
天狗舞
白座
Tengumai HAKUZA
Hakusan, Ishikawa
石川県 白山
白座
TENGUMAI
HYAKUMANGOKU NO SHIRO
SAKÉ PASSION & CIE

Tengumai / Shata Shuzo

—Nature, History, and Culture of Hakusan, Ishikawa—

1. History

Nurtured alongside Kanazawa's culinary culture and long cherished by the masters of "Kaga cuisine"



Founded at the foot of sacred Mt. Hakusan in Hakusan City, Ishikawa Prefecture, Shata Shuzo — the brewery behind well known sake, "Tengumai" — has been brewing sake for more than 200 years.

Its history began when the founder of brewery, Taemon, received official permission to brew sake from Maeda Narinaga, lord of the Kaga Domain. Since then, alongside the rich culinary culture of "Kaga Hyakumangoku", the brewery has continued to pursue refined sake meant to be quietly enjoyed by local over the years.

During Japan's rapid economic growth in the 1970s, "tradition al Yamahai brewing" began to decline amid growing demands for efficiency and mass production. Yet seventh generation Toshiro, together with the legendary-toji "Nakasaburo", remained deeply committed to the method. Believing in the harmony between yamahai, the underground waters flowing from Mt. Hakusan, and the traditional cuisine of Kaga, they introduced the sake under the name "Tengumai," which would later become one of the defining names of yamahai brewing.



Later, 8th generation Kazunari, together with Nakasaburo and his disciple Kenji Okada, introduced "Gorin," a sake brewed with the modern dining table in mind.

Even after earning widespread acclaim, the brewery has never ceased pursuing its ideal: "the finest sake to accompany the finest cuisine."

In 2023, 9th generation heir Keiichiro returned to the brewery and began taking on new challenges while carrying the brewery's traditions forward. Rooted in the nature of Hakusan and the food culture of Kanazawa, he continues to pursue ever greater expression through every stage of production, from rice cultivation to brewing.



SAKÉ PASSION Excluxive Brand

天狗舞 “白座”
Tengumai “Hakuza”

In 2023, Keichiro Shata returned as the 9th generation of the family sake brewery with over 200 years of history.
This “Tengumai Hakuza” embodies his ‘experimental challenges’ to the techniques passed down over the years, including the traditional ‘山廃 Yamahai’ brewing method. The first batch was brewed in 2024. Seeks to evolve the traditional flavours of Tengumai— sake that has grown alongside the local culinary culture—into an even more refined ‘ultimate accompaniment to food’, is truly a work that embodies the brewery’s future identity and represents the culmination of the passion of the young ninth-generation and brewers.

There is nothing fundamentally new in the making of Hakuza. Keiichiro’s challenge lies in what might be called ‘innovation within tradition’: thoroughly refining every single detail of the ‘Tengumai Yamahai brewing method’ established by his mentor, Nakasaburo.

Hakuza is crafted with extreme precision, beginning with a small batch unprecedented within Shata brewery. Every detail of the brewing process—from production scale and water temperature to koji and fermentation— is tightly controlled.
Rather than a dramatic change, what is unfolding is a ‘quiet yet intense shift’ of brewing practice at Shata brewery. It is driven by passion, conviction, and patience driven by the younger generation who cherish the traditions of both the local community and the brewery.

The name “Hakuza” was derived from ‘Mount Hakusan’, a sacred peak which locals have long worshipped as the mountain of the “White Deities”.



Launching in spring 2026







2． People and Philosophy

9th generation's challenge, the Ultimate「Tengumai Yamahai」

For over 200 years, "Tengumai" has evolved alongside the abundant natural surroundings of Mt. Hakusan and the rich culinary culture of Kanazawa. Keiichiro, the next-generation head of the brewery, sees his role not simply as preserving tradition, but as carrying it forward through continued refinement and new expression. While remaining deeply rooted in the techniques inherited from previous generations, he pursues every detail with precision and care, seeking to further deepen the character and elegance that define "Tengumai."
"Tengumai Hakuza" stands as one expression of that pursuit.



