

NAKANO YUZU UMESHU



Yuzu Umeshu

Nakano BC, Wakayama Prefecture

PRODUCT DETAILS:

Source: Ume fruit with yuzu juice added.

Alcohol: 12%

ABOUT UME FRUIT

Ume is a tart, pitted fruit similar to an apricot or unripe plum. Though commonly referred to as “Japanese plum,” *ume* are its own species. They share a genus with the plum family, but are genetically closer to the apricot. Linguistically, *ume* translates in English to “plum,” but the Japanese use a separate word (*puramu*) to define western plums. *Ume* have a very high citric acid content and have been used for centuries as medicine. Studies have shown *ume* to have a range of health benefits such as lowering high blood pressure and protecting against food borne illness. *Ume* are culturally important in Japan.

Ume are thought to have arrived in Japan from China about 1500 years ago. It is mentioned in many of Japan’s earliest poems, cookbooks, and medical texts. The samurai ate preserved *ume* as a field ration, and it is thought, perhaps through folklore, that this contributed to the spread of the *ume* tree throughout Japan. As time continued, the cultivation of *ume* trees became popular on land unsuitable for rice growing. By the 1600s, *ume* was a popular household ingredient. Alcohol produced from *ume*, called *umeshu*, was first mentioned in a 1697 cookbook. After WWII, serious effort by botanists was put into crossbreeding *ume* trees to produce larger, more flavorful fruit. Their culmination, the *Nanko-Ume*, is now the standard varietal of premium *ume*, and the type used in most *umeshu* production.

ABOUT THE BREWERY

Nakano’s history is young, yet rich, and incorporates the production of many different types of beverages. The company was founded in 1949 as a shochu producer. Founder Toshiro Nakano observed that the quality of shochu in post-war Japan was poor. He sought to offer a higher quality product. His shochu quickly gained an esteemed reputation. In 1958, Nakano expanded his business to sake production. Many were skeptical of sake from a shochu producer, but over time Nakano’s sake has gained acclaim both in Japan and in international competitions.

In 1979, the company expanded once again to begin producing *umeshu*, a beverage made by soaking the *ume* fruit in alcohol (shochu or sake) and sugar for many months. Nakano BC’s prefecture, Wakayama, is home to the best *ume* fruit in the world. Nakano is now nationally recognized for their *umeshu*. Through the years, they have been a category innovator, experimenting with special bottlings, cocktail mixtures, and collaborations with universities and restaurants. At present, the company continues to expand with an *ume* research department dedicated to incorporating *ume*’s health benefits into a variety of non-alcoholic products, such as cosmetics and tinctures.

TASTING NOTE

A delicious fusion of stone fruit and citrus. Very fragrant with aromas of fruity apricot, clementine, lemon and honey blossom.

SERVING

Enjoy chilled, over ice, with soda water, or mixed into a cocktail.



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