

WELCOME TO

IZUMIBASHI

SEP 2024

Vol.2

Ryota's tall : 180cm
Omachi's tall : 140cm



Thank you for checking “IZUMIBASHI NEWSLETTER”.



Thanks to your support, we were able to make this newsletter vol.2!!

In Japan, September is the autumn season, but we are still experiencing many days that feel as hot as summer. On very hot days, we often see our symbol, the dragonfly, cooling off in the shade of buildings... When visiting Japan from May to September, don't forget to take precautions against the heat!

Your feedback is a great source of encouragement for us. We look forward to hearing your feedback and receiving requests for topics you'd like us to cover.

Marketing Dev.

HARUNA HASHIBA



Who are we ??

Established in 1857, Izumibashi is a rare “Cultivation Brewery.” Driven by our belief that “sake starts with rice,” we cultivate and mill our own rice from nearby fields right here in our hometown of Ebina.

Our brands are “IZUMIBASHI”, “TONBO(Red dragonfly)”, and seasonal brands express dragonfly’s lifecycle. We use red dragonflies as a symbol mark because we want to protect the regions and countries and the earth where many red dragonflies fly in the autumn sky.



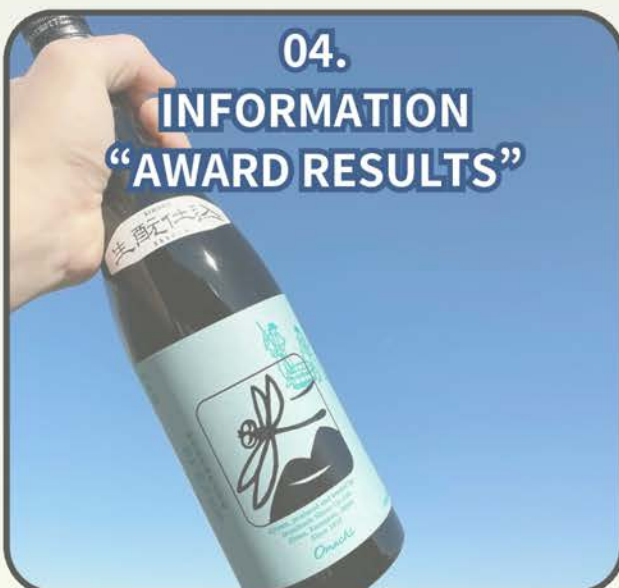
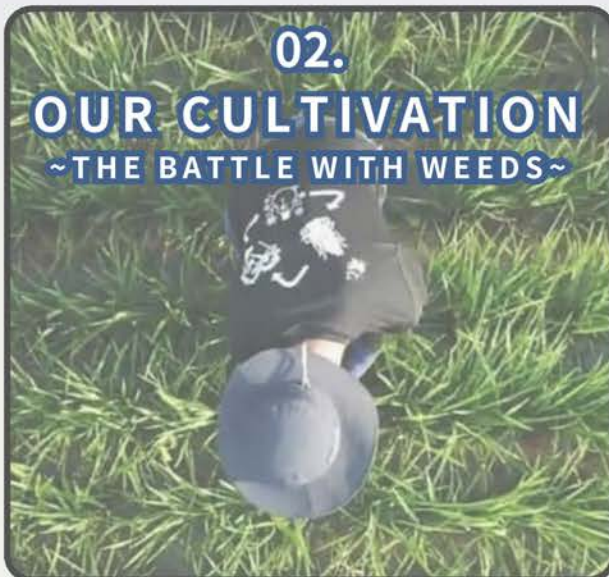
[Address] 5-5-1 Ebina, Kanagawa-pref, JAPAN

*It takes 20mins by foot or 5mins by taxi from Ebina station.

[Business hours] Our shop, called “SHU-YU-KAN” open 10:00-18:00.

[Holiday] Open all year round without from 13th to 16th in August, and New year holiday season.

CONTENTS



01. WE HAVE STARTED THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW SHOP



*Design image

Have you ever been to our shop, "SHU-YU-KAN (酒友館)"? Actually we decided to close the "SHU-YU-KAN" and open the new shop next March. So, in this time, while looking back at the history of "SHU-YU-KAN," which many of you have visited, I would like to give a brief introduction to our new shop!

in 1996, The old storehouse renovation

The 6th generation, Yuichi Hashiba, he renovated the earthen storehouse on the premises with the desire to "let people know about Izumibashi, enjoy it, and communicate with those who drink Izumibashi," after he return to the Izumibashi.

It was named "SHU-YU-KAN," borrowing the character "友" (friend in English) from his grandfather, Tomohachi Hashiba (橋場友八), the 4th generation of Izumibashi.