9th generation in-line　Shata Keiichiro

7th generation, Pioneering a new Era of Yamahai

The seventh-generation owner, Toshiro Shata, sought a new direction for sake brewing and invited the respected Noto-toji Nakasaburo to join Shata Shuzo. At a time when the traditional yamahai method was steadily falling out of favor, Nakasaburo devoted himself to its revival. After years of experimentation, the resulting sake was released under the name "Tengumai." In contrast to the light, delicate styles that dominated the market at the time, Tengumai offered a deeper, more structured expression that quickly gained a devoted following among sake lovers across Japan.



7th generation　Shata Toshiro



Toji　Nakasaburo

8th generation, a New Expression for the Modern Table

The eighth-generation owner, Kazunari Shata, worked alongside Kenji Okada, successor to the craftsmanship of the legendary toji Nakasaburo, to further refine the bold style of Tengumai established by the previous generation. As the world of gastronomy increasingly moved toward greater delicacy and precision, they sought to preserve the powerful core character of Tengumai while shaping it into a more refined and elegant expression.
Through years of experimentation, they introduced a new label, "Gorin," which today stands alongside Tengumai as one of the two pillars of Shata Shuzo.



8th generation　Shata Issei



Toji　Okada Kenji

A Legacy in the Hands of a New Generation

Drawn by the philosophy and distinctive character of Tengumai, aspiring kurabito=brewing team gather at the brewery not only from across Ishikawa, but from throughout Japan. Today, more than half of the brewery's craftsmen are in their twenties.
The educational philosophy passed down from the former toji Nakasaburo — entrusting young brewers with real responsibility from an early stage — continues to shape the brewery today. Under the leadership of toji Kenji Okada, sake brewing is carried out through constant dialogue and collaboration among the team.
Despite producing approximately 2,700-koku annually, Tengumai maintains a meticulous standard of quality in every stage of production.
That level of craftsmanship is sustained through the technical discipline inherited from Nakasaburo, as well as the strong sense of responsibility shared among the brewery's kurabito.



3. Nature・History・Culture of Hakusan, Ishikawa

The Wtaer that Nurtures Rice, Land, and Life

Mt. Hakusan spans four prefectures—Ishikawa, Toyama, Fukui, and Gifu—and serves as the source of four great rivers: the Tedori, Shogawa, Kuzuryu, and Nagara. Flowing from the slopes of Mt. Hakusan, these rivers have carried fertile soils downstream for millennia, forming vast alluvial plains and supporting agriculture and human settlement across a wide area of central Japan. Their waters have long sustained the region's prosperity and way of life.

For this reason, Mt. Hakusan has been revered since ancient times not only as the source of these life-giving waters, but also as one of Japan's great sacred mountains.



UNESCO-recognised unspoilt wilderness:
'Purity and Minerals' – the ultimate water source

The region stretching from the alpine heights of Mt. Hakusan to the Sea of Japan has been recognized as a UNESCO Global Geopark, a landscape where remarkable geological diversity and pristine natural environments have been preserved over countless centuries. The distance from Hakusan's summit to the coast is surprisingly short. As rivers descend rapidly from the mountain, they carve deep valleys through the landscape before reaching the sea, creating an extraordinary concentration of ecosystems and geological formations within a relatively compact area.
Shata Shuzo is located within this geopark, at the heart of the Tedori River alluvial fan. Here, layers of gravel and stone carried down from the mountains have accumulated to exceptional depth, naturally filtering the groundwater as it passes through the land. The result is exceptionally pure water, shaped by the geology of Mt. Hakusan and ideally suited to sake brewing.



A Gateway of Culture and the Historic Heart of Kaga





Hakusan City has historically served as both a strategic transportation hub and a major center of faith within the Kaga region. Before the rise of Kanazawa, it effectively functioned as one of the region's principal political and cultural centers. The importance of the area is reflected in the fact that the prefectural government was originally established here.
Even the name "Ishikawa" is said to derive from the river now known as the Tedori River, which flows from Mt. Hakusan and has long shaped the history and development of the region. At the mouth of these rivers stood a port that flourished from ancient times as one of the largest on the Sea of Japan coast, serving as a gateway to the Asian continent and a place where new cultures and technologies first arrived. During the Edo period, the area also prospered as an important port of call for the "Kitamaebune" trading ships.

Throughout its history, Hakusan has remained a place defined by the constant exchange of people, culture, information, and technology.

※the city name Ishikawa, meaning river of rocks, came from fact that Tedori river was used to send great quantities of rocks downstream.

