

How to Enjoy Honkaku Shochu and Awamori – Tasting



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The alcohol content of Honkaku Shochu or Awamori is generally 20-30%, which is higher than Sake, so these drinks are usually diluted with hot or cold water. This is actually the best way to enjoy the distinctive aroma of these beverages.

With hot water, the most popular way to dilute is 4 to 6, 5 to 5 or 6 to 4 (Honkaku Shochu/Awamori to hot water) to adjust the alcohol level to around 15%, the same as that of Japanese Sake. When the temperature is higher, some components in the Honkaku Shochu or Awamori will evaporate, making it more aromatic. Furthermore, the more alcohol that evaporates, the sweeter and more enticing the scent. Also, when diluting with hot water, it is best to pour the hot water into the glass first and then add the Honkaku Shochu or Awamori gently to allow the two to mix well, adjusting the temperature to best enjoy the flavor. However, if you pour the Honkaku Shochu or Awamori first, it is probably easier to measure the actual amount of Honkaku Shochu or Awamori you are using.

When diluting with cold water, put some ice in a glass, pour Honkaku Shochu or Awamori onto it, fill the glass with cold water to adjust the alcohol level to about 10-15%, and mix well. In this way, the aroma of the Honkaku Shochu or Awamori becomes milder with a refreshing flavor. If you put ice and Honkaku Shochu or Awamori first and then pour cold water gently over it, the Honkaku Shochu or Awamori will circulate up to the top, making the top part of the drink stronger. In this way, you can enjoy the rich flavor of Honkaku Shochu or Awamori with your first few sips, and gradually enjoy a weaker and milder flavor as the Honkaku Shochu or Awamori drifts slowly down.

If you want to enjoy the real flavor of Honkaku Shochu and Awamori, the best way is to drink it straight or on the rocks. However, it is important to pay attention to the alcohol level, which can be quite strong. It is best to enjoy the aroma first, then sip a small amount (1-2ml) of Honkaku Shochu or Awamori, swirling it around



your mouth to savor the taste before swallowing. In this way, the alcohol is diluted in the mouth, allowing a smoother passage down the throat.

As most Honkaku Shochu and Awamori do not have a very strong flavor, these drinks rarely clash with the flavors in food. Instead, certain unpleasant tastes in foods, such as oils and fats, are washed away by the refreshing flavor of the Honkaku Shochu or Awamori, often making dishes taste better.

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Honkaku Shochu and Awamori Tasting

It is easier to tell the difference in the quality of Honkaku Shochu or Awamori if you separate aromas and flavors when tasting. Aromas are judged with the distinctive traits of the ingredients taken into consideration, whereas tastes are judged by levels of sweetness and mellowness. Once you become more experienced at tasting, you should start considering the balance between aroma and taste. These aspects vary depending on the ingredients used and the production method, so evaluation criteria needs to be adjusted according to the particular variety.

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