

# SIGNOR SAKE

# FASHIONABLY LIGHT



Although the average ABV of sake is around 16% and can climb up to 21% (anything exceeding this is categorised as a different beverage legally in Japan), there's a recent trend of makers brewing lower-alcohol versions, relatively speaking. As brewing skill and know-how advance, makers have been able to create these while still keeping structure, balance, and drinkability. This can only be a positive move as sake has the potential to appeal to a wider audience. Here are some of the best available in Japan right now.

## TASOGARE ORANGE

KOUEIGIKU SHUZO - SAGA  
ABV 13% / Rice blend milled to 70%

One of the newest breweries in Japan since 2019 with Katsuaki Yamamoto at the helm who made his mark with the Kikutaka brand at Fujichi Shuzo in Aichi. One clear difference now is that, so far, he's only released low-alcohol versions (14% and under).

- Light yet complex
- Nutmeg and star anise
- Sultanas and brandy butter



## DIO ABITA

IMANISHI SHUZO - NARA  
ABV 13% / Yamada Nishiki milled to 65%

Imanishi brewery located in Miwa, Nara, is home to the oldest shrine in Japan, the Ookami Shrine, where the god of sake resides, and the Kasuga Shrine, where the oldest master brewer in Japan is enshrined. Meaning God lives in Italian, Dio Abita borrows the subterranean water of nearby Mount Miwa.

- Fruity and juicy
- Voluptuous body and sweet
- Cooked apple and woody



## ALPHA TYPE 1

YUCHO SHUZO - NARA  
ABV 12% / Akitsuho milled to 65%

Yucho are known for their fresh and spritzy sake that pop on opening. This is all thanks to the current owner, Chobei Yamamoto who developed a bottling machine where the spout moves with the liquid to ensure effervescence isn't lost.

- Fresh, fruity and vibrant
- Pear drops and aniseed
- Light effervescence



## MIRACLE ROSE

MIYAKO BIJIN - HYOGO  
ABV 9% / Gohyaku-Mangoku milled to 70%

Kunihiro Yamauchi, the head brewer on Awaji island, brews bold, punchy, and complex sake that only get better with age. Miracle Rose still retains some of that complexity but it's more approachable. It feels like a salad dressing, a carrot râpée or a tropical fruit juice,

- Guava and mango
- Sweet and sour notes
- Dried fig, raisins, caramel



## TSUCHIDA 12

TSUCHIDA SHUZO - GUNMA  
ABV 12% / Asahi-no Yume milled to 90% (70%)

Quality intensity, umami and acidity for a low alcohol version and it only gets better when warmed up. Try 60 degrees and then enjoy it as it slowly drops to room temperature. The secret to this sake is most of rice is barely polished and the use of white koji.

- Fresh cream and lime,
- Red plum, orange, and tangerine
- Medium dry

