

# CHORYO OMACHI



## Junmai Ginjo

Choryo Shuzo, Nara Prefecture

### SAKE DETAILS:

Rice: Omachi  
Polish Rate: 58%  
Sake Meter Value: +3.5  
Acidity: 1.3  
Alcohol: 15%

### ABOUT "JUNMAI GINJO" SAKES

The term *Junmai* is constructed of two kanji that together mean "pure rice." This means that the brew cannot contain any ingredient beyond the principal four of rice, water, yeast and koji. The term *Ginjo* means "specialized brew." *Ginjo* grade sakes must use rice polished to at least 60%, and generally employ labor intensive practices resulting in a more refined sake. Therefore, *Junmai Ginjo* sakes are pure rice brews, with a high polish rate and a specialized method of production.

### ABOUT THE BREWERY

Once upon a time, centuries ago, all sake was stored and transported in cedar barrels called *taru*, namely because stainless steel tanks and modern bottling technology had not yet been invented. It was easy to store the sake in a barrel, where one could walk to the local izakaya and fill up their *masu* cup or wineskin. Also, before modern brewing techniques, sake often had a very rough taste, and aging in cedar barrels helped mask some of the harsh edges. Many have seen these cedar barrels displayed at Shinto shrines, or placed at American restaurants. Indeed, the *taru* barrel still holds cultural significance, but improving technologies and brewing techniques have rendered them obsolete on a large scale. Sake that spends time aging in *taru* is called *taruzake*.

In 1964, Choryo Shuzo was the first sake brewery to bring back *taru*-aged sake for sale to the general public. This time, they age the sake in *taru* before bottling it in modern fashion. This was the first time people could taste the delicious woody profile of *taruzake* without having to actually crack open an entire barrel themselves. Today, *taruzake* in barrel is donated to Shinto shrines, or used for special occasions, while bottled *taruzake* is enjoyed at will.

Choryo Shuzo exclusively uses Yoshinosugi (Japanese cedar) from barrel makers at the foot of Mt. Nara. There are only five Japanese barrel makers left in the country. The barrels must be made by hand, from trees at least 80 years old, and require an aging period of one year to drain all the excess water and create a beautiful color. *Taru* barrels are never charred like wine barrels and are used up to three times by sake breweries. *Taruzake* ages in barrel for only about three weeks. It has a very distinct cedar aroma and taste.

### TASTING NOTE

After being brewed in the best traditional way using only the best *Omachi* rice, bottled *Omachi* sake is aged in a cool cellar. Its maturity brings out its soft, steady and rich aroma. Substantial rice umami with clean mouth feel. Moderate and pleasant acidity.

### FOOD PAIRING

White fish sashimi, steamed dumplings, traditional maki rolls.



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