

# KAGEMUSHA

## Black Koji Shochu

Yatsushika Brewery, Oita Prefecture

### SHOCHU DETAILS:

Raw Material: Sweet Potato (*Imo*)

Alcohol: 24%

Distillation: Single

### ABOUT SHOCHU

*Shochu* is a distilled spirit native to Japan since the 15<sup>th</sup> century. It originated on the southern island of Kyushu, which remains its heart, but is now produced all over Japan. *Shochu* can be distilled from many different ingredients, but barley, rice and sweet potato are the most common. *Shochu* is unique from other categories of distilled spirits because it begins with a grain inoculated with *koji-kin*, similar to sake production. The *koji* is then fermented in the same way a sake starter is created, following which the mash is distilled, filtered, stored and bottled. Until the 1970s, *shochu* was only consumed in southern Japan, but its appeal began to travel and resulted in a national boom. In 2003, domestic *shochu* sales surpassed sake and have never looked back.

### ABOUT THE DISTILLERY

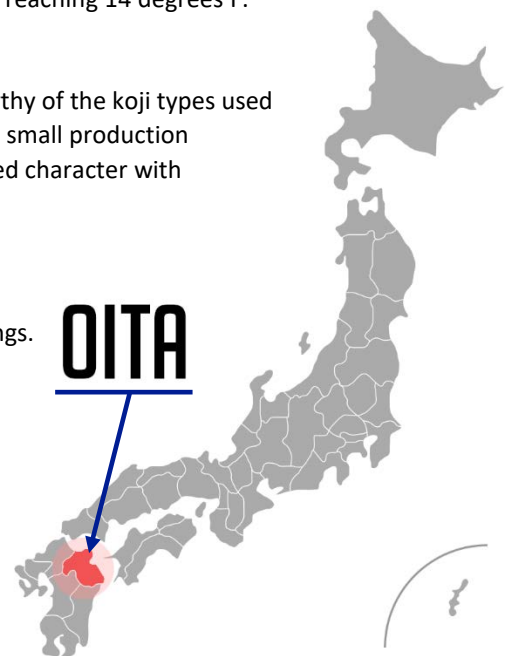
Yatsushika brewery was founded in 1864 by Toukou Aso (first generation), and was strictly a sake producer for 200 years. As the popularity for sake waned, Yatsushika expanded into shochu production. Deep in the scenic Kuju Mountain Range of Oita prefecture lies Yatsushika brewery. Commonly known as the 'roof of Kyushu,' this area is the leading producer of barley shochu in Japan. Nestled in the bosom of nature, the secret of Yatsushika's flavor is twofold: the clear, fresh water delivered to the brewery by a 250 meter well tapping into a natural underwater spring, and the winter climate perfect for cold brew with temperature reaching 14 degrees F.

### TASTING NOTE

*Black Koji* is the strongest and most earthy of the koji types used in shochu production. This high quality, small production Japanese spirit has surprisingly balanced character with a hint of baked cookies.

### FOOD PAIRING

Soups and stews such as ramen or soba noodles in dashi make great pairings.



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