

# In Praise of Fine Sake

Vol. 2

## Senkin Company Limited

Address: Baba 106, Sakura-shi, Tochigi  
Telephone: 028-681-0011  
<http://www.senkin.co.jp/>

- Alcohol content: 17~18%
- Seimaibuai (rice milling percentage): 55%
- Nihonshu-do (Sake Meter Value +dry, -sweet): -3
- Acidity: 2.1
- Rice type: Hitogokochi
- Volume: 720ml
- Price: 1,450 yen (tax inclusive)



## Junmai Ginjo from Senkin — A Clear, Unfiltered Raw Sake

Text/ Kaori Haishi (sake sommelier) Photography/ Susumu Nagao



### A New Taste that Returns to the Origins of Sake

The culture of brewing in Japan began back in the distant Jomon period, which lasted from 14,000 to 300 BC. Amazingly, traces remain of alcoholic drinks that were apparently made from fruit. This just goes to show how much the Japanese love their alcohol.

In the twenty-first century most sake brewers produce their product using enamel tanks and the conveniences of a computerized civilization. The Senkin Company, however, went against the times when it began making sake in a classical wooden barrel under the label, "Return to Origins."

Senkin is a progressive brewery in Tochigi prefecture, the second oldest one in the region, and is where Kazuki

Usui is attracting notice as a young brewing ace.

My choice this time was a Senkin Junmai Ginjo (a grade of sake made from rice milled to at least 60% of its original weight), an unfiltered, unpasteurized sake that is taken from the clear midstream when processing the moromi (mash mixture). The first sip of this sake gave me the feeling I had fallen in love for the first time again. Maybe it was the distinctive bittersweetness that did it. It was a flavor that somehow pulled at my heart. The aroma was suggestive of Thailand or Bali, and the sweet smell of flowers after a tropical downpour. Don't chill this sake too much, in case you let the sweet, flowery fragrance escape. While adoring the fresh smell reminiscent of a clear stream that is concealed in its

depth, you will also find irresistible the way it clutches at every pore of your being. It slips smoothly down the throat all the way, and feels rounded and matured. There is no tiring of the mellow flavor, which is one you can stay with for a long time. Even after you finish drinking, it leaves a poignant impression over the whole tongue that invokes admiration.

The perfect seasonal accompaniment would be firefly squid dressed with vinegared miso, or a marinade of fruit tomato and new onions. Fruity foods matched with vinegar are a good complement to the pleasant, expression-softening acidity. This sake is one to drink while nursing inexpressible bittersweet memories of first love.