Kaga Cuisine: Where food and Craftsmanship becomes Art





During the Edo period, the Maeda Family, rulers of Kaga[1], devoted considerable resources to the cultivation of culture and the arts. By combining the refined aesthetics of Kyoto tea culture with the rich ingredients of Hokuriku area and the traditions of the samurai culture, they fostered a distinctive cultural identity unlike any other in Japan. This spirit found its fullest expression in Kaga cuisine, where exceptional local ingredients were elevated through the skill and artistry of master craftsmen. Together with celebrated local crafts (including Kutani porcelain and the lacquerware traditions of Yamanaka and Wajima), dining evolved into a uniquely integrated art form—one that united cuisine, craftsmanship, and aesthetics into a single cultural experience. Among those captivated by this culture was Kitaoji Rosanjin[2], one of Japan's most influential gastronomes and ceramic artists. During extended stays in Kaga, he was deeply inspired by the region's culinary and artistic traditions.

It is said that these experiences later shaped his famous belief that "tableware is the kimono of cuisine," a philosophy that continues to influence Japanese gastronomy today.

Kaga[1]: Historic region corresponding largely to present-day southern Ishikawa Prefecture.
Kitaoji Rosanjin[2] (1883-1959): Influential Japanese ceramic artist, calligrapher, and gastronome.

From Sacred Mountains to the Brewery: Waters that have sustained the land for centuries

Mt. Hakusan, the sacred source of the Tedori River in Ishikawa, the Shogawa River in Toyama, the Kuzuryu River in Fukui, and the Nagara River in Gifu, has long been known as the mountain that nourishes more farmland than any other in Japan. Since ancient times, its waters have sustained daily life and agriculture across a vast region, giving rise to the ancient Hakusan faith in which the mountain itself is revered as sacred.
The well water used at Shata Shuzo is also drawn from the underground waters flowing from Mt. Hakusan. At the center of this faith is Kukurihime-no-Mikoto, the deity enshrined at Shirayama Hime Shrine, who has long been associated with water and purification. For the people living at the foot of Mt. Hakusan, both the mountain's abundant waters and the faith surrounding them have remained deeply connected to everyday life for centuries.





Hakusan Hime Shrine: the central shine of nearly 3,000 Hakusan Shrines Nationwide

Since the Nara period(710-794), when the famous buddhist-monk Taicho opened Mt. Hakusan as a sacred site of "Shugendo", those who trained there spread its spiritual influence throughout Japan while also building wide networks that connected distant regions. Centers of the Hakusan faith, represented by Shirayama Hime Shrine, also functioned as influential manor estates with considerable autonomy, maintaining close ties with the political and cultural powers of their time. Furthermore, because Hakusan lay along the geographical and cultural extension of Mt. Hiei — the guardian mountain of Kyoto, once the capital of Japan for a long time — it came to be revered by court nobles and Buddhist clergy alike as an especially sacred place.
Over time, this reverence expanded into a vast network of nearly 3,000 shrines across Japan.





Ishikawa・Hakusan　Terrior

1．Hakusan's Terrior　～Land, Climate, Water～

Hakusan city in Ishikawa offers conditions well suited to the cultivation of late-ripening sake rice. Strong sunlight comparable to that of the northern Kanto region, together with cool winds descending from mountains rising over 2,700 meters, creates the significant day-to-night temperature variation needed for slow and balanced rice maturation. Abundant underground water flowing from Mt.Hakusan also plays an essential role in both rice cultivation and sake brewing in the area. Despite these favorable conditions, Hakusan lies in the Hokuriku region, an area more commonly associated with heavy snow and harsh winters, making it one of the northernmost places where late-ripening sake rice can still be successfully grown.

The Northern Limit of late-ripening Sake Rice

Hakusan is known for deep snow and cold winters, shaped by its position along the Sea of Japan. Yet its latitude is close to the rice-growing areas of northern Kanto, long known for rice offered to the Tokugawa shogun family and the Imperial Court. The area receives enough sunlight for rice cultivation, while the cool climate at the foot of Mt.Hakusan allows the grain to mature slowly and steadily. For late-ripening sake rice such as Yamadanishiki and Omachi, this balance is essential. Hakusan is one of the northernmost areas where these varieties can be grown well. The rice from this region brings a clean, firm, and refined character to the sake.



