

U.S. National  
Sake  
Appraisal

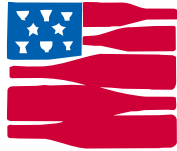
## The 19th Annual U.S. National Sake Appraisal



JUNE 4-6, 2019  
HONOLULU, HAWAII

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# The 19th Annual U.S. National Sake Appraisal

## Honoring the Legacy of Takao Nihei

The Kokusai Sake Kai is pleased to announce that the 2018 U.S. National Sake Appraisal will be held in Honolulu, Hawaii, from June 4 through 6. Once again, experts from Japan and the U.S. will convene to taste approximately 500 sakes over three days and judge them based on the four criteria of aroma, taste, balance and overall impression.

The Appraisal began in 2001 as a way of recognizing breweries that made sakes of outstanding quality available in the U.S. In addition, it honors the late researcher and brewmaster Takao Nihei, whose charisma, knowledge and deep affection for the pleasures of the sake cup inspired hundreds of people to learn about sake and sake culture.

The Appraisal is conducted by eleven judges under the guidance of the Japan National Research Institute of Brewing, which has supervised Japan's national sake appraisal since its establishment in 1911. The tasting is conducted "blind" and in two phases: a first tasting for all entries and a second tasting for those placing in the top fifty percent of the first tasting.

Following the Appraisal, each entry is showcased at Joy of Sake events New York, Honolulu and Tokyo, giving guests an opportunity to sample—in peak condition—the wonderful range of sakes being made today. The combination of superb sake, original sake-themed appetizers by top chefs in each location and a friendly party atmosphere have made The Joy of Sake the most eagerly anticipated event of the year for sake aficionados across the U.S. In 2018, 4300 people attended The Joy of Sake in New York, Honolulu, London or Tokyo.

During the year smaller "More Joy" tasting sessions are held in U.S. cities, using the entries submitted to the U.S. National Sake Appraisal. Each event features 40 entries, with an average 100 people attending. The Joy of Sake is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, and these events help fulfill its mission of sake education.

We would like to express our appreciation to brewers in Japan and the U.S. for their continued support of the U.S. National Sake Appraisal and The Joy of Sake.

Entries Committee  
U.S. National Sake Appraisal

## About the Judging

The Appraisal follows procedures established by National Research Institute of Brewing for the Japan National Sake Appraisal. Its motto is: Fairness, Transparency, Authenticity.



### An Absolutely Blind Tasting

The Appraisal is composed of two sessions: a first tasting of all entries and a second tasting of those scoring in the top fifty percent of the first tasting. The entries are sampled by the judges from traditional *janome* tasting cups at a cool room temperature of 65 degrees. The bottles are kept in a separate room and there is no possibility of visual contact before or during the judging process.

Each judge samples from a single 180ml official tasting cup. This practice gives more accurate results than would be the case if judges used their own individual cup, since there is no possibility of residual sake from the prior tasting affecting the perception of each entry.

Entries are judged on aroma, taste and balance. Judges weigh these three aspects differently depending on the category being judged (junmai, ginjo, daiginjo) or the style of individual judges. An average weighting would be around 30% for balance, 40% for taste and 30% for aroma for ginjo and daiginjo categories. Aroma is not considered an important factor for junmai judging. Entries are graded from 1 (outstanding) to 5 (flawed).

### A Fair and Transparent Judging System

The goal of the Appraisal is to have as fair and open a judging process as possible. All entries are measured for glucose density prior to the judging and are arranged on the tasting tables from low glucose to high. This ensures that entries with relatively low glucose will be judged together, rather than interspersed among high-glucose entries which might overpower them.

Each judge tastes and scores every entry, with scores recorded on an Excel spreadsheet. Those with the highest scores in the *nishin* (second tasting) are designated “gold award” winners, while those that fall below this level are given silver awards.

Every year two research technicians from the Japan National Research Institute of Brewing are sent to participate in the U.S. National Sake Appraisal. They form the core of a group of eleven judges, usually eight from Japan and three from the U.S. Judges taste each entry individually during the same session, resulting in a judging that is free from personal bias or outside influence.



