

Yamaki Nama

UNPASTEURIZED SHOYU & MISO COMPANY



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Shoyu History

Shoyu originated from the ancient Chinese salted and fermented food known as “Jiang.” Jiiag made from beans and grains was introduced into Japan in the 13th century. Jiang eventually evolved into “Hishio”, a food that was a cross between today’s Shoyu and Miso. The first Japanese Shoyu brewery was established around 1580, ultimately spreading throughout Japan. The Yamaki Nama Shoyu brewery traces its lineage back to that early period of Shoyu brewing. Their premium Shoyu is brewed today by expert craftsmen who have perfected their craft over the past 100 years.

Tradition passed down to the fourth generation

Located in the town of Kamikawa in Saitama Prefecture, a beautiful area with an abundance of nature and parks, Yamaki has been making Shoyu and Miso for more than 100 years. They use the “Koshikijozo” or traditional natural fermenting methods (established more than 1200 years ago) -- using cedar OKE barrels for the aging and fermentation process. Yamaki started their brewery in 1902 when the neighboring farmers brought them their soybeans, rice and wheat they had harvested, and asked Yamaki to make Shoyu and Miso for their own home use. Yamaki’s traditional process of making Shoyu hasn’t really changed since then; using only organic soybeans, organic whole wheat, koji, sun-dried sea salt and natural spring water. They create the initial Moromi (a mash made by mixing all the ingredients) in the traditional Akita cedar OKE barrels where they age for at least 1 ½ years. During the fermentation period, the Koji, yeast and other beneficial microorganisms become especially active during the summer months. During these warm months, the Yamaki shoyu brewers mix the Moromi with long wooden paddles several times a day, allowing it to be exposed to the air, which supports the natural fermentation process. Except for this occasional stirring (called “Kaiire”), the fermentation of the shoyu proceeds naturally, simply as a result of the the activity of Koji, lactic acid and yeasts while the climate changes between the four seasons. The brewmasters fill their ninety-two 70-year old OKE barrels for the Shoyu and Miso fermentation process.



From  Japan



The reservoir of holy water at Yamaki's plant



A crystal of Kamiizumi water

God Spring Water “Kamiizumi”

Yamaki believes that the quality of the water used in making Shoyu and Miso is of the utmost importance. They use “Kamiizumi” water, which translates literally as “God Spring water.” Yamaki brewers use this water exclusively during all the stages of their Shoyu and Miso manufacturing. This natural spring water has been filtered through Chichibu paleozoic strata for hundreds of years. Yamaki collects this natural mountain spring water daily from a nearby mountain (Mt. Jominesan at an altitude of 800 meters) They believe that the superior quality of this mountain spring water makes it particularly suitable for promoting the fermentation process and the growth of healthful microorganisms in the making of their Shoyu and Miso. They believe that by using Kamiizumi water for thier Shoyu and Miso, that the yeasts and lactic acid work more vigorously and enhance the fermentation resulting in the optimal aroma and taste of these foods.

Yamaki’s Nama Shoyu (Nama means “unpasteurized”) has remarkably mellow and Umami flavors (more savory than salty) that harmonizes well with its wonderfully appealing aroma. The flavors develop naturally from the high quality ingredients they use in addition to the traditional cedar wood OKE fermentation barrels. Yamaki’s Shoyu fermentation period continues through two summers, yet the color is lighter than other Shoyus, and it has a translucent amber color. The secrets of Yamaki’s special taste and quality actually lie in the traditional method they’ve passed on for generations, the natural spring water they use, and the fact that it’s totally unpasteurized.

“Nama” to be more natural

At the last process of making Shoyu, Japanese manufacturers usually heat their Shoyu (called “Hiire”) in order to enhance the savory aroma and stop further fermentation. However, Yamaki takes the more natural and traditinal approach to their fermented foods. They don’t heat or pasteurize their Shoyu or Miso. In addition to the nutrition of traditional Shoyu, Yamaki’s Nama Shoyu and Miso contain more enzyme than the more common pasteurized Shoyu and Miso. Its full-bodied flavor and exquisitely delicate bouquet can be enjoyed whether using it at the table or in your cooking.



To enjoy Yamaki’s certified organic Nama Shoyu to the fullest, one of the best ways is to simply add it as a garnish or light topping to cooked udon or soba noodles. Use between 2/3 to 1 tablespoon of Yamaki’s Nama Shoyu for 100g of dried noodles. Cook them according to taste and texture, rinse them under cool water, and drain them well. It’s also recommended to use Nama Shoyu on its own as a dip (with Wasabi) for Sushi, Tofu, grilled fish, and cooked or raw fresh vegetables such.