

Kanto-Shinetsu Sake Awards 2025

(by the Kanto-Shinetsu Regional Taxation Bureau of the National Tax Agency of Japan)

Overview

Kanto-Shinetsu Sake Awards are the traditional sake awards held by the Kanto-Shinetsu Regional Taxation Bureau of the National Tax Agency of Japan, which has jurisdiction for the Kanto-Shinetsu region's six prefectures (Ibaraki, Tochigi, Gunma, Saitama, Niigata and Nagano). The awards were first held in 1965 and the most recent awards held in 2025 marked the 96th.

The objective of holding these awards is, through evaluating the quality of sake, to promote the advancement and development of sake brewing technology, to improve the quality of sake brewed in Kanto-Shinetsu region's six prefectures, and to contribute to the sound development of the sake industry.



Six prefectures in the Kanto-Shinetsu region of Japan

The most recent awards (Kanto-Shinetsu Sake Awards 2025) consisted of three categories. The first category was for *Ginjo-shu* sake, a type of sake that has a fruity flavor and has been described as a work of art among sake. The second category was for *Junmai Ginjo-shu* sake, a beautiful combination of rich and fruity flavor of *Ginjo-shu* sake with fragrant and tasteful flavor of *Junmai-shu* sake. The last category was for *Junmai-shu* sake that is made solely from high quality rice and has a fragrant and complex flavor.

The six prefectures of the Kanto-Shinetsu region are blessed with outstanding natural beauty and best climate conditions for brewing sake. For the Kanto-Shinetsu Sake Awards 2025, 121 products were exhibited in the *Ginjo-shu* category, 150 in the *Junmai Ginjo-shu* category and 79 in the *Junmai-shu* category from many traditional sake breweries (*Meijo-kura*) in Kanto-Shinetsu region.

The judging panel, who used all their senses to evaluate the quality of the exhibits, carried out the first and second round of judging on October 2nd, 3rd and October 9th 2025. Following a strict but fair judging process, NAKAMURA Minoru, the Regional Commissioner of the Kanto-Shinetsu Regional Taxation Bureau, awarded Excellence Prizes to 41 manufacturers in the *Ginjo-shu* category, 51 in the *Junmai Ginjo-shu* category, and 29 in the *Junmai-shu* category that achieved excellent scores. In addition, the manufacturers that achieved the highest score in each category were awarded Grand Prizes, while the next two highest-scoring manufacturers in each category were awarded Special Prizes.

Judging method

The judges, who are experts in evaluating the quality of sake and came from the six prefectures in the Kanto-Shinetsu region, are researchers from public organizations for sake brewing technology, brewmasters, researchers from National Research Institute of Brewing and technical officers from the Kanto-Shinetsu Regional Taxation Bureau. The judges used all their senses to perform strict but fair evaluations of the quality of sake.

Review of 2025

The overall evaluation of the sake submitted to each category was as follows.

In the *Ginjo-shu* category, the lineup featured sakes with the

characteristic *ginjo* aroma — refined and richly fragrant — paired with a clear, delicate flavor profile.

In the *Junmai Ginjo-shu* category, there were many highly accomplished sakes with well-rounded balances of aroma and flavor, featuring fruity, floral or refreshing aromas complemented by the rich flavor of the rice used.

In the *Junmai-shu* category, a wide range of styles were identified: those with fresh, light flavors; those with a fruity character and well-balanced sweetness and acidity; and those with a robust umami derived from the rice, yet featuring a pronounced acidity that delivers a clean, crisp finish.

Results of the Judging

Please see [Appendix](#).