyoshi's pure waters and bountiful rice harvests and decided to start making shochu here. Initially, he made and sold miso and soy sauce as well, but eventually narrowed

down his focus to shochu, and expanded his client network throughout Japan. Currently, Fukano makes almost 50 types of shochu. Most are rice shochu, but Fukano makes potato and barley shochus as well.

There are two separate distilleries on the property: one for vacuum distillation, and one for atmospheric distillation.

The distillery that makes vacuum-distilled shochu is recognizable by its more modern equipment. The popular vacuum-distilled Saiba shochu uses white

koji similar to that used for sake and is fermented at low temperatures, giving it a uniquely fruity flavor and a fantastic ginjo fragrance. It has received many awards, such as first place in the rice shochu category of the 2018 National Autumn Sake Competition and the gold medal from Kura Master Awards 2021 in the rice shochu category.

|| ABOUT US

**Using century-old clay pots**

The current president, Seiichi Fukano, is the seventh president and was the one who started using traditional earthenware pots to make shochu about 20 years ago. There was a time when the distillery stopped using these century-old pots, but Fukano brought them back, explaining that he "wanted to make a discerning atmospheric-distilled rice shochu that would never get old."

The earthenware pots are ceramic and therefore are porous and can breathe, which helps accelerate maturation even during fermentation, resulting in a mild-flavored shochu with few off-flavors. Furthermore, because the pots are buried in the ground, they aren't affected by sudden

changes in temperature. Doing first and second fermentation by hand in clay pots is labor intensive for an atmospheric distilled shochu, making it truly unique even in Hitoyoshi-Kuma. Because it can be made in low volumes, Fukano can do small-batch shochus made with special local ingredients.

Fukano also began exporting their shochu overseas beginning around 10 years ago. In particular, Toki no Fuin - Kohaku, which is brewed in pots then aged in oak and sherry casks, has been gaining popularity in America.

Fukano preserves its history and culture while positioning itself to take on new challenges, resulting in a multitude of truly unique shochus.

"We want to preserve what time has proven to be good even as we make new things," states 7th president Seiichi Fukano. He also has great expectations for the flexibility and ambition of the next generation.



*Above:* Each pot holds 500 liters. Pots like these are no longer produced, so Fukano takes care of them so they last a long time.

*Below:* Fukano uses Kyushu rice exclusively and even the koji is made with Tachiaoi rice grown in Hitoyoshi-Kuma.



Many distillery tour guests become loyal fans of Fukano, which also sells its shochu online. Fukano is supposedly planning to release 20- and 40-year atmospheric distilled shochu in the future.