



球磨焼酎

Highly fragrant & a refreshing flavor

KUMA NO IZUMI (BLUE)

The sole vacuum-distilled shochu from this atmospheric distiller. Highly fragrant with a refreshing flavor, makes a great palate cleanser during a meal.

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



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*Classic Red:
The Original Nasu Flavor*

KUMA NO IZUMI KAMETSUBO-JIKOMI (RED)

Hand-crafted shochu made from Kuma rice and distilled under atmospheric pressure, for a traditional shochu with old-fashioned flavor. Awarded a special prize at the Kumamoto Sake and Shochu Awards for 16 consecutive years.

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



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*Shochu purists rejoice!
Atmospheric distillation at its best*

KUMA NO IZUMI GENSHU

Full-strength Kuma no Izumi, bottled with no added water. Enjoy the full flavor of this shochu, made with exacting standards in earthenware jars.

Ingredients: rice, koji
ABV: 41%
Distillation method: atmospheric

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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.

Nasu Shuzojo

那須酒造場



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 distillery and shop nestled in their tranquil rural setting. **Upper right:** Washing rice in a tub with handmade tools. A rarity in modern shochu making. **Left:** Adjusting the temperature and moisture content of the steamed rice. Nasu uses only Hitoyoshi-Kuma table rice. The ideal condition for rice varies depending on the outside temperature, humidity, and even the size of individual rice grains. **Right:** Steamed rice and water are added to jars in which the first fermentation has been completed in order to begin the second fermentation. The temperature is controlled to make sure it is correct.

■ NASU SHUZOJO (Taragi) ■

Traditional techniques over 100 years old, all to preserve quality shochu

■ HISTORY

An irreplaceable part of local life

Nasu Shuzojo is located along the upper Kuma River, where stone distilleries stand among the tranquil rural setting of Taragi. Toraji Nasu moved to this land blessed with pristine waters and abundant rice, then founded this shochu distillery in 1917. The mantle of ownership was passed onto Toraji's son, who died young after being drafted into the war. Instead it was his wife,

Mitoshi, who worked steadfastly with help from the toji to keep Nasu Shuzojo alive. The distillery's quality-focused, family-operated business returned in full force with the homecoming of the third-generation head after he obtained his brewer certification in Tokyo.

Nasu focuses on atmospheric distillation. The red label version of its signature Kuma no Izumi brand is made using traditional techniques handed down since

the distillery's founding. Until the shift to vacuum distillation and the subsequent evolution of widespread distribution, it was primarily sold locally. The locals share various intriguing tales related to enjoying this shochu, like saying they know it is time to drink when the moon comes out or when a typhoon causes flooding. These illustrate how shochu is an invaluable part of the lives of people in the area.

■ ABOUT US

Actively engaging in new challenges

On a near-freezing winter morning, well-worn wooden tubs and barrels, stirring oars and the like line the storehouse. Among them, cleaning the rice with his bare hands, stands the fourth-generation head, Yusuke Nasu. He hefts a handmade pole and plunges it loudly again and again into the massive wooden tub full of water and rice, mixing from the bottom of the tub and back up. The rice cleaning, koji preparation, and first and second fermentation processes are all done by hand. Feeling the product, checking the smell, and sharpening his five senses to guide his work; it's almost as if he is in constant conversation with the shochu.

For their standard shochu, it is aged for at least three years in a tank until it matures into a fine balance of rich, sweet, and mild flavors. While he follows tradition when making shochu, Yusuke Nasu also enjoys testing out new things. Spirit-peddlers with an eye for quality throughout Japan carry his products. Atmospheric distillation gives the shochu a rich, full flavor, so many people are hooked with their first sip. This dedication to over 100 years of tradition is sure to continue long into the future.

"I want us to try new things while continuing to make delicious shochu that we ourselves would want to drink," says fourth-generation head Yusuke Nasu.

The distillery also makes small batches of custom shochu made with ingredients brought in by collaborators.



Left: Distillery founder Toraji Nasu. **Center:** Since its founding, Nasu has focused only on its Kuma no Izumi line of shochu. **Right:** The distillery in 1988, before being remodeled



Nasu Shuzo makes koji using the *futa koji* method, in which koji rice is allowed to develop for a full day and night on a large bed, and then moved to wooden, lidded shelves, and left to sit for an additional day and night. Although this is tremendously time-consuming, it allows for the creation of exceptionally high quality koji.