During the renovation work.

Incidentally, this storehouse collapsed in the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923 and was rebuilt in 1935. When you think about it, it's only 11 years away from its 100th anniversary of reconstruction!



Old letters and documents found in the earthen storehouse.



The second floor of the storehouse before renovation.



The image quality isn't great, but you can clearly tell that it was a storehouse full of history.

The interior of "SHU-YU-KAN" at the time. The counters and tables are made of wood, giving the whole place a somewhat retro feel...?



This is The second floor which is now used as a storage space and is not open to the public. It was previously used for MTG with associates and for lectures aimed at customers.



in 2008, Chimney shortening work

Although it's not part of "SHU-YU-KAN" itself, chimney shortening work was carried out on the chimney that you can always see when you come to Izumibashi.

Before the construction, it was about 20 meters tall, but it was cut down to about half that height due to concerns that it could be dangerous if it collapsed in an emergency. The impression of Izumibashi changed significantly after the work.

BEFORE



Under construction



AFTER



in 2020, Construction of the Terrace and the interior of "SHU-YU-KAN"

At the time when measures were needed to prevent the spread of the COVID-19, we undertook renovations of the garden around "SHU-YU-KAN" and its interior, with the hope that customers could still make use of the space and that outdoor events could be held occasionally. The completed garden, where bright sunlight shines and provides a comfortable atmosphere, was named 'TERASU-SEKI', "照らす席" in Japanese.

It became a large-scale project that involved moving almost all the stones and plants in the flower beds.



After the construction, It is especially beautiful on winter evenings when it is illuminated.



And then...

We have started the construction of new shop this year.

And in August, we began developing a new shop. The new shop will be about five times the size of "SHU-YU-KAN", as we are repurposing a building that has been used as a warehouse for product management for over 20 years, while keeping its original framework.

In the new shop, we are preparing not only for the sale and tasting of Izumibashi products, but also for light meals to be enjoyed. Additionally, we plan to create exhibits that will allow visitors to feel closer to Izumibashi, as well as to the culture and history of sake.

Thank you for joining us in reflecting on SHU-YU-KAN's history. Rest assured that the "SHU-YU-KAN" building itself will remain even after the new shop open.

We apologize for any inconvenience caused by the construction vehicles and personnel coming and going during this time, and we kindly ask for your understanding and cooperation.



Scheduled to open in March 2025!

Look forward to the opening of the new shop!



02. OUR CULTIVATION ~THE BATTLE WITH WEEDS~

In newsletter vol.1, we introduced about our cultivation from growing to transplanting seedlings. The transplanting is done, and you might think it's time to take a breather. But in fact, this is where the real work begins! This time, we'll be sharing about the cultivation process from after the transplanting to right before the harvest. Let's go!



THE BATTLE WITH WEEDS

At our rice fields, where sake rice is grown with no or reduced pesticides, weeds inevitably start to grow. If we leave the weeds unchecked, the sake rice won't receive enough nutrients, which would affect the quality of the sake. For the delicious sake, the battle between the brewers and the weeds begins!

1ST BATTLE: PREVENTING WEED GROWTH BY SPREADING RICE BRAN

The powder produced during rice polishing, particularly from the outer layers of the sake rice, is called "Nuka". This "Nuka" is spread over the rice fields immediately after planting. Rich in nutrients and rice oil, the bran floats and spreads on the surface of the water, blocking sunlight. As it decomposes, it creates an oxygen-deficient environment in the soil, which inhibits weed germination. Additionally, it activates microorganisms in the soil, contributing to the creation of a rich, smooth soil.

Carrying 20kg bags in one hand, making countless trips back and forth through the unstable, muddy fields...it's a whole new kind of muscle training.



2ND BATTLE: WEEDING WITH HANDMADE WEEDING CHAINS

A week after planting seedlings, when the roots have taken hold, it's time for the handmade weeding chains. By manually pulling these chains across the surface of the field, they bury or uproot small weed sprouts—a simple but effective tool!

Thanks to the rice bran spread earlier, which prevents weed growth, the weeds at this stage haven't yet taken root. The chain, weighing about 12kg with fine links, easily removes them.



Actually this chains made by 5th generation, Hideaki Hashiba. He is Yuichi's father.



Weeds caught on the chain, and Weeds uprooted and floating on the water surface.

3RD BATTLE: WEEDING WITH CULTIVATING MACHINE AND IMPLEMENT

This is a push-type weeder that removes weeds by shallowly tilling the topsoil between the rows of rice plants.

By stirring and loosening the soil, oxygen is delivered to the roots of the seedlings, promoting respiration and root growth.

