

# Kankyo Shuzo

MIRIN BREWING COMPANY



販賣店



Original Kankyo Shuzo logo

## History

Mirin was introduced to Japan from China four hundred years ago and was considered a sweet liqueur (like plum wine) often drunk by women. At that time Mirin was known as “beautiful and fresh Sake” and was highly regarded as a very sweet Sake. This appreciation remains today with Otoso, the spiced medicinal sake beverage, which is traditionally consumed during the New Year’s celebration. People started to use Mirin as a seasoning in the middle of the Edo period (18th century) but it was limited to the higher classes of society. Mirin finally became mainstream and available to regular households after the 1950’s.

Today Mirin has become an essential part of culinary Japan and at least one bottle can be found in every Japanese kitchen. If you’ve ever wondered why the soup in noodle broth you make at home doesn’t taste as good as the ones from Japanese restaurants, -- the missing special ingredient is probably Mirin.

## Our Esteemed Producer

Hirahachi Yamada started producing Mirin in 1862. He lived near a stream whose source was the Noubi Plain, the center of rice growing in the Aichi Prefecture located in the central region of Japan’s main island. It was convenient that the rice used for his mirin was delivered by small boats that used this stream that flowed near his home. The climate in this region, with dry winters and humid summers, is ideal for making Mirin. In 1935 the company was renamed the Kankyo Brewery (literally meaning the “Sweet and Strong” brewery). Unfortunately, during World War II the commercial production of their Mirin was prohibited because it was considered to be a luxury item. In 1951, 6 years after the end of WWII, the commercial production of Mirin was once again permitted at this brewery. Kankyo also started to produce Sake commercially in 1954. In 1995 they became the first brewery in Japan to be certified organic by OCIA International.

The original building structure of Kankyo Brewery was built in the 1860’s and a portion of the original building is still used as the storehouse (called Kura). The Kura naturally maintains a stable internal temperature, and this optimal temperature is critical for producing the most complete fermentation for Mirin and Sake.

## About Genuine Mirin

The traditional Mirin brewing methods used by the Kankyo Company involve a unique fermentation and distillation process. Genuine Mirin is also called “Honmirin” and is made with the combination of these simple ingredients: sweet rice, rice Koji, and distilled Sake. First steamed sweet rice is mixed with rice Koji and later distilled sake is added. The addition of the distilled sake suppresses the fermentation process, and as a result large amounts of sugars and amino acids are created which trigger a chemical reaction as the Mirin matures through a sixty to ninety day mashing (saccharification) process. This reaction gives Mirin its distinctive amber color. Its flavor mellows and its color turns darker during longer maturation periods.

The raw material that results from this initial process results in what is called “Moromi.” Next the Moromi is pressed to separate the Mirin from the dregs (or lees). Pressed Mirin (a milky white liquid at this stage) is then aged for an additional 6 -12 months, during which time the alcohol percentage reaches about 14 per cent. This traditional method of making authentic Mirin takes quite a bit of time and considerable human involvement.



From  Japan



Steamed rice cooling down



Rice Koji

med rice is inoculated with the Koji spore evenly across the surface is an essential part of Koji making. Therefore, this process is done totally by hand. After the inoculation, the heat and humidity levels are carefully controlled and monitored, and the air must be thoroughly circulated for 24 hours (with the occasional aeration by rotating the bed of the rice Koji). Kankyo has the highest quality standards in making their rice Koji and their brewing craftsmen always strive to improve and perfect their Koji making processes.

### Unique Culinary Qualities of Authentic Mirin

Mirin provides a complex flavored sweetness, consisting of glucose, isomaltose, oligosaccharide, amino acids, organic acids, and aroma enhancing components such as ethyl phenylacetate. This is why the sweetness that Genuine Mirin brings out is mellow yet rich and round with a relatively low glycemic index despite being sweet tasting..

Mirin's unique flavors have a wide variety of uses—including being one of the primary flavorings in simmered dishes including Oden. Oden is a Japanese winter stew in which all sorts of absorbent, and squishy vegetables and Tofu simmer for hours—even days—in a broth based on Dashi, Shoyu, and Mirin.



Mirin Glazed Kabocha Pumpkin

Mirin gives Japanese foods a subtle sweetness and sheen, and adds texture and an appetizing luster to foods like they have been glazed. An exquisite, versatile seasoning, Mirin has the unique ability to coax out and accentuate the flavors from bland or light-tasting foods. Known to provide the true umami flavor, one of the essential tastes of traditional Japanese cuisine, Mirin's mild sweetness and unique qualities help all the other ingredients integrate their flavors while eliminating any unpleasant meat and fish odors.

Mirin enhances the flavors of sweet as well as savory sauces, vinaigrettes, noodle broths, simmered vegetable and fish dishes, sautéés and stir-fries, fried noodles, Sushi rice, marinades, and dips for Tempura and Sushi. Since it's naturally aged over 9 months, our Mirin has a unique and unmatched gentle sweetness, a rare, magical quality that enhances and harmonizes delicate flavors. Muso's organic and authentic mirin harmonizes flavors and elevates them. Mirin and soy sauce together provide an enhanced luster to foods and are used in Teriyaki sauces for fish and meats. Enjoy this truly authentic Mirin, a treat rarely seen even on store shelves in Japan!