V-shaped Valleys and Day-to-Night Temperature Difference

Strong winds descending from Mt.Hakusan create significant day-to-night temperature variation across the Tedori River alluvial fan. As nighttime temperatures fall, the rice is able to retain and slowly accumulate the starch produced during the day, allowing each grain to mature with greater depth and balance. These winds follow the V-shaped valley formed by the former Ishikawa River — now known as the Tedori River — running from the 2,700-meter peaks of Mt.Hakusan toward the Sea of Japan. Located near the upper central part of the Tedori river alluvial fan, Shata Shuzo also benefits from this constant airflow. The moving air helps prevent excessive humidity and stagnant heat around the brewery, maintaining a cool and clear environment for sake brewing.



Abundant rainfall and Pure Water

The Hakusan region receives more than 3,000 mm of rain and snow each year, among the highest levels in Japan. Seasonal winds from the Sea of Japan bring abundant snowfall and rainfall as they collide with Mt.Hakusan. Over time, this water is filtered through the mountains and becomes exceptionally pure underground water. The steady flow of cool water throughout the year also helps create rice and vegetables with remarkable clarity and freshness in the plains.



2． Tengumai’s Rice

Kaga　Hyakumangoku no Shiro

A sake rice variety cultivated only in Ishikawa Prefecture.
The rice grows with relatively short height and sturdy stalks, allowing it to withstand strong wind and rain while ripening steadily in the Hakusan climate. Its character sits between the richness of late-ripening varieties and the sharper profile of earlier-ripening rice, giving it a natural sense of balance. That balance is one of the qualities most closely associated with both the variety itself and the sake of the Hakusan region. Rather than overpowering the sake with excessive weight or intensity, the rice allows the brewer’s decisions and style to appear clearly in the final expression. In the hands of a skilled brewer, it can produce sake with precision, quiet depth, and long structure.



New initiatives aimed at achieving the finest quality “Tengumai Hakuza”, starting from the rice field.

Kaga　Yamadanishiki　to be released in 2027

Shata Shuzo and “Ōta Farm” are co-working to cultivate pesticide-free Kaga Yamadanishiki (as of 2025) for the highest expression of Hakuza. The rice is grown deep in the mountains beyond Shirayama Hime Shrine, along the upper reaches of the Dainichi River. Cold mountain water with very little organic matter flows through the area, reducing yields but producing rice with a more refined and tightly structured character.
This region sits near the northern limit for growing late-ripening rice varieties such as Yamadanishiki. The cool water and mountain air create rice that is firmer and more delicate than typical Yamadanishiki, making brewing especially demanding. The small terraced fields, pesticide-free farming, and careful brewing required for this rice all call for an unusual level of precision. When everything comes together, the brewery believes the result is a sake with a purity and clarity that cannot easily be achieved elsewhere.



