

# GINKOUBAI HANNYA TOU

## Chili Infused Ume-Shu Ippongi Kubohonten Co., Fukui Prefecture

### SAKE DETAILS:

Ingredients: Ume, shochu, rock sugar, sake, chili  
Alcohol: 12.5%

### ABOUT "UME-SHU"

*Ume-shu* is a delicious alcoholic beverage made from steeping Ume fruit with a clear liquor (such as *shochu*) and rock sugar. Though often called "Japanese Plum," Ume is genetically separate from the plum family, though they share the same sub-genus. *Ume-shu* was first mentioned in Japanese literature in 1697, contained in a cookbook. Ginkoubai Hannya Tou is further infused with chili and sake, to give it a unique sweet and spicy character.

### 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

Take a sip and, following the initial full-bodied sweetness, enjoy the bold spicy flavor that spreads through your mouth. You've never experienced a flavor quite like this. Just one drink and, you'll be hooked, and want to recommend it to all your friends.

### FOOD PAIRING

Pairs well with meat dishes or any dish sweet or heavy. It also can be recommended as an after-dinner drink, with or without sweets.

