



# Shōchū 焼酎

## Shōchū (焼酎)

Shochu is a Japanese clear distilled spirit similar to vodka. The main difference between sake and shochu is sake (or "nihon-shu" in Japanese) is brewed, whereas shochu is distilled.

In Japan shochu is often mixed with hot water with salty ume-plums, or mixed with oolong tea and fruit juices such as orange, peach and grapefruit.

Health conscious consumers prefer shochu than other types of beverage alcohol because of its low calories. (about 15 - 20 cal. per ounce) By law, the alcohol content of Shochu must be 45 percent or less. Although most comes in at 25 percent, lower than a regular bottle of distilled spirits that are sold at 40 percent. is an alcoholic beverage of Japan, most commonly distilled from barley, sweet potato or rice. Typically it is 25% alcohol by volume, making it weaker than whisky, but stronger than wine and sake.

## Types of Shōchū

<p>Barley shōchū 麦焼酎 mugi-jōchū</p>	<p>Barley shōchū is generally less distinctive than rice shōchū and easy to drink. However if cask-aged the taste can be quite sharp and strongly reminiscent of single-malt whisky.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kannoko 神の河</li> <li>• Ichiban-fuda 一番札</li> <li>• Iichiko いいちこ</li> </ul>
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<p>Potato shōchū 芋焼酎 imo-jōchū</p>	<p>Potato shōchū uses sweet potato, widely cultivated across southern Kyūshū since the Edo period, as its base ingredient. Originally it was almost exclusively produced in Kagoshima and Miyazaki prefectures, but nowadays is made across Japan using locally-grown sweet potatoes. It tends to have a strong taste and a distinctive smell, sharply dividing drinkers into those who do and don't like it. More recently producers have made varieties whose aroma is somewhat suppressed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shiranami 白波</li> <li>• Kuro Kozuru くろ小鶴</li> <li>• Heihachiro 平八郎</li> <li>• Ikkomon 一刻者</li> <li>• Kappa No Sasoimizu 河童の誘い水</li> <li>• Shima no Izumi 島乃泉</li> </ul>
<p>Buckwheat shōchū 蕎麦焼酎 soba-jōchū</p>	<p>Soba or buckwheat, shōchū has origins going back to just 1973 when Unkai Brewery Co., of Miyazaki Prefecture, developed it using soba from the local mountainous region as its base ingredient. Since then shōchū producers across Japan have produced it, sometimes as part of a shōchū blend. Taste is milder than barley shōchū.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Genan 玄庵</li> <li>• Unkai 雲海</li> </ul>
<p>Rice shōchū 米焼酎 kome-jōchū</p>	<p>Rice shōchū shares its base ingredient with sake. It has a fairly thick taste, and appears to have originally developed in regions too warm for sake production.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kaiku 皆空</li> </ul>
<p>Japanese Basil Labiate shōchū しそ焼酎 shiso</p>	<p>There is a very wide range of unusual base ingredients, such as shiso leaf, sesame and yuzu.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tantaka tan 鍛高譚</li> </ul>