



A gentle aroma of sweet vanilla

TARUMIKOSHI

Made by sealing junmai shochu in a barrel and letting it age for 5+ years until it turns light amber. Its defining features are its smooth mouthfeel, and a gentle, sweet aroma of vanilla.

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



A well-balanced, refreshing flavor

SANGA

The refreshing flavor and light aroma is sure to delight. Perfect for drinking any style: mixed with hot/cold water, straight, etc. This shochu received a special prize in the 2017 Kumamoto Sake and Shochu Awards.

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



Subtle aromas with a neat finish

HANATEBAKO

A rice shochu made with ginjo yeast to give it a brilliant flavor. The well-balanced flavor provides a refreshing experience that pairs well with any type of cuisine.

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

Fukuda Shuzo

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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.

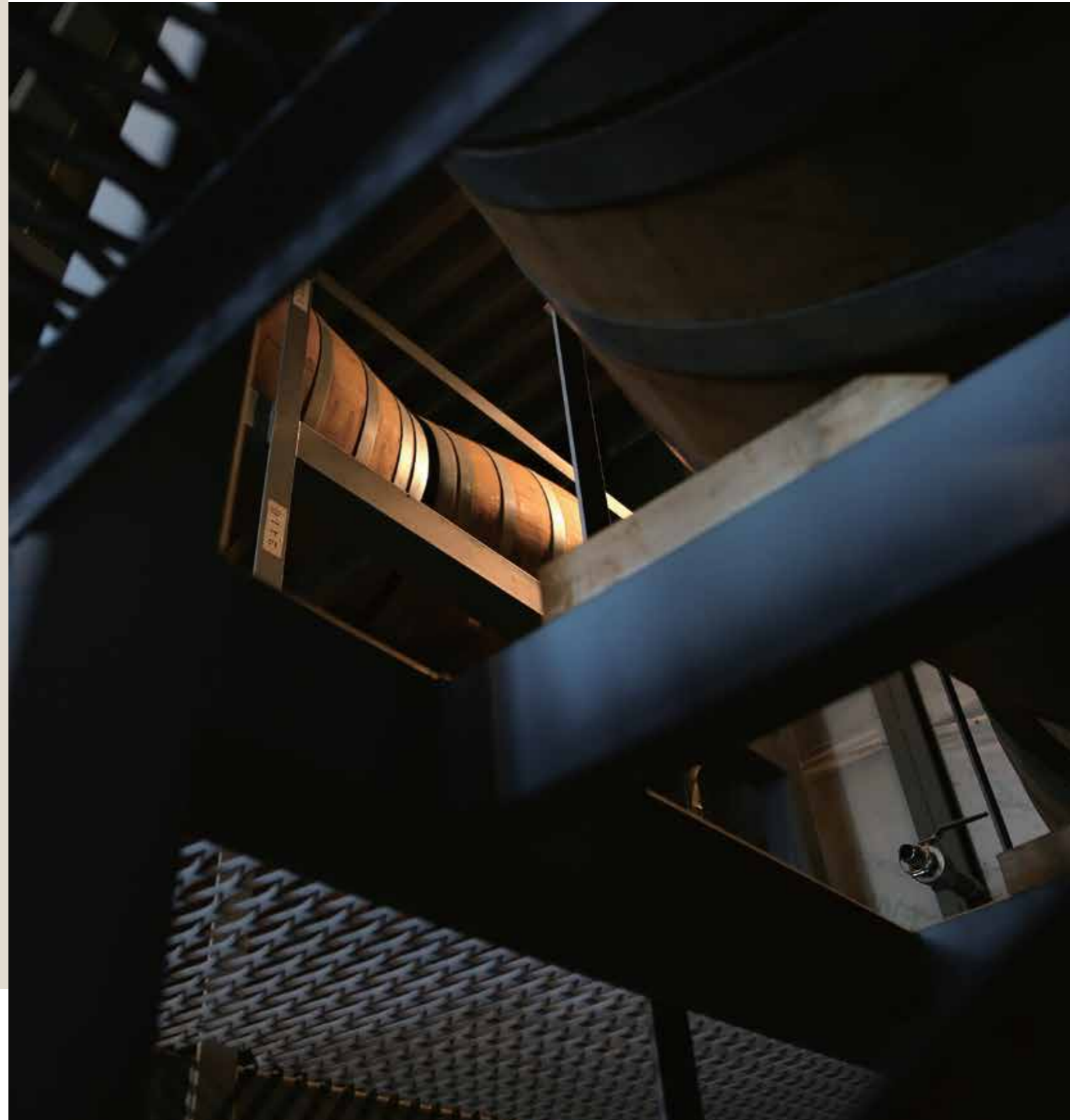
In 1995, Kuma Shochu was designated as a Geographical Indication by the National Tax Agency, establishing it as a world-class shochu brand and attracting attention from around the globe.

