

Kanto-Shinetsu Sake Awards 2023

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

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 2023 marked the 94th.

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 2023) 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-shu* sake that is made solely from high quality rice and has a fragrant and complex flavor. The last 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 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 2023, 135 products were exhibited in the *Ginjo-shu* category, 162 in the *Junmai Ginjo-shu* sake category and 82 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 September 28th, 29th and October 5th 2023. Following a strict but fair judging process, KIMURA Hidemi, the Regional Commissioner of the Kanto-Shinetsu Regional Taxation Bureau, awarded the Grand Prize to a manufacturer who achieved the highest score in each of the three categories (the *Ginjo-shu* category, the *Junmai Ginjo-shu* category and the *Junmai-shu* category), and also gave Special Prizes to two other manufacturers that achieved the highest scores in each of the three categories following the Grand Prizes. Furthermore, the Commissioner KIMURA also gave Excellence Prizes to 42 manufacturers in the *Ginjo-shu* category, 52 manufacturers in the *Junmai Ginjo-shu* category and 27 manufacturers in the *Junmai-shu* category that achieved excellent scores.

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.

Results of the Judging

Please see [Appendix 1](#) and [Appendix 2](#).