...Unfortunately, any seedlings that weren't planted straight during the rice planting are removed during this process, so it's very important to plant the seedlings in straight lines...☹️



4TH BATTLE: HAND WEEDING WITH A SICKLE

As the rice plants grow larger, machines can no longer be used, so we switch to using sickles for weeding. While this is the most reliable method, it must be done before the rice heads appear, as hitting the plants during this stage could damage them.

Since the work is done while inside the field, it also allows us to check the condition of the rice plants. We can assess the types of weeds growing and the number of rice stalks while working.



*Weeding with a sickle.
brewers, Ryota and Kosuke.*

FINALLY, APPEARANCE OF THE EARS!

The appearance of the ears is called "SHUSSUI" (出穂). This year, the early-maturing Rakufumai variety done thr appearance of the ears in early August, followed by the late-maturing Yamadanishiki and Shinriki in late August, and finally Omachi in early September.

During SHUSSUI, the young ears develop inside the rice stalks. In fact, if you cut a rice stalk vertically before the The appearance of the ears, you can observe the soft, moist young ears tightly packed inside the stalk (though please don't try this yourself!). The brewers use this method to estimate how high the young ears have risen and predict the timing of the appearance.



A cross-section of the rice stalk cut vertically and the young ears. The inside of the young ears is, of course, empty and quite soft.



Rakufumai in the process of SHUSSUI and flowering. You can see the small white flowers that only bloom in the morning!

FIELD INSPECTIONS OF RICE FIELDS

On August 21 and September 11, the brewers from Izumibashi and members of the “SAGAMI SAKE RICE RESEARCH ASSOCIATION*” conducted field inspections. Together, we visited each member's rice field, and while researchers from the Kanagawa Prefectural Agricultural Technology Center conducted surveys, we all checked the growth conditions. We examined the height of the rice, the number of stalks, the color of the leaves, and discussed future management methods and harvest timing predictions.



Checking the leaf color



Checking the height



After the field inspections, we discuss management methods until the harvest and any important notes for next year's cultivation in the conference room.



Check the ripening

What is “SAGAMI SAKE RICE RESEARCH ASSOCIATION”?

This is a research and cultivation group for sake rice farmers that was established in 1998. It is an organization dedicated to growing sake rice for Izumibashi. Its members include local farmers from Ebina, JA, the Kanagawa Prefectural Agricultural Technology Center, and Izumibashi. Approximately 90% of the sake rice used in Izumibashi's sake is grown either by the brewery's own staff or by members of this association.



Cultivation & Brewing Div.
Reader : Ryota Takahashi

Message from the Autumn Rice Fields “AKI-TONBO” series



The long-awaited harvest has arrived in the autumn rice fields. The refreshing breeze of an autumn clear sky carries the scent of ripened rice. This is also the season when dragonflies find their lover. Having emerged from larvae in early summer, the dragonflies become a couple in autumn and lay their eggs in the rice fields, continuing the cycle of life. Year after year, the future of these creatures—symbolized by the red dragonfly and other life that call the rice fields home—endures. This sake, brewed from rice grown in such an environment, has matured over the summer and now perfectly captures the bountiful essence of autumn, like a crisp, clear autumn day.



Yamadanishiki Kimoto Junmai

Made with low-polished Yamadanishiki and using the kimoto method, this sake offers a rich umami flavor with a crisp and refreshing acidity and bitterness, creating a sharp finish. With a sake meter value of around +10, it is the driest among our products.



Omachi Kimoto Junmai

A bold, full-bodied mouthfeel with a unified taste of pronounced umami and a mellow sweetness. The rich umami of Omachi is distinctly present, leaving a long-lasting finish that Omachi lovers will find irresistible.



Rakufumai Junmai Ginjo

It has a clear and smooth drinking experience. Based on the fresh and refreshing acidity, characteristic of the Rakufumai, a gentle sweetness and soft umami spread across the palate.

*The products listed are announced according to our release dates in Japan and are not necessarily exported overseas. For inquiries regarding new products and other matters, please contact Izumibashi.

04. Information “Award Results”

Sky-Blue Black Dragonfly Kimoto Junmai

This is a special product made with deep care and affection. Izumibashi's brewers grow their own Omachi rice without using pesticides or fertilizers, and it is brewed using the traditional kimoto method. After being aged for four years, it is presented as a carefully crafted masterpiece.

