

# KINOKUNIYA BUNZAEMON

## Junmai

Nakano Brewing Co., Wakayama Prefecture

### SAKE DETAILS:

Rice: Dewa Sansan  
Polish Rate: 58% for koji rice, 65% for *kakemai* (steamed rice)  
Sake Meter Value: -2  
Acidity: 1.5  
Alcohol: 15%

### ABOUT "JUNMAI" STYLE 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

Nakano Brewing Company has been brewing delicious sake since only 1949, making them quite the youngster on the sake brewing scene. They are located on the inlet coast of Wakayama Bay, just south of Osaka. Originally a producer of soy sauce, then shochu, Nakano found its way to sake production and has been renowned internationally ever since. Nakano produces a range of delicious *Junmai*, *Ginjo* and *Daiginjo* grade sakes. Their famed "*Bunzaemon*" *Junmai*, named after a famous Japanese merchant, has earned international acclaim.

It may come as a shock to some, but sake has steadily fallen out of favor with young drinkers in Japan, who increasingly favor cocktails and beer. Nakano has wisely expanded their business to become a cultural hub, producing a range of health foods and cosmetic supplies from local ingredients with a strong emphasis on interactive classes for tourists and locals alike. A trip to their brewery is not complete without a walk through their expansive Japanese garden.

Nakano also specializes in the production of *ume-shu* or "plum liqueur" which they adopted in 1979. In fact, Nakano is just as revered for their *ume-shu* as they are for sake. Wakayama Prefecture accounts for about 60% of the country's plum cultivation. Japanese plums are revered for their intense sweet and sour taste, as well as purported health benefits like fortifying the blood, anti-aging, and anti-fatigue (whichever is the case, it will put a smile on your face). Like cider apples, Japanese *ume* are too tart to eat raw, so they must soak for at least six months at the brewery prior to production.

### TASTING NOTE

Gentle-tasting with a robust savory flavor and sweetness of rice. The sourness, enhanced by the savory flavor, makes this sake superbly drinkable while giving it body and aroma.

### FOOD PAIRING

Seafood stew, vegetable tempura, and *sukiyaki*.



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