

SAKE COMPETITION

Sake competition executive committee

For all sake brewers outside of Japan!

We are thrilled to announce that the SAKE COMPETITION 2024 will be taking place! Furthermore, we are excited to share that the overseas-brewed sake category will be reintroduced this year. We look forward to celebrating the diversity and excellence of sake from around the world in this upcoming competition

The winner of the overseas-brewed sake category will be officially recognized during our award-winning ceremony. It would be an honor to have the winner join us at the ceremony, which is scheduled to take place on June 12th at The Peninsula Tokyo.



SAKE COMPETITION 2023

After the 8th SAKE COMPETITION in 2019, we were forced to cancel the competition in 2020, 2021, and 2022 due to the spread of the new coronavirus infection. In 2023, we were finally able to hold the SAKE COMPETITION for the first time in four years.

Due to the challenges associated with judging in the same style as before, we decided to limit the total number of entries to 1,000 items across all four categories: "Junmai Sake," "Junmai Ginjo," "Junmai Daiginjo," and "Super Premium" in 2023. Additionally, there was a change in judging style: we utilized plastic cups for the preliminary judging and the kikijoko for the final judging, maintaining consistency with previous competitions.

GOLD: top 10 sake of Junmai, Junmai Ginjo, Junmai Daiginjo
top 3 sake of Super Premium

SILVER: top 10% of each category after GOLD

2023 results

- Junmai 273 entries / GOLD 10 / SILVER 18
- Junmai Ginjo 343 entries / GOLD 10 / SILVER 24
- Junmai Daiginjo 333 entries / GOLD 10 / SILVER 23
- Super Premium 51 entries / GOLD 3 / SILVER 2

Other prizes

Diners Club young maker encouragement prize, JAL prize

SAKE COMPETITION 2024

SAKE COMPETITION 2024 Calendar

12 April	Entry application deadline
▼	Online application https://forms.gle/2fWS9mduRN5RRNaEA
10 May	Shipping deadline for oversea entry
▼	
14 May	Preliminary Judging
▼	*Not open to public
15-16 May	Final Judging / Official tasting
▼	*Not open to public
end of May	Announcement of the results (Gold and Silver nominees only)
▼	
11 June	Official tasting
▼	*Not open to public
12 June	SAKE COMPETITION 2024 award-winning ceremony at The Peninsula Tokyo

Special rules for overseas brewed sake category

- All sake must be commercially available within July 1st 2023 to December 31st 2024, or intended to become available within this period.
- Up to 3 entries per brewery
- No specific bottle size is required. If your bottles are smaller than 500ml, please send additional bottles. We will need at least 900ml for the judging.
- No preliminary judging for this category.
- Our judges will score your sake with the same criteria as domestic entries.

Entry Fee and Shipping of your sake

- Entry fee will be **18,000 yen** per item

After confirming the details of your application, we will send you an invoice by e-mail. You can either pay by bank transfer or credit card

- Please send 2 bottles of sake (720ml) by **May 10th**

Shipping address

2-3-3 Azabujuban, Minato-ku, Tokyo 106-0045

C/O Hasegawasaketen Inc.

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TEL +81-3-6273-4355

If you would like to bring your sake to us, we can receive any time and we will make sure to keep them in fridge.

- Applicants need to cover all the shipping cost

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us

Judging

Each sake tasted will be scored with 1 to 5 points as follows:

1, Outstanding 2, Good 3, Standard 4, Slightly off standard 5, Doesn't meet standard

Our judges will be scored based on ,

1) balance of flavor (aroma and taste) : orthonasal aroma, retronasal aroma, taste, after taste. Judges will see the balance of each and total balance of flavor.

2) features of flavor : looking for the origin of each flavor. Such as rice originated, yeast originated, brewing process originated, etc.

3) essential elements of quality : This is quite abstract...but we usually discuss with our judges each year and set certain agreements in advance. Mainly look for elegance of aroma, depth, smoothness, etc.

4) drinking characteristics: compatibility with food, not too high ethyl caproate, not too strong bitterness, etc.

Common faults that our judges give -1 point are Hine-ka and Namahine-ka. These are caused because of over maturing and too much amino acids created, wrong timing of pasteurization and sake is not stored properly. Smell of acid, Fukuro-ga, kami-shu are also very common. In Junmai category, too high ethyl caproate aroma is recognized as a minus point. This is because in our elements of quality Junmai sake which we usually drink with the meal should not have strong aroma to disturb. Our judges tend to focus on balance.

Judging

Preliminary Judging :



Fixed amount of sake is poured into multiple plastic cups, and each judge is presented with 20 cups as one set to evaluate. Judging is done individually and there is no consultation or talk with other judges. The minimum requirement for the judges is that they must accurately judge at least 100 items in one hour.

Final Judging :



The kikijoko is used for the final judging, maintaining consistency with previous competitions. Each set of 6 kikijoko would contain the same amount of sake, poured at the same temperature, is served to judges. One judge is responsible for evaluating all 500 items out of a total of 1,000 entries in the final judgment. This requires significant experience and a high level of tasting skill.

SAKE COMPETITION award-winning ceremony

Top 10 sake from each category (top 3 for super premium and sparkling, top 1 for overseas brewed sake) will be announced at the award winning ceremony.