# The Joy of Sake

Every entry in the Appraisal is presented to the public at Joy of Sake venues in three cities: Honolulu, New York and Tokyo

The Joy of Sake is the largest sake-tasting held outside Japan, providing guests an opportunity to sample competition-level sake in peak condition. First held in 2001, the event is credited with playing a major role in the popularization of sake in the United States. Last year, The Joy of Sake was held in London for the first time and traveled to four global cities. For brewers in Japan, the U.S. and other countries, it provides an outstanding opportunity to showcase their labels to a global audience of sake enthusiasts.



## An Elegant Expression of the Brewer's Art

Outside Japan, sake is seen as a sophisticated beverage choice, appealing to men and women, young and old. This is especially true in the United States, which imports more sake from Japan than any other country in the world. With their stylish party ambience, Joy of Sake events are unique in the sake world, conveying the message that sake is an elegant beverage for modern tastes. Women and people in their twenties and thirties make up a big share of the attendance, comprising a whole new segment of sake enthusiasts.

A big draw at Joy of Sake events is the exceptional quality of the food. Leading restaurants in each city create sake-themed appetizers just for the event. For those new to sake, this acts as a catalyst, enticing them into the world of sake enjoyment. Many different cuisines are featured, providing endless opportunities for pairing and planting an awareness that sake is made to be enjoyed with good food and friends.

# 2019 U.S. National Sake Appraisal Summary

Dates	June 4–6, 2019	
Place	Hawaii Convention Center, Honolulu, Hawaii	
Judges	Tsutomu Fujii	National Research Institute of Brewing, Quality and Evaluation Research Division, Director
	Hideaki Shimizu	National Research Institute of Brewing, Analytical Research Division, Senior Researcher
	Yukio Hamada	Japan Sake and Shochu Makers Association, Former Director
	Haruhiko Uehigashi	Kochi Prefectural Industrial Technology Center, Deputy Director, Director of Food Development Department
	Kenji Suzuki	Fukushima Technology Centre, Aizuwakamatsu Technical Support Centre, Department of Sake Production and Food Science, Head Researcher
	Toshihiko Koseki	Yamagata Prefecture Brewers Association, Special Advisor
	Masaru Hosaka	Tokyo University of Agriculture, Professor
	Chiaki Takahashi	United Sake Consulting Co.,Ltd., President
	Makiko Tejima	Sai Shoku Ken Bi Co.,Ltd., President
	Danny Sprague	Ozumo Santana Row, Director of Sake
	Michael Tremblay	Ki Modern Japanese + Bar, Head National Sake Sommelier

## Important Dates

March 20 (Wed)	Entry application form submission deadline
April 15 (Mon)	Entry fee payment deadline
May 17 (Fri)	U.S. entry sake delivery deadline
June 4 (Tue)–6 (Thu)	Appraisal of Entries (closed to public), Hawaii Convention Center
June 11 (Tue)	Announcement of Gold and Silver awards
Early July	Mailing of award certificates and information for award seal download

# Schedule of Related Events



<p><b>Joy of Sake New York</b></p>	<p>June 21 (Fri) 6:30 pm–9:30 pm Metropolitan Pavilion Expected attendance: 1000</p>
<p><b>Kuramoto Dinner</b></p>	<p>August 8 (Thu) 6:00 pm–9:00 pm Place: TBA (Honolulu)</p>
<p><b>Joy of Sake Honolulu</b></p>	<p>August 9 (Fri) 6:30 pm–9:00 pm Hawaii Convention Center Expected attendance: 1600</p>
<p><b>Joy of Sake Tokyo</b></p>	<p>November 6 (Wed) 6:00 pm–9:00 pm TOC Building, Gotanda Expected attendance: 1000</p>

# Entry Submission Guidelines

## Purpose

To recognize, through a rigorous judging process, entries of outstanding quality and to elevate the awareness and appreciation of premium sakes in the United States and Japan. In addition, through Joy of Sake events, to present a wide variety of regional sakes in peak condition to the public.