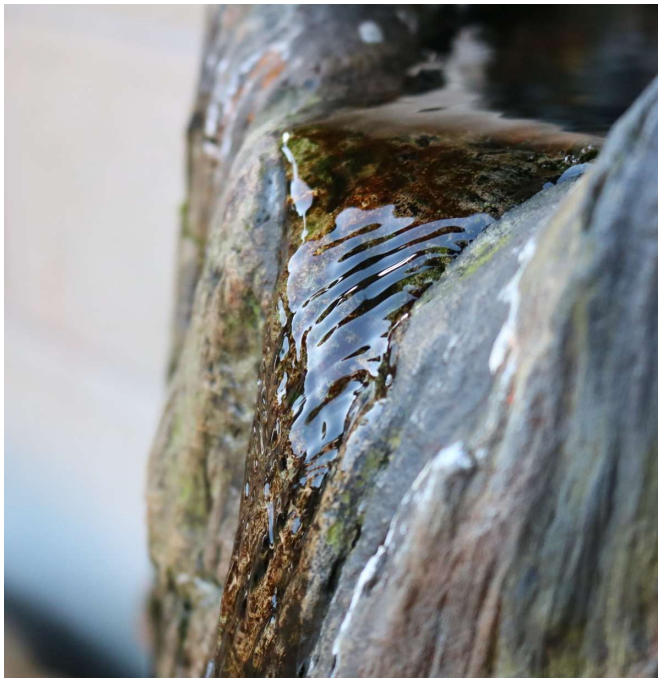


3． Water of Hakuza

Hakusan area is known for exceptionally pure water with a rare mineral balance, shaped by the region's unique geology and mountain environment. Locally referred to as "goshinsui," or sacred water, it supports both the agriculture and sake brewing of the region. Snow and rain falling on Mt.Hakusan slowly filter underground over the course of nearly a century before emerging as remarkably clear water low in organic matter. As the water passes through volcanic rock, ancient marine layers, and limestone-rich strata, it absorbs both calcium and mineral elements such as magnesium, creating a brewing water unlike that found in most sake regions of Japan. This unusually complex geological environment is one of the defining characteristics of the Hakusan area, which has also been recognized by UNESCO for its natural landscape and geological significance.



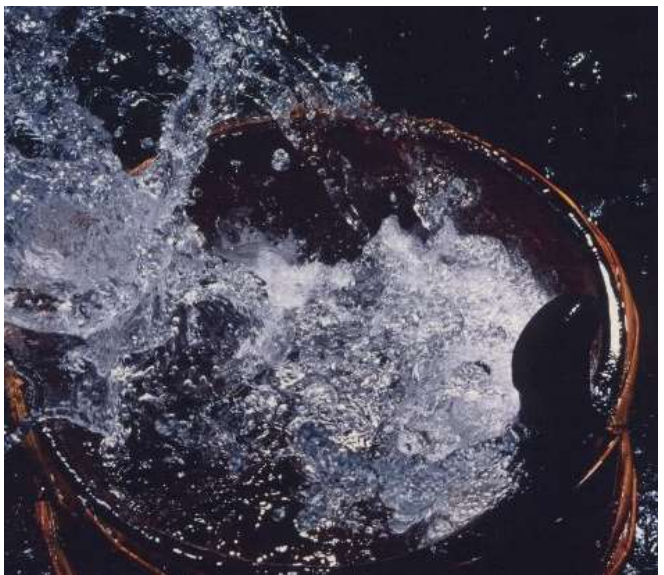
*Typically in Japan, the lowlands—where water tends to pool—are predominantly characterised by soft water, which is rich in organic matter but low in minerals. In contrast, mountainous regions and foothills are predominantly characterised by moderately hard water originating from strata uplifted by tectonic activity (such as granite, which is rich in mineral-based elements like magnesium), or from layers formed by volcanic activity, as well as soft water (soils formed from lava flows and volcanic rock—rich in mineral-based minerals; volcanic ash soils—soft water containing no minerals) are the majority. Water such as the Hakusan groundwater, which possesses 'minerals derived from limestone (calcium) that offer both definition and softness'—similar to that found in Burgundy or Champagne—is an extremely rare phenomenon.



Brewery's Water

Hakusan ground water: calcium-rich moderately hard water

Shata Shuzo's brewing water is a rare calcium-rich, moderately hard water with a hardness level of 120mg/l, an uncommon feature in Japan. The minerals it contains, including calcium and magnesium, play an important role in promoting the growth of naturally occurring lactic acid bacteria during the traditional Yamahai brewing method.



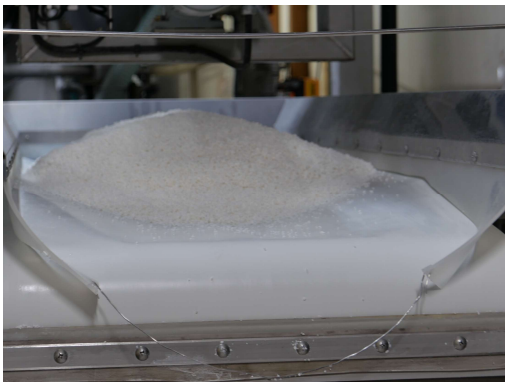
Tengumai's Brewing

Preparatory Stages



Rice Polishing

Shata Shuzo handles all rice polishing in-house. For a brewery of its size, Shata Shuzo maintains an unusually large number of rice polishing machines — five in total — allowing polishing to be adjusted to the condition of each year's rice. (The majority of breweries outsource rice polishing.)



Washing and Soaking

Automatic washing and soaking systems allow soaking times to be adjusted with extreme precision. By automating work once done manually by eight people, more attention can now be devoted to koji-making and yeast starter preparation.



