

To All Members of the Press
Press Release

15 April 2025
SSA / Sake Sommelier Association

International Sake Competition "Tokyo Sake Challenge 2025"

Announces Award-Winning Sake

The Sake Sommelier Association® (SSA) is thrilled to announce the results of the inaugural **Tokyo Sake Challenge 2025**, held on 15th March 2025. With the theme "*Rediscovering Sake*", the competition sought to both honour the traditions of sake brewing and celebrate the drink's growing diversity. Entries encompassed not only classic sake, but also craft sake and *doburoku* (unrefined sake), reflecting the evolving nature of this iconic Japanese beverage.

Blind judgement was conducted by Certified Sake Sommeliers® with a deep understanding of international market trends. Sake were assessed not only on their aroma and flavour profiles but also on their versatility in food and sake pairings with a multi-dimensional approach to evaluating their unique strength. Awards were presented across four categories: **Platinum, Gold, Silver, and Bronze**. And the **Best Design Award** was later added, recognising outstanding label design.

We extend our warmest congratulations to all the breweries who earned awards. Through this competition and our wider initiatives, we hope to contribute to sharing the indispensable Japanese culture and preserving amazing Japanese drink, sake.

This first-ever event in Japan—the birthplace of sake— became a reality thanks to the tireless efforts of the event's co-organisers, **Ms Cindy Bissig** and **Ms Giulia Maglio** who are dedicated to the education and promotion of sake. As with the first "Sake Challenge®" held in 2012, the judging for this landmark event was undertaken by Certified Sake Sommeliers®, ensuring a rigorous and impartial process throughout.

Our sister event, **Japan Life®**, also proved a great success, welcoming numerous attendees—particularly from the hospitality and food sectors. We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to all participating breweries, supporting partners, and guests who made the event such a memorable occasion.

< Award Results >

Visit the link below to find out the full list of award-winning sakes:

<https://tokyosakechallenge.com/awards/>

The comments of the local organisers are following.

Ms Cindy Bissig

‘It’s been an absolutely fantastic experience to host the very first Tokyo Sake Challenge together with the Sake Sommelier Association this year, and we’ve been truly overwhelmed by all the positive feedback.

I personally had two main goals in mind: first, to offer sake professionals a space to connect, network, and explore the incredible variety of sake currently available across Japan; and second, to provide breweries with a platform to showcase their craftsmanship and bring their amazing brews to a broader audience, both in Japan and abroad. It has been amazing to see that we achieved both of those goals, and I’m incredibly grateful to the SSA and everyone who helped make this possible, especially to the breweries for placing their trust in us by participating.

We learned so much during this process, and I’m already looking forward to the Tokyo Sake Challenge 2026, with plans to expand the experience further - opening it up to the public and finding more ways to celebrate and support the breweries, their communities, and the amazing craftsmanship behind every bottle.’

Ms Giulia Maglio

‘Organizing the first Tokyo Sake Challenge was a thrilling and rewarding experience. The passion from brewers, judges, guests, and volunteers was inspiring. As a brewer, seeing everyone's enthusiasm for sake was incredibly motivating. We showcased diverse sake styles, including craft sake and *doburoku*, making the event inclusive.

I look forward to an even bigger celebration next year, welcoming more brewers to share this beautiful beverage with the world.’

We would like to once again express our sincere gratitude to all who supported the **Tokyo Sake Challenge 2025**. The Sake Sommelier Association® will continue to dedicate itself to the promotion and education of sake worldwide, and we thank you for your continued support.

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