



OHMIWA-JINJA SHRINE, GOD OF SAKE BREWING

Since ancient times, the Japanese have seen spirituality in rice as the energy of life, and in particular, sake made from rice was considered sacred, a link between gods and people. The oldest shrine in Japan, Ohmiwa-jinja Shrine in Sakurai City, does not have a main shrine but enshrines Mt. Miwa as its sacred body, and is believed to be the god of sake brewing. Many brewers and toji (chief brewers) from all over Japan attend the Sake Festival held on November 14 every year to pray for the safety of new sake brewing. The festival is crowded with brewers, worshippers, and tourists.

Cedar balls hung from the eaves of sake breweries in various locations indicate that the new sake is ready.

The cedar ball, from which hangs the nameplate “Miwa Myojin, Shirushi-no-Sugidama” (cedar ball as a sign of Miwa Myojin), was delivered from Ohmiwa-jinja Shrine. When new sake is made, it is green in colour, but as the seasons change, it turns into brown. This change coincides with the maturation of the sake over time, and the browner the colour, the more mature the sake is.



Umenoyado Sake Brewery
(Katsuragi)



Kawai Sake Brewery
(Kashihara)

奈良
BIRTHPLACE OF MODERN SAKE

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Like beer, sake requires a yeast solution for the fermentation process called “Shubo (yeast mash).” At Shoryaku-ji Temple, the birthplace of modern sake, an event called “Bodai-moto” (Bodai-moto Sake-making Festival) is held every January in the precincts of the temple, and some breweries brew sake using the yeast mash made at the festival. Even if the same yeast mash is used, each brewery produces a different flavour.



VISIT SAKE BREWERIES AND DISCOVER THE CHARM OF FOOD CULTURE IN NARA

There are many sake breweries in Nara, nestled in the traditional townscape and magnificent nature, and visiting breweries in each area will give you an opportunity to learn about Nara’s sake, which is suited to each environment and climate. Nara, an ancient city with a history of over 1,300 years, is also said to be the birthplace of Japan’s food culture, which was formed by accepting various civilizations from all over Eurasia via the Silk Road, and even today visitors can experience many ingredients and food culture. Why not visit Nara and experience its history and culture in a relaxed atmosphere?





BIRTHPLACE OF MODERN SAKE



NARA, THE BIRTHPLACE OF MODERN SAKE

Sake is loved not only in Japan but throughout the world. Nara is considered to be the birthplace of refined sake. Sake culture has existed in Japan for more than 1,000 years, but the first sake brewer in Japan to produce the clear sake we know today was the Shoryaku-ji Temple in Nara City. The brewery boasted innovative sake brewing techniques during the Muromachi period (around the 15th century), and was called "Mujo-shu," meaning "sake so delicious that there is nothing better than it," and was highly praised by the shogun of the time. At Shoryaku-ji Temple, sake brewing techniques that would become the foundation of modern brewing methods were established, such as the "three-stage brewing" method, in which brewing is done in three separate batches, the "bodai-moto" method of making the original yeast mash, and the fire-quenching process to prevent spoilage. Sake produced in Nara is created from natural water and fine rice, as well as the skills and passion inherited from our predecessors

ACCESS TO NARA

FROM KYOTO



FROM OSAKA



FROM KANSAI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT



SAKE



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