

DENSHIN INE

Junmai

Ippongi Kubohonten Co., Fukui Prefecture



SAKE DETAILS:

Rice: Koshi No Shizuko
Polish Rate: 65%
Sake Meter Value: +3.5
Acidity: 1.5
Alcohol: 16%

ABOUT "JUNMAI" 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. Most *Junmai* sakes use rice polished to at least 70%, but no legal mandate exists. *Junmai* style sakes tend to be richer and rounder, while emphasizing more savory characteristics.

ABOUT THE BREWERY

Ippongi Kubohonten hails from the small prefecture of Fukui which is in proximity to the commercial epicenters of Kyoto, Osaka, and Nagoya. Many centuries ago, in the days when samurai roamed the streets, local feudal lord Ogasawara termed the sake brewed for him as "ippongi" or "ultimate truth", and as such the brewery adopted this name. Quickly upon founding, Ippongi Kubohonten turned to the esteemed *Nanbu Toji* guild of sake brewmasters to find their next head of operations. The Nanbu Toji hail from the northern Iwate prefecture, and their brewing talents have been widely sought after for over 300 years.

Ippongi Kubohonten's good fortune places them close to one of Japan's most renowned rice growing areas, known as *Oku-Echizen*. It allows the brewery to source all their rice from local growers, especially the *Koshinu-shizuku* rice varietal grown only in Fukui. No other prefecture may use this varietal of rice. Fukui is a snowy region in the winter, at the foothills of Mt. Hakusan, one of Japan's most sacred mountains. Along with Mt. Tate and Mt. Fuji, it is considered one of Japan's "Three Holy Mountains." Travelers have visited this mountain to pray for many centuries. Their water is sourced from the snowmelt of this special mountain.

The brewery workers, or *kura-bito*, work hard through the challenging winter months producing delicious, hand-crafted sake. At the beginning of springtime, their town of Katsuyama holds a special festival to mark the beginning of the warmer months. Ippongi Kubohonten ceremoniously opens their doors to the citizens, and the *kura-bito* whack open a *taru* (cedar barrel) of fresh sake with large wooden mallets to signify the drinking of the new year's fresh batch.

TASTING NOTE

This sake features a smooth, soft, round body, and dry taste. It reminds you of an image of fully ripe rice plants swaying gently in the breeze. Brewed solely using 'Koshinoshizuku,' which is a very rare, locally grown sake rice. The production is only about 2000 bales a year, and it has been produced and distributed only within Fukui Prefecture.

FOOD PAIRING

Soft pairings like veggie tempura, gyoza, and soup dumplings work well.