Steaming

Steam from the boiler is reheated before use, and the rice is steamed slowly over the course of an hour. This longer steaming process helps reduce excess fatty acids and unwanted aromas in the rice.

Koji Making



Koji is made by hand using traditional hako-koji and took-koji methods. The brewery works with "so-haze style",(=Spread the koji-mould evenly over the entire surface of the rice) to bring depth and umami to the sake. For Yamahai moto, the koji is cultivated over a longer period to support the natural development of lactic acid bacteria.



At Shata Shuzo, koji-making is the most important key to express their own style. This approach has been maintained for more than fifty years, since the previous toji Nakasaburo first joined the brewery.

Moto Preparation

Sake brewed at the brewery as a whole is produced in a ratio of 7:3 between Yamahai-moto and Sokujo-moto.



Yamahai Moto

Yamahai moto is developed through the natural activity of lactic-acid-bacteria living within the brewery, together with careful temperature control by the brewing team. The yeast raised in this environment behaves differently from yeast grown through sokujo moto, maintaining stronger fermentation even in the later stages of moromi fermentation.
Yamahai moto also shapes the flavor of the finished sake itself, bringing gentle bitterness along with greater depth and complexity.
Only a small number of brewers allowed to step inside the Yamahai moto room, where microbial control is especially strict.

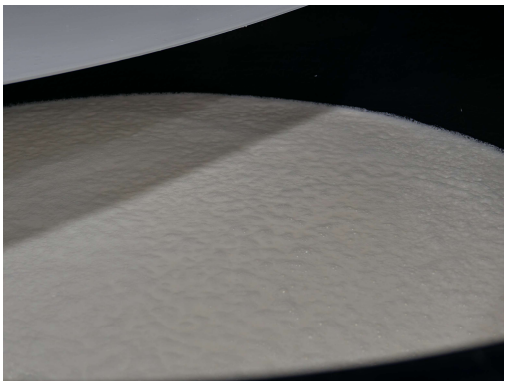


For the Final Touch



Moromi Management

The moromi is checked closely throughout fermentation through detailed analysis and daily tasting by the toji, with the aim of balancing umami and acidity while keeping the finish clean. Water additions and temperature are adjusted so the yeast can continue working without stress, guiding the moromi in good condition through to pressing.



Toward the end of fermentation, the moromi develops a thick surface film, a characteristic often seen with Shata Shuzo's so-haze style koji.

Aging

Many of Shata Shuzo's sake include a portion of aged sake in the blend.
The brewery's moderately hard water and so-haze style koji give the sake a firm structure, allowing the higher acidity of Yamahai brewing to support long aging without losing definition, while gradually deepening texture and maturity.



Tengumai “HAKUZA”　Portfolio

＜coming soon＞

Designated Plot

Pesticide-Free

Kaga　Yamada Nishiki

＜release Nov.2026＞

Hyakumangokuno Shiro

Yamahai　Fukurotsuri

25BY

＜latest release＞

Hyakumangokuno Shiro　Yamahai

24BY



- The May 2026 release will be limited to a single tank of ‘Hyakumangokuno Shiro’.
- A very limited ‘Fukurotsuri’ expression will be added to the lineup from November of 2026.
- We are preparing a November 2027 release of pesticide-free ‘Kaga Yamada Nishiki’ from a designated mountain plot in Hakusan area.

Shata shuzo General Portfolio

—TENGUMAI —





Limited Aged Expressions
(Yugen Series)

Yukanpaku
Ginkoburi
Nakasaburou





Yamahai Junmai Daiginjo

Tengumai　Yamahai Junmai Daiginjo
Tengumai　Haku(excusively for restaurants)
and more

Yamahai Junmai

Tengumai　Yamahai Shikomi Junmai Sake
Tengumai　Yamahai Junmai 'GI' Hakusan
Tengumai　Koku(excusively for restaurants)
and more





Junmai Daiginjo

Junmai

Tengumai　Umajun
and more

Honjozo

Tengumai　Mai
and more

—GORIN —

Gorin　Hari



Gorin　Junmai Daiginjo

Junmai Ginjo
Junmai Ginjo　Nama




Gorin　Junmai

Junmai
Junami　Nama






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