## Entry Categories

Entries may be submitted for the following four categories:

<b>Daiginjo Section A</b> (including Junmai Daiginjo) .....	Polishing ratio 40% or less
<b>Daiginjo Section B</b> (including Junmai Daiginjo) .....	Polishing ratio 50% or less
<b>Ginjo Section</b> (including Junmai Ginjo) .....	Polishing ratio 60% or less
<b>Junmai Section</b> .....	Polishing ratio 70% or less

- Junmai ginjo sakes should be entered in the “Ginjo” category, and junmai daiginjo sakes should be entered in the “Daiginjo” category.
- The category designation stated on the bottle label (junmai, ginjo, daiginjo) is the basis for determining the category.
- Please note that Appraisal staff will correct your entry if it is mistakenly entered in the wrong category.
- For judging purposes, junmai entries are divided into those with polishing ratios of 57% or less and those with polishing ratios of 58% or more. The two sections will be judged separately, however their respective scores will be tabulated together in the overall judging results.
- Genshu sakes may be submitted and will be judged together with other entries in each category. Entries with 17 or higher alcohol content will be indicated by a mark on the tasting cup. Entries with 14 degrees or less alcohol content will be indicated with a different mark.
- Kimoto entries are separated from other entries in the judging. However the scores for sokujo and kimoto respectively are combined for award determination.

## Number of Entries

There is no limit to the number of entries per brewery.



# Entry Submission Guidelines (continued)

## Ineligible Entries

Please read carefully.

- There are no judging categories for **Nama** (unpasteurized), **Nigori**, **Koshu**, **Kijoshu**, **Honjozo** and **Sparkling Sakes**. Please do not submit entries in these categories.
- All entries must be pasteurized prior to submission.



## Judging Method

- The judging is conducted blind, with a first tasting of all entries followed by a second tasting of those scoring in the top 50%.
- Entries in each category will be placed on the tasting tables in order of glucose density (low to high).

## Judging Results

Gold and Silver award certificates will be presented to entries with the highest scores. In addition, “Grand Prix,” “Second Grand Prix” and “Third Grand Prix” awards will be presented to the three entries that receive the highest marks in their respective categories from the eleven judges. The “Emerald Award” is presented annually to the brewery with the highest cumulative total of gold and silver awards from 2001 to 2019.



Gold and silver award stickers

Judging results will be posted on the U.S. National Sake Appraisal website ([www.sakeappraisal.org/en](http://www.sakeappraisal.org/en)) and printed in the Joy of Sake programs. Award certificates will be mailed out after the Appraisal. Digital files of the each award sticker for both print and online usages will be available for free upon request.

The certificates for “Grand Prix,” “Second Grand Prix,” “Third Grand Prix” and “Emerald Award” will be presented at the award ceremony (date to be announced).



Award ceremony in 2018

## How to Submit Entries

Entry applications can be submitted online, faxed or scanned and submitted as email attachments to [entries@sakeappraisal.org](mailto:entries@sakeappraisal.org).

## Deadline for Submission of Entry Form

**Wednesday, March 20, 2019**

## Entry Fee (breweries located outside Japan)

For breweries submitting more than one entry, multiply the number of entries by \$260.

Basic Entry Fee	\$180
Shipping and Storage Fees (Honolulu–New York–Tokyo)	\$80
<b>Total per Entry Submitted from U.S.</b>	<b>\$260</b>

## Payment Method

**Basic Entry Fee + Shipping and Storage within U.S.: \$260**

Please make check payable to “The Joy of Sake” and mail to:

U.S. National Sake Appraisal  
1144 Tenth Avenue, Suite 430  
Honolulu, HI 96816

For breweries who submit entry applications online, credit card payment is also available.

## Payment Deadline

**Monday, April 15, 2019**

Entries for which payments have not been received will not be submitted for judging. All payments are nonrefundable.

# Entry Submission Guidelines (continued)

## Sample Submission

1500 / 1800ml .....	6 bottles
640ml / 720ml / 900ml /1000ml .....	11 bottles
500ml .....	16 bottles
300ml .....	26 bottles

## Allocation of Samples (for 720ml submissions)

- Appraisal, International Sake Association,  
Joy of Sake (Honolulu and New York) and More Joy events ..... Total: 9 bottles
- Joy of Sake Tokyo ..... Total: 2 bottles

## Shipping Method

Please ship samples via FedEx or UPS to U.S. National Sake Appraisal.

