SAKE 101

WHAT IS SAKE?

Sake is an alcoholic beverage that is brewed from rice and has been produced in Japan for over 2000 years.

SAKE MAKING – THE SHORT COURSE

- *Sake is a brewed fermented beverage consisting of:* ***Rice | Koji | Water | Yeast***
- *Brown rice is polished to remove fats and proteins, minerals and other compounds that would contribute off flavors to the final product. Higher quality sake is brewed from rice that is polished at least 30%. Many brewers remove up to 50% or more.*
- *Polished rice is then rinsed, soaked, steamed and cooled.*
- *20% of the steamed rice is inoculated with a special mold. This rice is then called Koji -Rice.*
- *Fermentation: Rice, Koji -Rice, Yeast and Water are combined. The Koji -Rice gradually converts the rice starches in the whole batch into fermentable sugars which are converted to alcohol by the yeast. This natural process lasts 20 days until the mixture reaches 20% alcohol.*
- *The fresh sake is then filtered, pasteurized and aged for six months to mature.*
- *After aging, the sake is blended, filtered, diluted with water to about 15% alcohol, and bottled.*

TYPES OF SAKE

Junmai *– Junmai sake is made from rice that has been polished at least 30%, thereby removing most of the fats and proteins to yield a full, rich flavor. The addition of neutral grain spirits is not permitted. Junmai sake can also be of Ginjo or Daiginjo quality.*

Honjozo *– Honjozo sakes also have at least 30% of the rice removed by polishing, but a small amount of neutral grain spirits is added to smooth and lighten their flavor. Honjozo sake can also be of Ginjo or Daiginjo quality.*

Ginjo *– Sake classified as Ginjo must be made from rice that has been polished at least 40%. Ginjo sakes are usually brewed longer and at lower temperatures than other sake in order to maximize the flavor of the rice. Ginjo sake can range from dry to slightly sweet and are usually light, fruity and refined.*

Daiginjo *– These sakes are made from rice that has been polished at least 50%. Most quality producers exceed that and polish at least 65%. Daiginjo sake is usually light, complex and fragrant.*

Nigori *– Rice particles remaining in this coarsely-filtered sake give it a milky appearance. Most are slightly sweet.*

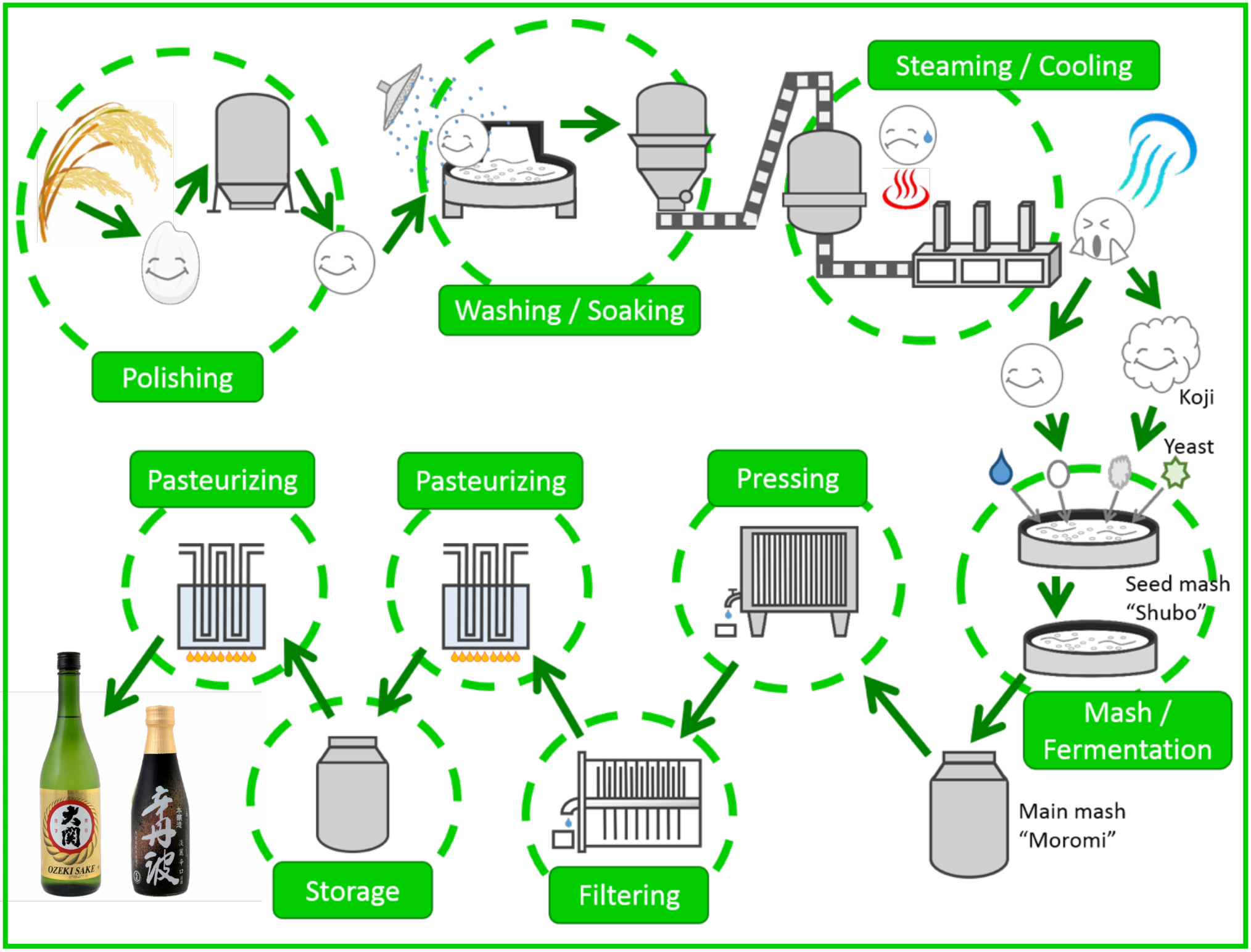
Genshu *– Undiluted sake. Before bottling, pure water is added to most sake to adjust the alcohol content from the naturally occurring 20% down to about 16%. Genshu is sake to which water has not been added.*

Tokubetsu *– A term reserved by brewers to indicate the sake is special in some way – often by the use of a particular brewing technique or specially designated rice.*

Nama *– Nama sake are unpasteurized and are usually light and fruity.*

DRINKING SAKE

- *Sake may be enjoyed slightly warmed, chilled or at room temperature. The appropriate serving temperature for sake is dependent on the type of sake, the occasion, the food and ultimately personal preference.*
- *Higher quality sake should be served chilled, as warming may mask delicate flavors. However, there are some high-end sake whose flavors are enhanced when warmed and basic sake can be very enjoyable when served this way.*
- *Warm sake is traditionally served in small ceramic cups. Chilled sake may be served in a clear glass vessel such as a white wine glass.*
- *Sake is best consumed within one year of release in order to enjoy the sake as the brewer intended. Sake will not "go bad" after this time; it generally becomes more intense and concentrated in flavor.*


Polishing
Washing / Soaking
Steaming / Cooling
Koji
Yeast
Seed mash
“Shubo”
Mash /
Fermentation
Main mash
“Moromi”
Pressing
Filtering
Pasteurizing
Pasteurizing
Storage
OZEKI SAKE