

DAISHICHI

“Minowamon” Junmai Daiginjo Kimoto Daishichi Sake Brewing Co., Fukushima Prefecture



SAKE DETAILS:

Rice: Yamadanishiki
Polish Rate: 50%
Sake Meter Value: +1
Acidity: 1.4
Alcohol: 15-16%

ABOUT THE SAKE

“Minowamon” is the name of one of the gates to Nihonmatsu Castle, a beautiful structure dating from the Edo period. Brewed by the traditional *Kimoto* method, this was the first sake in Japan produced using the super flat rice polishing technique developed by Daishichi (more info below) to achieve the total elimination of all components that might result in undesirable flavors. The clear taste has an underlying richness that creates a natural, elegant aroma and a gentle, mellow texture of remarkable delicacy. For two years running, this sake has gained top place in voting by *kikizakeshi* (Japanese sake sommeliers) in the refined sake section. It has also won consecutive gold medals in competition in the United States.

ABOUT THE BREWERY

Committed to the art of *Kimoto* style brewing, Daishichi has been carrying the torch of old school, hands-on brewing since 1752. *Kimoto* style sake requires an extremely labor and time intensive method of creating the fermentation starter (called the *shubo*) using weeks of manual pole-ramming. Less than 1% of sake breweries today use this production method, partly because *Kimoto* method sake all but requires the brewery to become a natural home for ambient yeast and other happy microbes...it's not something you decide to do on a whim.

For centuries, until the early 1900s, it was thought that the only way to produce sake was *Kimoto* method – to spend hours on end (for weeks) mashing the fermentation starter. As technology and innovation improved, less labor intensive methods emerged. The result of *Kimoto* method brewing is a *shubo* that contains much more ambient yeast, lactic acid, and other “good” bacteria. The sake produced from this method is distinctly different from sake produced by conventional methods – it is often earthier, with a wildly expressive character and can even take well to aging – a rarity in the sake world. In fact, Daishichi ages their sake at the brewery for two years under optimal conditions prior to releasing it to the public. Part of this special process requires their sake to be “capped” with nitrogen at the bottling stage, ensuring no excess oxygen can affect the sake as it matures at the brewery. While the sake matures in Daishichi’s storage area, well water is pumped through the walls to mimic the environment of the natural world around it.

Daishichi also employs a special method for milling their rice called, “super flat polishing”. In short, this entails making manual adjustments to their rice mill that polish away the undesirable parts of the rice grain (fats and proteins) in a much more precise manner, leaving more of the pure starchy center that sake breweries strive for. This is a much more time consuming method of precision polishing, and can take up to twice the amount of time as a traditional polish. For this, the chief miller has been officially recognized in Fukushima as a “Master Craftsman”, which was a first. Daishichi only uses *Yamadanishiki* and *Gohyakumangoku* rice varieties. All of this translates into a portfolio of sakes that have one of the most distinct and focused identities in the world. There is sake, and then there is Daishichi.

TASTING NOTE

Endless floral and fruity notes dance on the palate like a ballerina. The epitome of nuance, elegance, and sophistication in a sake.

FOOD PAIRING

First, enjoy on its own. Food pairings should be very subtle so not to overpower the delicate beauty of this sake. Think simple sashimi.

FUKUSHIMA



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