【Rice】 Omachi, In-house cultivation

【Polishing ratio】 65%

【Alcohol】 16度



Kura Master
Classic Moto
Platinum



全国燗酒コンテスト
KAN SAKA AWARD
2024

The Highest
Gold Award

It has a matured, creamy aroma reminiscent of roasted nuts and yogurt, with a faint refreshing hint of mint that lingers on the nose. The smooth texture, along with the mellow acidity characteristic of the kimoto method, and the full umami of the rice can be distinctly tasted.

To fully enjoy the acidity and umami, we recommend drink this with serving temperature 15°C~50°C. It pairs perfectly with richly flavored dishes. Additionally, its creaminess makes it a delicious match with cheeses like Gorgonzola.



*This product are announced according to our release in Japan and are not necessarily exported overseas. For inquiries regarding this product and other matters, please contact Izumibashi.



Sales Div. Manager

Masato Terada**Who is Terada?**

He joined Izumibashi on October 1st, 2000. With his start date falling on “SAKE DAY” (October 1), he is truly a man who both loves and is loved by sake. For 13 years after joining, he was involved in rice farming and sake brewing as a brewer and even served as the assistant master brewer (fuku-toji). Now, as the Sales Manager, a professional in both rice cultivation and brewing, he is an indispensable figure at Izumibashi.

Please tell us your main job content.

I visit liquor stores, promote sake through in-store sales at shops, attend events like makers' dinners at restaurants, and lead study sessions and brewery tours for professionals. My main focus is on ensuring that, even after customers purchase our sake, they can continue to enjoy it to the fullest with engaging suggestions and experiences.



If you can meet Mr. Terada in IZUMIBASHI, You are a lucky person, because he is so busy everyday. from Yuichi Hashiba

What do you like about your work, and please tell me the reasons.

Connecting with people through food, and creating smiles (peace) through the sake, Izumibashi — that's where the great potential lies. By connecting with people who do good work and linking them with others who are also doing great work, a positive cycle is created. I believe that the lives of those within this circle will become enriched.

Which product do you like, and please tell us your recommended how to drink and pairing with foods?

The best for me is "EBINA GO-CHI" from the Megumi series. For me, it's the sake that best brings out the umami of the rice and pairs perfectly with various dishes. I drink this sake with different temperature each time depend on the dish I'm eating.

Rice : Yamadanishiki produced in Ebina, Polishing ratio : 80%, Alc% : 16%
It is one of the driest flavors, competing for the top spot among our products.



Do you have some place you recommend near Izumibashi or in Kanagawa?

I recommend "Yakitori Juichi" near the Zama station next to Ebina city.

The owner, who is the same age as me, is a dedicated professional who starts preparing as early as 6 am every morning. Each skewer of yakitori is carefully crafted, delicious, and reasonably priced. You can also order our sake.



Q YAKITORI JUICHI ZAMA



What is your hobby?

Usually, I enjoy reading, and also spending time with my beloved dog. My black Shiba, "Saki" is turning 14 this year. She still has plenty of energy thanks to regular visits to the chiropractor and acupuncturist.

"I've always thought his expressions are literary and beautiful, and perhaps that's related to the amount of reading he does,"
from Kawanabe



So lovely and really cute
in a summer style♡

During acupuncture...
The acupuncturist distracts her with tasty treats to keep her still, and Saki happily eats.



Please say a few words to readers.

We are passionately dedicated to sake brewing from rice growing. If you think, "This sake is delicious," please visit our brewery! I believe you'll find the answer to what makes it "delicious."

Recent report

October 1st : SAKE DAY

In the sake industry, a unique calendar called the "Brewing Year (BY)" is used, which differs from the typical fiscal year. The brewing year runs from July to June of the following year. However, in the past, it was set from October to September, making October 1st the New Year's Day for sake.

The other reason is connected to the 12 animals of the Chinese zodiac. While most people know that these animals represent different years, they can also represent different times of year.

October 1 falls within a period represented by the rooster and expressed by the character 酉, which is read as tori, meaning "bird." Etymologically, this character is a derivation of 酒, the character for sake, which itself is a pictogram of a sake jar.



Preparing for brewing

Preparations for the brewing season, which begins in late September, are underway. We applied persimmon tannin coating to the wooden tubs used for mashing in the traditional KIMOTO method.



Before & After



BBQ with all staffs

On September 9th, known as "HIYAOROSHI DAY," we took advantage of an empty warehouse—cleared out for new shop—to enjoy an in-house BBQ and savor the autumn evening. Though the hot days continue, brewing season starts at the end of September, along with the rice harvest, making things even busier. So, we decided to gather beforehand. Nearly all the staff participated, around 30 people! It was a lively and successful event!



This winter, once again, our entire staff will unite as one to bring you delicious sake. We sincerely appreciate your continued support and look forward to serving you in the future!