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.

Fukuda Shuzo

福田酒造



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:** Site of the Fukuda Shuzo Experience program, you can take a guided tour with a toji and see shochu barrels being blended. **Upper right:** Initial prep underway in an enameled metal tank. **Left:** Every shochu here is made using rice grown in western Japan and white koji. **Right:** As the number of Kuma Shochu distilleries declines, machinery is introduced to handle automatable tasks. Rice is washed, soaked, and seeded with koji spores in a drum, before it is moved to a triangular rack and turned to koji.

**■ FUKUDA SHUZO (Hitoyoshi)**

# Quality over efficiency: the key to beautiful, superior-quality shochu

**■ HISTORY**  
**Keeping abreast of new technology**

The founder of this distillery, Kunihiko Fukuda, is originally from Amakusa. It's said he moved to Hitoyoshi and worked in forestry, but when a shochu distillery in the city went up for sale, he decided to buy it and get into spirit making.

The first batch of Fukuda Shuzo product was distilled in 1935 with the help of a toji from Kagoshima. In 1937, their rice shochu Fuku no Tsuyu took the gold medal at

a shochu competition. In 1964, the distillery installed automatic koji-making equipment, which allowed them to improve their koji stock and saccharification processes. The year of 1982 saw the release of what would become Fukuda Shuzo's signature brand, the vacuum-distilled Sanga. Then, in 1984, the factory was overhauled with all-new equipment, thus guaranteeing quality spirits, more brand offerings, and greater output. Fukuda Shuzo has long been an innovator among Kuma Shochu

distilleries. For example, it was the first to introduce the filling equipment necessary to package and sell shochu in paper cartons.

Furthermore it began aging shochu in sherry wood barrels for its Fuku no Tsuyu Taru shochu. These days it ages shochu in both sherry and oak-wood barrels. Its vintage shochu brand lineup is further rounded out with Genchu and Tarumikoshi, both of which are aged for over 5 years.

**■ ABOUT US**

**Meeting strict OEM quality standards**

Fukuda Shuzo's main philosophy when it comes to shochu-making is "quality over efficiency."

Rather than simply seeking efficient production, the distillery is dedicated to upholding the basics of shochu-making passed on from its predecessors and preserving its reputation for high-quality spirits. For this reason, every day's work ends with cleaning and polishing the equipment and factory floor. A single day's work might involve starting distillation before daybreak and not finishing cleaning until late evening.

The level of cleanliness at the distillery means no contamination from unwanted bacteria and a hospitable environment for

the koji mold critical to producing shochu.

Fukuda Shuzo's prioritization of quality above all else has also earned it esteem from third parties. From 1985, it began dealings with local consumers' co-operatives, which are known for setting their own, exacting standards of quality of ingredients and manufacturing processes. It has also received high praise for its reliable shochu-making processes, including adopting OEM production methods typically practiced by only major manufacturers in Japan.

The company has now set its sights on foreign markets, and is looking to sell Hitoyoshi, an umeshu made with Sanga shochu, in Asia.

The fifth generation owner, Toshikazu Fukuda. He has inherited the philosophy of "quality over efficiency" from his predecessors and works with his expert staff to make "beautiful and superior-quality shochu."



**Left:** The certificate of merit received when Fuku no Tsuyu took the gold medal at a shochu competition in 1937. **Center:** One of the barrels filled with shochu that can be seen all over the expanded distillery building. **Right:** Another certificate of merit, this one from the French Kura Master spirits competition.



Sherry and oak barrels line the shochu storehouse, filling the air with a sweet aroma. Once blended, the heads of the distillery, along with the entire staff, hold tastings to determine the optimal flavors to refine in each batch.