U.S. National Sake Appraisal  
1144 Tenth Avenue, Suite 430  
Honolulu, HI 96816

## Shipping Deadline

Samples must be received by **Friday, May 17**.

## Inquiries

Please contact the e-mail address below for inquiries. Contact: Naoko DeCosta  
Email: [info@sakeappraisal.org](mailto:info@sakeappraisal.org)

## Website

[www.sakeappraisal.org/en](http://www.sakeappraisal.org/en)

# How to Submit Entries Online

Online entry is now available. Below is the flow for online entry.

**Notice! You cannot save the data when you exit the online entry portal. Therefore please refer to page 12 and write down all information needed before filling in the online entry form.**

## Online Entry Form URL

[www.entries.sakeappraisal.org/en](http://www.entries.sakeappraisal.org/en)

## Online Entry Flow

### ① Input your company information

### ② Input your entry(s) information

- If you would like to submit two entries or more, click “Add entry” button and repeat this step.

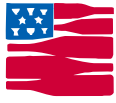
### ③ Confirm your entry information

### ④ Select payment method

- You can select either credit card or check.
- If you select credit card payment, please fill out the credit card information and click confirm button to complete the payment.

### ⑤ Receive confirmation e-mail

- You will receive a confirmation e-mail right after completing step x. In case you don't receive the confirmation e-mail in 24 hours, please look for in your junk mail box. If you cannot find it there, please e-mail us at [entry@sakeappraisal.org](mailto:entry@sakeappraisal.org).
- If you selected payment by check, please send a check to the address in the confirmation e-mail by April 15.
- Please keep the confirmation e-mail as our receipt for those who selected credit card payment. Please allow the confirmation e-mail to serve as our invoice for those who selected payment by check.



# 2019 U.S. National Sake Appraisal Entry Form

- Entry Submission Deadline: **Wednesday, March 20, 2019**
- Please use a separate entry form for each entry, making copies of this form as necessary.
- Please keep copies of your entry forms for your records.
- Please check the “Name of Company” and “Name of Sake Label” carefully. These names will appear on the Appraisal web link, website, award certificates and other printed materials.
- Please write “undisclosed” for any items on the form that you do not wish to disclose.
- Upon completing the information below, please fax to:  
From Japan: (03) 3779-1268 • Within U.S.: 808-739-1000

■ Name of Company \_\_\_\_\_

■ Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_ ■ Title \_\_\_\_\_

■ Address \_\_\_\_\_

■ Telephone No. \_\_\_\_\_ ■ Fax No. \_\_\_\_\_ ■ Email \_\_\_\_\_

■ Name of Sake Label \_\_\_\_\_

■ Entry Category (Please circle)      Daiginjo A      Daiginjo B      Ginjo      Junmai  
Polishing ratio 40% or less      Polishing ratio 50% or less

■ Brewing method (Please circle)      Sokujo      Yamahai      Kimoto      Koon Tokamoto  
速醸      山廃      生酛      高温糖化酛

■ Is this entry a genshu sake? (Please circle)      Yes      No  
はい      いいえ

■ Volume \_\_\_\_\_ ml/bottle      ■ No. of bottles (No./Case) \_\_\_\_\_      ■ Suggested retail price in Japan \_\_\_\_\_

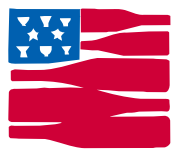
■ Availability in the U.S. (Please circle)      Sold in U.S.      Not sold in U.S.

■ Name of importer (if sold in U.S.) \_\_\_\_\_      ■ FDA registration number \_\_\_\_\_

■ Rice variety used \_\_\_\_\_      ■ Yeast variety used \_\_\_\_\_

■ Glucose percentage \_\_\_\_\_      ■ Polishing ratio \_\_\_\_\_ %      ■ Alcohol percentage \_\_\_\_\_ %      ■ Acidity \_\_\_\_\_      ■ Amino acid \_\_\_\_\_

■ Submission Method (Please circle)      Ship from Yokohama      We will arrange shipping ourselves



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