



Aged version of flagship shochu, famous for its lucky name

ISSHOCHI

A superb spirit made by aging full-strength Sono no Izumi in sherry casks for over five years. Sweet and easy to drink, with a mellow yet full-bodied, fruity taste. Popular for its lucky name, with "issho" meaning "victory."

Ingredients: rice, rice koji
ABV: 25%
Distillation method: vacuum
Aged: 5+ years



Pot-fermented rice shochu tells Fuchita's long history

SONO NO IZUMI

Fuchita's flagship shochu, in production since the mid-1800s. Fermented in earthenware pots and vacuum distilled for a fruity flavor. An easy shochu to drink on the rocks.

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



Top quality rice shochu, popular for its delightful taste

NITEN ICHIRYU

Vacuum-distilled shochu made using high-quality rice that's good enough to eat. A well-known brand beloved for its excellent flavor.

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

Fuchita Shuzo Honten

溯田酒造本店



Fuchita Shuzo Honten

1 Ko 422-1 Isshochi, Kuma, Kuma-gun, Kumamoto Prefecture
1 Tel: 0966-32-0005

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.

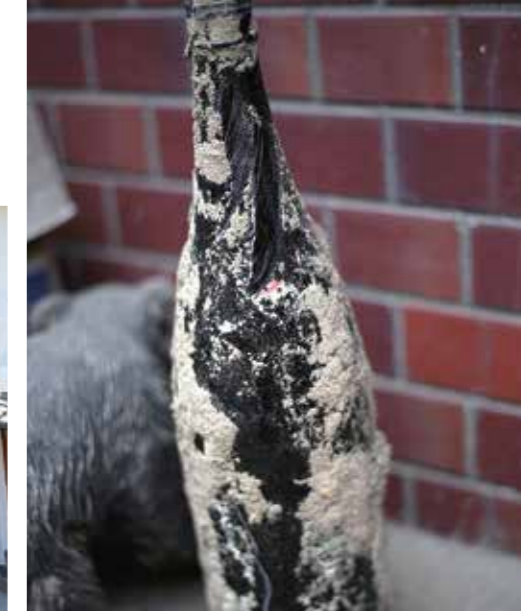
In 1995, Kuma Shochu was designated as a Geographical Indication by the National Tax Agency, establishing it as a world-class shochu brand and attracting attention from around the globe.

WHAT IS KUMA SHOCHU?

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



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: Fuchita Shuzo's location at the meeting point of the Kuma and Imo Rivers made it susceptible to severe damage during the recent heavy rains. The distillery was reborn in 2023, this time with adjoining shop and office spaces.

Upper and center right: The flooding buried fermentation pots, tanks, and other equipment, as well as glass and ceramic bottles.

Left: The over-200-year-old beams supporting the distillery building were repaired using modern techniques.

FUCHITA SHUZO (Kuma)

Coexisting with the Kuma River, preserving tradition in a new distillery

HISTORY

Uninterrupted shochu production

Of all of the Kuma Shochu distilleries, Fuchita Shuzo Honten is located farthest downstream on the Kuma River. Although records indicate that this distillery received its license and thus began operation in 1869, the 6th generation head of the distillery Kasuke Fuchita claims that its history actually dates back to 1813. Although no documentation of these early generations remain, Mr. Fuchita says this is inferred

based on the date and name of the first Fuchita family head, Kazaemon, written on the Sekiso Jizo statue near the distillery. Although the distillery was forced to move about 100 meters upstream when the Hisatsu railway was built over its former location in 1908, the current site in Isshochi has been making shochu uninterrupted ever since.

Fuchita has historically always made rice shochu, except for a 10-year period

around 1955 when poor rice harvests necessitated a guest distiller from Kagoshima to produce potato shochu instead. The small scale of the distillery meant they had to make shochu 150 days out of the year to make 100,000L, all of which sold out within the year.

In 1970, vacuum distillation equipment was installed, and the distillery developed its flagship brand of vacuum-distilled shochu called Sono no Izumi.



The entrance to Isshochi is near a large bend in the Kuma River. A Sekiso Jizo statue stands near a guardrail on the Hisatsu Line, which is currently out of service due to flood damage. The sacred statue shares the history of Fuchita Shuzo's founding. Believed to have once been part of a checkpoint station, the name "Kazaemon" is engraved in the stone shrine.

ABOUT US

Rebuilding after torrential rains

The Isshochi toji takes pride in hand-crafting sweet, easy-to-drink rice shochu. Having been refined for over a century, this strong tradition shows in their production processes, such as fermentation in earthenware pots, making koji in a stone koji room, and aging shochu in a red-brick storehouse.

This historic distillery was badly damaged in the heavy rains of July 2020. Rain waters flooded the entire first floor, caking the equipment and tanks in mud. Only about 60% of the shochu in storage was recoverable. Although Mr. Fuchita considered relocating the distillery, staff and volunteers supported the effort to rebuild, believing that the distillery needed

to coexist with the Kuma River, risks and all.

The Fuchita distillery was reborn in February 2023, utilizing the original beams that supported it since the beginning. It features a factory shop, and work is underway to prepare for the next batch in November. As the flood damage destroyed the distillery's stock of heirloom yeast, Mr. Fuchita is concerned as to whether the new shochu will taste the same. However, he and the rest of the staff are committed to their traditional methods of using local groundwater and making koji by hand with Kuma rice. Although vacuum distillation is the dominant method of shochu making these days, Fuchita plans to also use atmospheric distillation after reopening.

Kasuke Fuchita comments, "As I was over 70 when the flood happened, many people thought we would close up shop. However, with some of our shochu stock safely preserved, I had no doubt that we would rebuild."



The interior of the new koji room is now visible from the outside. A double-layer of doors with a gap between them minimizes any temperature fluctuations inside the chamber.